Between Tradition and Modernity
Between Tradition and Modernity
Philosophical Reflections on the Modernization of Chinese Culture

Li Zonggui
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Part I Culture
Chinese culture has formed its own typical spirit gradually during a long development process. The basic spirit of Chinese culture is the reflection of a value system, mode of thinking, social mentality, ethical ideas and aesthetic taste of the Chinese nation. The basic spirit of Chinese culture is a wide and neutral conception, belonging to the category of fact judgment. The excellent elements in the basic spirit of Chinese culture constitute the national spirit, and become the inner motivation keeping the Chinese nation moving forward.

I. Schools of thought on the basic spirit of ancient Chinese culture

Some scholars think the ideological basis that has developed over a long period of time can be called the basic spirit of Chinese culture, which is the internal motivation resulting from a long developmental process. In other words, this is the basic idea that leads the national culture to move. The basic spirit of Chinese culture is the main characteristic of the spiritual form of the Chinese nation, and it includes: (1) being energetic and promising; (2) being harmonious and moderate; (3) advocating good virtues and pragmatism; (4) coordinating nature and human beings: “They are the basic spirit of ancient Chinese culture”.¹

The basic national spirit of China can be seen in two famous sayings from The Book of Changes: “As Heaven maintains vigour through movement, a gentle man should constantly strive for self-perfection”. “As earth’s condition is receptive devotion, a gentle man should hold the outer world with a broad mind”.

“Constantly striving for self-perfection” and “holding the outer world with a broad mind” can be regarded as the basic spirit of traditional Chinese culture. Apart from these, the basic spirit can be described as: (1) harmony between nature and man; (2) people oriented; (3) vigourous and promising; (4) and harmonious.²

Some scholars think that: “The basic spirit of Chinese culture is integration and freedom”.³
In some scholars’ view, the patriarchy level and ethical codes that are based on the self-sufficient natural economy and the family, should be the main clue, essence and core of the five aspects running through ancient Chinese society, including social production activities and productivity, social production relationships, the social system, social mentality, and forms of social consciousness: “This is the basic spirit of traditional ancient Chinese culture”.4

In some scholars’ eyes, the national spirit of China can be generally summarized into four connected aspects: First, rational spirit, manifested as a long history of atheistic tradition, full affirmation of the integration of human and nature and between individuals and society, and advocacy that the satisfaction of the individual’s emotion and desire should meet the rational needs of society. Generally speaking, the spirit does not accept the worship of a supernatural God, and the existence of the “other world”. It strongly advocates harmonious unity between human and nature, and the integration between individual and society. It opposes their separation and conflict. This is the basis of the rational Chinese spirit.

Second, free spirit. This kind of spirit was first shown among the people who fought against the exploiting class. Meanwhile, when fighting against foreign nations, some people from the ruling class also fought. It means that the traditional culture of the ruling class also had an active, “strong love of freedom”.

Third, practical spirit. Confucianism in the pre-Qin period advocated: “do not pretend to know what you do not know”. It opposed the view of being born wise and learned when commenting on man and the world; Legalism denied “prior knowledge,” and focused on “participation and experiment,” emphasized practical activity, and praised utilitarianism; while Taoism advocated “knowing others,” “self-awareness” and “analyzing the truth of all things on earth. All these ideas were the examples of the practical spirit.

Fourth then, the spirit of adaptability.5

Some researchers hold the opinion that the basic spirit of traditional Chinese culture “can be summarized as ‘respect the ancestors, think highly of the human relations, advocate morality, and emphasize…etiquette’”.6 In addition, traditional Chinese culture has a developmental viewpoint, striving unceasingly and never tiring of study.7

According to some researchers, the spirit of Chinese culture is characterized by humanism, manifested in the following aspects: it does not isolate individuals from interpersonal relationships, and it does not oppose humans and nature; it does not pursue a pure system of natural knowledge; it advocates utilitarianism in its value system; it emphasizes the conduct of the individual.

The humanism of Chinese culture has brought credit to our nation, but also set up obstacles; it has spread the light of wisdom to the rest of the world, but also opened gaps for the exchange of culture. It is a great spiritual treasure. It is also a cultural load.8
II. The cultural spirit with humanism as its core

Chinese culture perceives everything from the heart and life of human beings, and its moral principles and political culture are characterized by the search for good governance. It replaces religious belief with the moral feeling, and prevents the possibility of fervent national religion. Theology has never been a mainstream ideology in China, and clericalism has never overridden the power of the emperor. On the contrary, the monarchical power always exceeds the clerical and overwhelms it. From an overall perspective, and seen from the inner motivation and outward manifestation, the core of the spirit of Chinese culture is humanism. This claim is explicated below.

1. Constantly striving for self-perfection

One of the essential perspectives of Chinese culture is that it constantly strives for self-perfection.

There is a famous saying in the Book of Changes, “As Heaven maintains vigour through movements, a gentle man should constantly strive for self-perfection”, “The great attribute of Heaven and Earth is giving and maintaining life”. These generalize and vividly reflect on the Chinese people's spirit of energy and promise, and of constantly striving for self-perfection.

Confucius advocated and tried to practice the spirit of “being so immersed in work as to forget one's meals”, and despised the life attitude of those people who “stuff themselves with food the whole day, without applying their mind to anything good”. He is the man “who is in his eager pursuit of knowledge and forgets his food, who is in the joy of its attainment and forgets his sorrows, and who does not perceive that old age is coming on”. Confucius also believed that one need not be full when eating, need not be comfortable when living, but should be industrious and agile when working, be careful and cautious when talking, to correct one's behaviors from the masters, and that such a man can be considered a studious gentleman.

From the Han dynasty to the Qing dynasty, through more than 2,000 years, the thought of the Book of Changes gradually permeated, and its ideas became accepted by society. Not only intellectuals but also ordinary people are encouraged by its words:

When Xibo, the Earl of the West, was imprisoned at Youli, he expanded The Book of Changes; Confucius was in distress and he made The Spring and Autumn Annals; Qu Yuan was banished and he composed his poem “Encountering Sorrow”; after Zuo Qiu lost his sight, he wrote The Conversation from the States; when Sun Wu had his feet amputated in punishment, he set forth the Art of War; Lü Buwei was banished to Shu but his Spring and Autumn of Mr. Lü...
has been handed down through the ages; Han Fei, trapped in the prison of Qin, brought into being his *Shuo Nan* and *Gu Fen*. The three hundred pieces in the *The Book of Songs* were mostly works venting the indignation of sages and men of virtue".10

This famous quote reflects a people’s spirit and indomitable will. The more the Chinese nation suffered a setback, the more its people would rise and fight. Some might argue that this merely reflects the upper class intellectuals’ striving for self-improvement. However, such folk sayings as, “though one is poor, he has lofty [high] aspirations”, and “knife would go to rust if not sharpened, people would be left behind if they do not learn” suggest otherwise. Many Chinese people would be given the name of *ziqiang* (self-reliant). The spirit of self-reliance has become very general.

It is exactly the spirit of vigour, promise, and constantly striving to become stronger that has promoted the development of Chinese culture and society. With every invasion and change of leader, the Chinese have fought against invasion and oppression.

Numerous people with lofty ideals kept on fighting and devoted themselves to the fight. Such excitement was expressed in the poem, “It is said the Northern Gate is recaptured of late; when the news reaches my ears, and my gown is wet with tears. Staring at my wife’s face, of grief I find no trace; rolling up my verse books, my joy like madness looks”;11 the exclamation was expressed in such lines as “He died before he accomplished his career. How heroes could not wet their sleeves with tear on tear!”;12 or “the refugees are still suffering from the war and expecting to recover their country, and numerous people are weeping each night tonight”;13 or the ambition as expressed in such lines as “do not forget to tell your dead father in the family sacrificial rites when our army has recovered the lost land”;14 and in these lines: “My bow like a full moon, and aiming northwest, I will shoot down the fierce Wolf from the sky”.15 This is the spirit of self-improvement expressed through a high-level of self-confidence and self-esteem. It is this spirit of self-improvement that nurtures self-reliance and rising against the oppressor; ceaseless learning and moving forward.

2. Being upright and straightforward

Chinese people always uphold justice, and have the courage to seek truth and advocate integrity. Under the gradual influence of traditional culture, especially the Confucian, Chinese people advocate integrity, and place great store by lofty sentiment. This nurtures strong national pride and noble virtue. In the pre-Qin period, Confucius advocated: “Man takes death over humiliation” and “The commander of the forces of a large state may be carried off, but the will of even a common man cannot be taken from him”. Mencius called for the personality of
a great man that: “Neither riches nor honors can corrupt him; neither poverty nor humbleness can make him swerve from principle; and neither threats nor forces can subdue him”. Tao Yuanming in the Jin dynasty, “would not bow to the superior merely to get the scanty pay”. Li Bai in the Tang dynasty declared: “Why should I serve the high and mighty with lowered eyes and on bent knees? Such things can never make my heart rejoice”. These are typical expressions, showing an insistence on moral integrity. Even though loss of personal wealth and even fatal disaster might ensue, they would never lose their determination and dignity.

Fan Zhen in Qi and Liang of the Southern dynasties insisted on fighting the conception of karma and theory of spiritual imperishability in Buddhism, despite the coercion of Xiao Ziliang, the King of Jingling in the Qi dynasty and Xiao Yan, the Wudi Emperor of the Liang dynasty. They demonstrated their righteousness and would never, “sell off their own theory in order to get a position”.

Huan Tan, a righteous man in the Eastern Han dynasty, was clearly aware that the Emperor Guangwu was superstitious in prophecy and destiny, yet still dared to challenge the Emperor face to face. According to the historical records: “Huan Tan... is simple and does not care about the etiquette. What he likes is not the ordinary or popular views of the scholars, so he was always rejected and defamed... When Wang Mang usurped the power and took the Emperor's position, all the people flatter and appealed to him, in order to get a position in his court, only Huan Tan kept his own principle and said nothing”. He submitted a written statement to Emperor Guangwu and believed that the rise and fall of a country was determined by governmental affairs, while the success and failure of governmental affairs depended on whether the assistants were wise or not. However, as “the emperor was addicted to prophecy, and the decisions were mainly made by that,” Huan Tan’s statement was not able to be shown to the Emperor. Therefore, Huan Tan became “so depressed and discontented and submitted his statement again even this might cause his death,” pointing out that, “nowadays, the petty persons compile the books and profess that these books are the prophecy and destiny talisman, in order to cheat the greedy and malevolent people, and you the Emperor are also implicated, why don’t you stay away from these people?” He criticized the Emperor Guangwu “it is a great fault that you believe in the prophecy and destiny talisman”. When the Emperor Guangwu asked Huan Tan: “what do you think if we decide this issue by the prophecy?” Huan Tan stayed in silence for a long time and replied: “I don’t understand that”. As a result, Huan Tan was charged for “defaming the Emperor and disregarding law and discipline”, and he was almost beheaded. This example shows that there were intellectuals in ancient China seeking truth and a correct path.

The well-known Bo Yi and Shu Qi, the son of Gentleman Guzhu in the late Shang dynasty, stopped the horse of King Wu of Zhou and admonished him not to fight with King Zhou of Shang. When King Wu of Zhou conquered Shang dynasty, they “were ashamed of eating [chestnuts] produced by the Zhou dynasty” and starved to death on the Shouyang Mountain. Frankly speaking, Bo Yi and Shu Qi opposed the progressive and righteous war, but if we picked the detailed content
out, and examined it on the general value orientation and theoretical meaning, we have to admit that they really showed their honesty and uprightness in some aspects.

As for the value principles of life such as “acting bravely for a just cause”, “never declining to do charity,” or “killing oneself for a noble cause,” people have been delighting in talking about them, and have been carrying them out in reality for thousands of years.

The tradition of advocating the righteous and striving for the lofty sentiments nurses a sense of righteousness and the concept of right and wrong amongst outstanding Chinese intellectuals and the majority of the people, and contributes to forming the noble spirit of the Chinese nation. Especially when the country was suffering from adversity, or at critical moments, all the people would give priority to the interest of the country. The emergence of numerous national heroes in history is a clear evidence for it.

Admittedly, the concept of advocating the righteous and striving for lofty sentiments in traditional Chinese culture also has serious defects. For example, the traditional concept of sentiment strives for the “distinction of nobleman and vile character” and “distinction between Chinese and barbarians,” which implies chauvinism or egotism, and an aristocratic consciousness scornful of foreign nationalities. This kind of egotism always becomes a narrow mentality when communicating with foreign nationalities. Another example is that the traditional concept of sentiment has sometimes become the catalyst of the literati and officialdom in feudal China to compete with each other or to form gangs. The traditional concept of sentiment always appears as the worship of some abstract concept without considering class distinction or the nature of political power. These examples all have their typical historical limitation. We will make a scientific judgment by drawing from historical materialism.

3. Upholding harmony and mean

One of the basic spirits of Chinese culture is upholding harmony and mean. Focusing on harmony, and insisting on mean, is the spirit that soaks through the pores of Chinese national culture.

Shi Bo in the late Western Zhou dynasty and Yan Ying at the end of the Spring and Autumn Period were the men who first discussed the harmony theory. Shi Bo emphasized the coordination of different elements to balance conflicts in order to reach a harmonious result. Harmony of five different tastes could produce delicious foods; harmony of six different temperaments could form music pleasing to the ear; a king who could accept different opinions from different people could manage the situation such that, “harmonious and happy... they were one”. Only “harmony” can “produce all the things,” so that “all the things would become substantial and grow up”. This is a practical theory.
Yan Yin used the idea of “supplementation” and “perfection” to enrich the connotation of “harmony”. He applied his theory to the monarch-subject relationship, and laid stress on the importance of “supplementation and perfection” when the monarch and his subjects were dealing with government affairs. Through the comprehensive balance of, “supplementing the weakness to make up for the defect” in order to keep, “government affairs mild and not to go against... courtesy,” a harmonious relationship between the monarch and his subjects might be maintained.

Confucius used the concept of “keeping within the bounds” to rule the limitation of harmony. In his view, going beyond the limit was as bad as falling short, and everything should take its “middle part” as the guarantee and achievement of “harmony,” while propriety was the principle of taking the “middle part”. If we are forced to pursue harmony, it is harmony that is “hypocrite-like,” and the “thief of morality”.

The Doctrine of Mean promotes this Confucian concept of “keeping within the bounds” to a philosophical height. From “perfect morals” to “great fundamental virtues of the world” and “practical principle of the world,” which emphasizes achieving harmony between man and man, humanity and natural law through learning from experience, and practice.

Yi Zhuan materializes the idea of harmony into the separation of Yin and Yang, the orientation of softness and firmness, and precedence between the monarch and subjects, subjects and ordinary people of social political relationship, and between father and children, husband and wife in the family, and strictly defines the class order where Yang is more worshipful than Yin, and firmness is higher than softness.

Seen as a whole, the harmony theory of the Pre-Qi dynasty is theoretically based on the Doctrine of the Mean, and sets the proprieties as the standard, limited by harmony, and characterized by maintenance of integrity and inhibition and elimination of competitive systems. Confucius said that: "In practicing the rules of propriety, a natural ease is to be prized. In the ways prescribed by the ancient kings, this is the excellent quality, and in things small and great we follow them. Yet it is not to be observed in all cases. If one, knowing how such ease should be prized, manifests it, without regulating it by the rules of propriety, this likewise is not to be done". This emphasizes harmony-based proprieties, and proprieties abstract from the base of diversity, inconsistency, and even the conflict of things.

Just like the precocity of Chinese culture, Confucian harmony theory that might represent the basic spirit of ancient China is also precocious. It was born in the period when “disturbances arose repeatedly” and “The system of the Tao (the Way) was about to be torn in fragments all under the sky”. We might say it was a little inopportune or inappropriate.

The real content it insisted on and the value orientation it reflected were quite different in that period of “fighting with brute force”. However, it nevertheless represented the basic spirit of ethical political culture; its conservative aspect highlighted an important value after the situation of the times had changed from turbulent chaos into peace.
Thus, Chinese feudal society stepped into the normal track after the Qin and Han dynasty; the Confucian idea of upholding harmony and mean met the political need for unification, and the tender affection satisfied the moral and emotional need of a patriarchal society, and thus formed the principles of a national psychology. Whether it was Dong Zhongshu’s three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues as well as the theory of interactions between Heaven and mankind, or the idea of “upholding the truth of nature and exterminating human desire” from the Neo-Confucianism of the Song and Ming dynasties, they were all defined by the concept of mean and harmony. However, they were also different from Confucian harmony theory in the Pre-Qin dynasty. Zhang Zai of the Northern Song dynasty had pointed out in his famous Xi Ming: “living is worth celebrating and death means total peace”. It was the concentrated reflection of upholding harmony and mean in individual experience.

Upholding harmony and mean, as the soul of Eastern culture and part of Chinese culture, has exerted deep and profound influence upon our nation. As the whole nation identifies with this idea, the Chinese people pay attention to the achievement and maintenance of harmony. They will not go to extremes when doing things, and will do their best to protect collective interests. They will seek common ground on major issues while reserving differences on minor ones, which has become a principle of thought. These have played an active role in gathering and extending the national spirit, maintaining a uniform and multiracial regime.

However, this idea rejects competition and conflict. Therefore, it has an evident drawback. It does harm to individual creativity, inhibits the growth of competition and morality, and more often than not, becomes the tool of feudal rulers, used to maintain hierarchical order for authoritarian governance.

4. People are the foundation of the state

The thought that people are the foundation of the state is also one of the basic aspects of Chinese culture.

It is a tradition that has run through the culture, and gives prominence to Chinese humanism.

This thought can be traced back to the Yin and Zhou dynasties. In the Chapter of Pan Geng in the Book of History, there were such statements as “pay attention to my people,” “we should not let the people’s expectations down,” “bestow real good upon the people,” and “we should move people to their advantage”. The duke of Zhou saw the power and function of ordinary people from the fall of the Yin dynasty and brought about the thought of “protecting the people”. On his view, public opinions were a reflection of God’s will, and the dignity and sincerity of God could be seen from public feelings: “awful though Heaven be, it yet helps the sincere; the feelings of the people can for the most part be discerned”.19
The Great Declaration said: “what the people desire, Heaven will be found to give effect to”.\(^{20}\) In the ancient books and records such as *The Tso Chuan* and *Guo Yu*, the thought of attaching importance to people occurs many times. Such as: “for people, they are the master of Gods. So the wise emperors should help people to fulfill their wishes and then commit themselves to Gods”\(^{21}\); “good fortune [does not come] unless the people are harmonious”\(^{22}\); “a country would become prosperous if it listens to the people, and it would fall if it listens to the Gods”\(^{23}\).

Of course, the thought of attaching importance to people that can be found in these books gave no personal dignity, or the right to supervise the rulers to people themselves. It was merely towards “making the country prosperous” and maintain the ruling order. Emphasizing the importance of people was only a means to this end.

This thought can typically be found in Confucian theory. It can even be claimed as the basis of Confucian political theory. Whether the needs of people can be met or not is the essence of whether or not politics succeeds.

Confucius advocated making people rich and educated\(^{24}\), emphasizing “people, food, funeral, and sacrifice,”\(^{25}\) with people heading the list. Mencius insisted on the basic principle that: “The people are the most important element in a nation; the spirits of the land and grain are the next; and the sovereign is the lightest,”\(^{26}\) suggesting that the emperors should care about the people or the dynasty will fall. He said: “A ruler, who carries the oppression of his people to the highest pitch, will himself be slain, and his kingdom will perish. If one stops short of the highest pitch, his life will notwithstanding be in danger, and his kingdom will be weakened”.\(^{27}\) He also said: “to gain the peasantry is the way to become sovereign”\(^{28}\) and “Jie and Zhou's losing the throne arose from their losing the people, and to lose the people means to lose their hearts. There is a way to get the kingdom: get the people, and the kingdom is got”.\(^{29}\) Xunzi said: “in the use of the state, one who gains the strength of the Hundred Clans will be rich, one who obtains their willingness to die will be strong, and one who gains their praise will be honored. One who possesses all three of these “gains” will have the whole world come to him as to their own home. One who ruins these three “gains” will have the whole world leave him”.\(^{30}\) According to the famous metaphor where the ruler is the boat and the people are the water, the water can both carry and overturn.

Not only Confucian but also Taoism emphasized people. Lao Tzu said: “there is no unchangeable mind, we should put the people's mind in the first place;”\(^{31}\) “the reason why people feel hungry is they have paid heavy grain tax”.\(^{32}\) Legalism also paid attention. Although they advocated that all the things in the universe should be judged and people ruled by law, they nevertheless conceded that public feeling is the basis for enforcing law and a nation’s foundation.

In Han Fei’s eye: “every legal nation is based on the public’s mind;”\(^{33}\) “people would become meek where the interests existed” and “the emperors need the people who are ready to risk their lives in the hard time, and make all the efforts to build the country in the peaceful time”.\(^{34}\)
It was also stated in Quanxiu of Guanzi: “If the taxes are too heavy, all the people would complain about that; if the power of the public is used up, all the government orders would never take effect”. The chapter of Junzheng of Jingfa stated: “if the orders meet the public’s needs, the public would follow them”. So we can see that philosophers in the Pre-Qin dynasty all put the public first.

This idea further developed in the Han and Tang dynasties. In Jia Yi’s view: “all the political bodies are based on ordinary people...therefore, the security of a country, the honor or disgrace of the subjects and the position of the officials, are all determined by the ordinary people”. “Abstain that! The people who fight against the public, the public must be the winner”.35

Emperor Taizong of the Tang dynasty said: “the emperor is based on the nation, while the nation is based on the ordinary people, if the ruler is satisfied with being severe to the people, it is just like curing the flesh from body to satisfy one's hunger, one would feel full but he would die, the ruler would be wealthy but the nation would fall”.36

In the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, this thought had been further strengthened. Zhang Zai in the Northern Song dynasty publicized the thought that “all people are my brothers and all things are my companions”.37 Sima Guang considered the ordinary people as the “base of a nation”.38 The Neo-Confucian philosophers Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi claimed that “the ordinary people are the foundation of a state,” and39 “the pleasure of the public is the basic principle of a ruler”.40 In Zhu Xi’s view, “there is nothing more important in the world than sympathizing the public”.41 Wang Fuzhi in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties said that “people are the base of a ruler... the ruler would not keep his foothold without the support of his people”. 42 Tang Zhen said: “how can a nation have the four pillars of governance (referring to the: feudal system, national treasury, royal court and official positions) without people?”43

There are numerous similar examples. To sum up, whether it was the emperors, the high officials, the advanced thinkers, or the reactionary politicians, they all admitted the importance of the public to the development of a nation, therefore they proposed showing respect to the ordinary people.

The traditional thought that people are the foundation of a state has two expressions in Chinese culture. One is expressed in the ruling class, represented by the feudal emperors. They treated the ordinary people as the base of the regime. They needed to “protect people to guarantee their position,” and they used the power of the public to serve the needs of the throne. The public was simply the source of national tax and military service; merely a tool or a means. The second is expressed by the progressive thinkers, who always voiced concerns about the present situation. They suggested that the ruler should cut tax, and loosen control over the common people, even as a way to fight against tyranny.

Whether it was the former or the latter strand, this thought is not democratic. The democratic thought was put forward at the time of the modern commercial economy, and it was based on law. The idea that the common people are the foundation of a state is to stress of the function of people in a social life characterized
by the ruling of man under the natural economy. It is a call for the ruler to reduce oppression.

These two approaches are fundamentally different. Just as in some scholars’ view, the traditional thought of attaching importance to people does not have the content of citizenship. This thought was proposed for the benefit of the ruler, with the public only the object. Although this idea seems in conflict with the autocratic monarchy, seen as a whole, it cannot be seen to negate autocratic monarchy, only reminding rulers of the condition of their existence.

The thinkers did not object to the rulers, but gave them suggestions on how to improve their rule. They treated this idea of valuing ordinary people as a way to strengthen the position of the rulers. Therefore, this idea can be seen to supplement totalitarianism.44

5. Evenness and equality

Evenness and Equality compose one of the basic spirits of Chinese culture.

Equality is mainly expressed in economic benefit. Evenness is equality, while equality must be performed as evenness. Evenness and equality in the occupation of social wealth and the distribution of the product of labor.

Confucius said: “I have heard that rulers of states and chiefs of families are not troubled lest their people should be few, but are troubled lest they should not keep their several places; that they are not troubled with fears of poverty, but are troubled with fears of a want of contented repose among the people in their several places”.

Administering the country and managing a family would not be troubled with the lack of finance, but unequal distribution.

Before Confucius, Yan Yin had already urged, “to even the poor and the rich”.46 Guan Zi thought: “if the national treasury does not have too much storage, and the common people are living on selling their children, it is because the ruler does not have the approach to reach equality”.47 He attributed the poverty of the public to the ruler’s unequal distribution of wealth.

Dong Zhongshu noticed that land annexation was quite serious, “the rich have uninterrupted stretches of land while the poor even have no space to stand”, and strongly advocated “adjustment of evenness”, “limiting the people to use more lands”. People should “allow the riches to show their dignity but not arrogance, the poor should be rich enough to live but not be worried, this is the adjustment of evenness”.48

Not only the thinkers advocated the thought of equality, but also the emperors themselves sometimes carried out the measurement of equality. Such were the policies of evening out and limiting land.

When Wang Mang became emperor of the Han dynasty, he reconstructed the ancient systems, focusing on restoring the “nine squares” system of land ownership in China’s slave society, and set all the lands as state-owned, and named them as
“Wang Tian” (the King’s lands), forbidden to be bought or sold. Instead, the lands were allocated according to the number of family members. The famous system of land equalization and the related kin system in the Northern Wei dynasty were carried out by the small family of a husband and a wife, and there was no difference due to the class of the household. One of the important reforms of Wang Anshi in the Northern Song dynasty was to collect tax according to land ownership. Hai Rui, the famous honest and upright official in the Ming dynasty said, “the way to keep the world peaceful is to implement the policy of ploughing the field. If it did not work, land ownership should be limited; and if this still did not work, tax should be evened”.49

Ideas of evenness and equality were deeply rooted in the farmer’s mind, and its external expression was very intense. The idea of the thinkers and rulers above was largely limited by the thought of farmers, in order to relax the class struggle and prevent revolt.

The farmer’s revolts mostly set equality up as their slogan. The Yellow Turbans Uprising in the late Eastern Han dynasty absorbed the thought of the Scripture of the Great Peace, and came up with “Peace and Equality” as their slogan which means highly equal. Huang Chao’s uprising in the late Tang dynasty set “Evenness” as their slogan. Wang Xiaobo’ uprising in the Northern Song dynasty set out to “average the poor and rich” as their dream. Zhong Xiang and Yang Me’s uprising set out to “equal the gentle and simple, average poor and rich”. The farmers’ uprising in the late Yuan advocated “killing all the inequality in the world so that it would become equal”. The farmers’ revolt led by Li Zicheng sought to “average the lands”.

As to the modern times, the Taiping revolt expressed the ideal of equality as “plow the lands, wear the clothes, use the money all together, average exists everywhere and all the people are full and warm”. 50These ideas attracted and encouraged the farmers, and defeated the base of feudal autocratic rule.

Strictly speaking, equal society has never existed in China. Policies such as averaging the lands or limiting the land adopted by rulers were targeted at relaxing class conflict, but they were not intended to attain to great harmony or equal society. Advocating equality was only a way of considering the issues from the macro and long-term perspective, and against exploitation. The farmers’ uprisings never reached their dream of an equal society due to their own limitations and the strong power of the ruling class.

There is no doubt that the idea of evenness and equality (mainly shown among the farmers’ group) is the product of a small-scale peasant economy. However, under the condition of the natural economy, this thought of averaging the social wealth and arranging the surplus to supplement the deficiency plays an important role in reducing exploitation, preventing annexation, maintaining the basic living condition for the farmers, securing the society and so on. It gave rise to the social cultural psychology of the farmers, fighting against tyranny and demanding equality, and it also promoted the growth of fighting spirit.
As a social mentality, it enriched the awareness of the independent Chinese nation, and transformed into the desire for freedom. However, this idea is marked by absolute egalitarianism, and it is impossible to realize in the world. It does not allow different people or groups to have a better life through exploiting advantage. It emphasizes static balance and sacrifices efficiency and promotion, and it does not encourage dynamic competition, nor encourage people to achieve the improved work and production. In this way, the idea of evenness and equality is, perhaps, inadvisable.

6. Being practical and realistic

Being practical and realistic is one of the basic spirits of Chinese culture. The departure point of Chinese culture is people's mind and life. It faces reality and emphasizes life. Being practical and realistic is the principle of cognition and moral belief.

Confucius advocated “constant reviewing or practicing of that already studied”, “asking about every uncertainty”, “When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it”, “no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary predeterminations, no obstinacy, and no egoism”, these were all the reflection of the realistic spirit.

Xun Zi disagreed with the idea of “born to know”, and stressed the importance that the knowledge can be acquired through hard work. Dong Zhongshu admitted that “the rich have uninterrupted stretch of land while the poor have no space to stand”, and required “renewal” to loosen penalty and taxes. Wang Chong emphasized on the reality, and rejected the unfounded things.

As for the latter Chen Liang, Ye Shi, Yan Yuan, they all focused on the feat, and stressed unifying motivation and effect. These were the different manifestations of the realistic spirit.

Taoism also had the realistic spirit though they considered “Tao” as “extremely mysterious and abstruse”. Lao Tzu said: “He who knows other men is discerning; he who knows himself is intelligent,” and advocated studying the enemy's situation and: “There is no greater danger than under-estimating your opponent”.

While Chuang Tzu's school required one to “analyze the truth of everything in the world” highlighting the discussion between freedom and necessity, and opposed dogmatism. The latter Huang-Lao Taoism's statement that “things have changed with the passage of time” is another expression of realistic spirit.

Legalism rejected a priori knowledge, and emphasized the “participation of practice”. It laid stress on real action, and advocated merits and honors based on the plough and on battle. It attacked prayer and illusion, and stuck to reality. Penalty and admiration were used as instruments to stimulate and limit the passion of the people. It made no attempt to educate through hollow speeches. This is realistic spirit reflected from the standpoint of the utilitarian.
The traditional Chinese study of history insisted on truthful record, and was not afraid of the pressure from power, reflecting again the realistic spirit. The famous historian Liu Zhiji, “reports all the issues, be they good or evil, so that the luxurious emperor and the treacherous officials would feel fear”. There was no lack of upright historians who would rather be demoted, exiled, or even lose their lives simply to record historical fact.

The realistic spirit is made manifest through a practical attitude. Chinese people always reject illusion and emphasize reality. They express their will and achieve self-value through quotidian life, human relationships and social political life, opposing unrealistic illusion.

In Chinese cultural history, the power of the emperor was always above the theocratic power. Theocracy served the needs of the crown. This is closely related to the practical spirit of Chinese people. We might even say that the tradition of realism in Chinese classic literature is closely related to the realistic and practical spirit. This kind of spirit is also deeply engrained into the national mentality.

The quality of Chinese people is simple and unadorned. They advocate a down-to-earth attitude and going forward step by step, as in the saying “cross the river by groping the stones”. They despise the showy and insubstantial. These all reflect the outstanding side of Chinese cultural spirit and the quality of the Chinese nation.

However, there are some negative aspects to this spirit. For example, it emphasizes people's mind and life, but ignores the reconstruction and research of nature. For another example, this spirit is always based on experimentalism, paying more attention to practical benefit and the immediate interest. This is clearly the mentality of small farmers. This shows that the practical and realistic spirit tends to ignore long-term interests, and this is inevitably the result of the small peasant economy's own limitation.

7. Being optimistic and open-minded

Chinese culture has the spirit of being optimistic and open-minded.

In Chinese people's eyes, the meaning of life and value of individuals exist in the real world. It is worth celebrating if someone is living a gilded life; while if the official career is full of frustrations, or suffering from sorrows, it is not lamentable. Be proactive and exert oneself constantly, and always have an optimistic mind. Pursue the truth, yearn for the light, and then people's hearts are filled with hope. Personal frustration can be adjusted through the “the troubles [that] chasten one’s heart so that he would become a great man”, and transform into an optimistic attitude.

If the team is met with troublesome situations, they can be regarded as opportunities, and hard times as the trough between two upsurges. The nation can be recovered through enduring hardships in order to accomplish some ambition. Maxims such as “there are no roads without dangers and difficulties, there are no
things without defeat” and “out of the depth of misfortune comes bliss” express people's firm belief in a promising future. “The roads are devious, while the future is promising”, is the precipitation and transformation of this kind of optimistic spirit.

Chinese classic tragedies always have a happy ending. Though characterized by a utopian daydream, they nevertheless express people's yearning and pursuit of beautiful endings, and hold an optimistic attitude fast to meet with tragedy.

The optimism of the Chinese nation gives birth to an open mind. It appeared as an all-inclusive cultural value. Chinese culture has always connected and mingled with foreign cultures in history. Not only does it influence foreign cultures with its internal characteristics, but it also absorbs and integrates.

In the process of Buddhism's spread towards eastern China, Chinese culture and foreign cultures were living in peace. When they got conflicts, they would be intermingled in the end, and helped each other and developed together.

Islam and Christianity had a similar experience in China. People were familiar with the reconciliation between different components within Chinese culture. Confucianism and Mohism were closely related, and Confucian and Legalism were flowing together, Confucian and Taoism supplemented each other, and Confucianism and Buddhism absorbed the main ideas from each other. Finally, they were merged into one. These examples, throughout the theoretical refining, were expressed as the principle that: “all living creatures grow together without harming one another, just as roads run in parallel without interfering with one another”.

As for the social political life, it advocated that “the differences can supplement each other”, “harmony in diversity”, drew on the wisdom of the masses and chose the right to follow. As for the cultural aspects, “there are thousands of thoughts in the world but they are sourced from the same point, or arrive at the same end by different means or roads”, people should be fully inclusive and equitable, and different things go opposite and yet they are complementary to each other.

This spirit lends Chinese culture a strong ability to adapt and remodel, and gives Chinese people a broad mind and great tolerance, so that Chinese culture might adapt and regenerate. However, there are some negative aspects to this spirit. Concepts like “happiness consists in contentment,” “do not feel the disgrace when being affronted,” “satisfied with poverty and living happily” have permeated throughout the whole society, and lead to a conservative mindset. People would get satisfied with what has been achieved, and made no move towards progress. Chinese people are unaware of crisis when they meet with hidden danger.

Meanwhile, this kind of thought contributes to the compromising mind of Chinese people, preventing prompt action, even though this might mean missing opportunity for the breaking of deadlocks and the progress towards reform.

8. Controlling desire through morality

Another aspect of Chinese culture's basic spirit is controlling desire through morality.
When Chinese society stepped into the civilized world, there was a strong rational spirit permeating the whole process. In Chinese culture, people are rational and moral, but they are not creatures in the biological sense. Everyone has a sense of honesty and honor, and it is the basic content of the subjective mind. The main object of understanding philosophy is the ethic norm. The “extreme kindness” is the highest realm of morality, and it is also the ultimate political dream. Therefore, the satisfaction of an individual’s emotion and desires should meet the social and rational requirement.

Confucianism advocated that one be, “expressive of enjoyment without being licentious, and of grief without being hurtfully excessive,” “hence the superior man returns to the (good) affections (proper to his nature) in order to bring his will into harmony with them” and “a relationship starts with affection, but ends up with morality”.

Taoism considered the satisfaction of the emotion and desire of individuals as detrimental to life and body. Generally speaking, Chinese culture not only opposes the asceticism that denies the emotion and satisfaction of desire, but also the emotion and satisfaction that is expressed by carnalism.52

Another expression of the ancient rational spirit is stressing the conformity between individuals and groups and society. On one hand, it fully recognizes the existence of individuals’ sensations and the important values of development. On the other, it strongly advocates that existence and development of individual rational life should be connected with others as well as the existence and development of the whole society. The two aspects should stay in a harmonious relationship and should not split. The great scholar Zhang Zai in the Song dynasty’s Xi Ming expressed this Confucian thought. Xi Ming treated the whole world as one, and advocated that, “all the people are my compatriots and we should share everything with them,” and “the reason why we respect the elders is to respects all the elders among our compatriots; take care of the helpless and poor people is to protect all the helpless poor people...all the people in the world are my brothers that suffer from the hardship and have nobody to vent their grievances, including the old, disabled, lonely people, or the widowers and widows”.

This thought was the same as the Confucian, “in regard to the aged, to give them rest; in regard to friends, to show them sincerity; in regard to the young, to treat them tenderly”. All express the unity of individuals’ life and with society.

While Taoism once pointed criticism on the falsity of virtue and morality, and on limiting individuals’ personalities advocated by Confucianism, they preferred to stress the existence of individuals and the free development, but did not oppose the spirit of kindheartedness. Lao Tzu advocated “a great man never accumulate the wealth, the more he contributes to the public, the more satisfied he would feel, the more he give to others, the richer he will be”. Zhuang Zi’s school not only praised the spirit that people help each other in hardship like “when the springs (supplying the pools) are dried up, the fishes huddle together on the dry land. Than that they should moisten one another there by their gasping, and keep one another...
wet by their milt,” but also eagerly expected people to break away from all sufferings, and live freely like fishes in the river without any troubles.

Mohism’s “universal love” had an ascetic aspect, and also encouraged people to devote themselves to the world and their country. Legalism put satisfaction of personal desire in the first place, but also connected this kind of satisfaction with the contribution that the individuals made for others and their country. Of course, understanding the unity of individuals and society is lower than Confucianism and Mohism, and their influence in Chinese history cannot be compared with the other two trajectories.

In addition, as mentioned above, the sense of responsibility to country and people aligned with the thought, “be the first to worry about the troubles across the land,” and “everyone is responsible for his country,” emphasizing the whole situation and interpersonal relationships.

Evidently, the thought that the satisfaction of individuals’ emotion and desire should meet the sense of society, and the thought of the unity of individuals and the society, are all the specific expression of the thought of controlling desire by morality.

In traditional Chinese culture, regardless of theoretical schools and family background, as the interests of their lives were limited by the ethical and political culture, they all pursue the control of morality. Though people in different times and different positions pursue different connotations of morality, they can all be abstracted as the moral and rational spirit, and become the guideline for action. “Morality” should be the principle of people’s emotion and desire. Emotion does not go against morality, and desire should not exceed morality. This has become the common life attitude.

The formation of this spirit plays a positive role for the Chinese nation, since it emphasizes reasoning, pays attention to moral integrity, and objects to carnalism and naturalism. It also plays an active role in the formation of the typical national spirit and social harmony.

However, in the feudal rulers’ hands, this spirit has become a tool to suppress people's normal satisfaction of desire and normal personalities. Neo-Confucian theory in the Song dynasty’s “people should keep the natural law and exterminate the human desire” is one of the typical examples, and should be criticized and abandoned.
Types and Characteristics of Chinese Culture

I. The culture of ethical politics that seeks good governance

The so-called Chinese culture type in fact consists in the specific cultural patterns that set the Chinese nation apart from other social groups. The so-called national culture is the sort of culture that has been formed after a long cumulative history and that has involved the participation of the common affairs of the group. Each nation can be characterized culturally by intrinsic and extrinsic qualities. This is so-called cultural nationalism.

From the extensiveness of deep cultural structure and function, this cultural nationalism mainly refers to the unique ethos of its people, such as the way of thinking, value systems, and emotional psychology. The characteristics of the material and institutional culture can, to be sure, broadly reflect cultural nationalism.

Nevertheless, it does not seem as typical, concentrated and profound when compared to spiritual qualities. According to the viewpoints of cultural sociologists, the longer a cultural institution that a nation participates in and enjoys, the more profoundly this culture will be accepted by society, and the more vehement the traditional spirit of the national culture becomes, hence the stronger national character.

Patterns of culture refer to the essential qualities of a particular social group that has historically formed, such as shared values, ways of thinking, mental state, spiritual outlook, and more. According to this understanding, through the investigation of the traditional value orientation, ideal personality, social psychology, ways of thinking and other aspects, we can deduce the most general feature throughout ancient Chinese cultural history, which has the farthest reaching influence on the development of the essential characteristics of the nation. Namely, the seeking of goodness and being keen on governance. Therefore, the pattern of
Chinese culture can be summed up as an ethical and political type. This can be analyzed from the following aspects.

First, seen from the nature of society, ancient Chinese society was patriarchal agrarian. As Chinese society entered on the threshold of civilization, social change was not thorough. Society took a reform path, so that clan kinship, and the mentality of blood relations it determined, continued to exist and was made use of by the ruler, strengthening this force, which eventually became a bond with families functioning as the basic structure of society as a whole, and the basis of psychological communication and emotional identity between people.

The formation of the clan system and the popularity of the patriarchal idea gave birth to a whole set of behavioral norms. On this social norm, generalized as the code of conduct in society, the king should be wise, officials loyal, parents kind and sons and daughters filial, and brothers kind to one other. Correspondingly, each individual person must be considerate to others and be self-restrained, courteous and respectful, and behave like a gentleman at all times. He should also break himself away from the external fetters of fame and wealth with the aid of the internal power of self-cultivation. Therefore, in the soil of patriarchal society, with natural economy as its basis, there bloomed the flower of morality and ethics.

Second, the main content of Chinese culture and Chinese philosophy (with Chinese culture as its core) are both subject to political governance, seeking goodness as its purpose. Confucianism emphasizes “I daily examine myself on three points”, “I am conscious of sincerity on self-examination”, “getting rid of human desires and restoring the justice of the heavens”. Needless to say, the Confucians would take as their guidance of life the cultivation of the moral self, regulation of the family, right maintenance of the state the peace of the world and make all peaceful, and they would also consider the self-improvement of their morality as the top priority of their life value.

Taoism pursues the restoration of human nature, not the load of material life. It launched fierce criticism upon the Confucian doctrines, which, after all, aimed to maintain their own morality. The hermits of future generations like Tao Yuanming who would not bow to a superior just to get scanty pay would not be reconciled to the rise and fall of the earthly world, and they would rather maintain purity of soul and keep their integrity.

Mohists were chivalrous, fearless and warmhearted, always ready to help the poor and those in trouble, in order to implement their moral doctrine of being impartially benevolent to everyone. This school of thought maintained that interest is righteousness, which is diametrically different from the Confucian doctrine of valuing profit over justice, and thus expressing their own philosophy of values. Such values were closely associated with the moral ideal of universal harmony of the small producers.

Buddhism urged its believers to develop an instinctual inherent intuition and a charitable virtue, so naturally people in the moral ideal state would move toward the goal of a good man.
Legalism was a big advocate of utilitarianism, which maintained the value principle that masters sell the official post and the officials sell their strengths and efforts. This principle is in fact an ethical convention of constraining the heart of the people.

The emergence of Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasties resulted from the unifying the religious thought of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. However, in the course of this unity, Confucianism not only absorbed the speculative spirit of Buddhism and Taoism, and enriched and strengthened its own ontology; more importantly, this combination happens to demonstrate the importance and necessity of the morality of the people on an ontological level.

“The Three Principles and Eight Terms” was universally practiced, and the doctrine of “maintaining the heavenly truth and exterminating the human desire” became a sacred and absolute theory, which is precisely a powerful ontological supplement to the moral ideals previously advocated by Confucianism from the perspective of epistemology.

What is particularly worth examination is that, the core of the philosophy of ancient Chinese culture, its emergence, thinking trends and objectives, its content and mode of thinking are invariably linked with the overall objective of good governance.

The basic pattern of Chinese philosophy was formed in the Spring and Autumn Period. During the entire period of the following 2000-year-long feudal society, the overall framework of the pre-Qin philosophy was not broken, despite the division and unity, the rise and fall of the different schools of Chinese philosophy and no matter how much content was appended, deleted and evolved. Therefore, Chinese philosophy in the Qin dynasty can be seen as a model when we analyze the characteristics of Chinese philosophy.

As far as the cause of its emergence is concerned, Chinese philosophy was subject to political and ethical needs.

The ancient Chinese philosopher was mostly social activist, political commentator, and ethicist. Confucius’ life was centered on renewing the ceremonial rites and regulations of the Zhou dynasty. He was rushing about in distress in Chen and Cai States, lobbying in different countries, just in order to have his theory of benevolence spread and practiced. His ideas of benevolence, whose societal foundation was based on human affection and ethics, and closely tied to the ritual ceremonies, reflected the inherent logic between politics and morality. “Man of benevolence and lofty ideals should not, at the expense of benevolence, cling cravenly to life instead of braving death. He will, on the contrary, lay down his life for the accomplishment of benevolence” which is a typical demonstration of the unification of morality and politics.

Reflected in epistemology, such thoughts as “One should be aware of what he knows and what he does not know.”, “There were four things from which the Master was entirely free. He had no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary predeterminations, no obstinacy, no egoism,” and “Those who are born with the possession of knowledge are the highest class of men....” and so on are all expounded and reflected through political ideals and moral principles. As for the
nurture of the five virtues, such as modesty, tolerance, credibility, earnestness, and wisdom, and the promotion of such ethical principles as filial, piety, fidelity and forgiveness were inseparable from political need and reality.\(^{55}\)

Mohists advocated universal love, exalted unity, took profits as righteousness wherein justice and profit were regarded as equally important. They took as their own responsibility condemning offensive warfare, practicing moderation, and eliminating the three causes of people’s sufferings. They scorned the Confucian doctrine of humanity and justice, but established their own system of doctrines in its place. The connotations of the two systems are different, but both served the need of their political ideals and of the promotion of their moral tenets. Therefore, there is no essential or fundamental difference between them. In terms of epistemology, Mozi took the conduct of the sage kings as their criteria of making a statement, which apparently had strong political overtones. Another speech criterion of profiting the people is obviously linked to the ethical feelings of universal love.

Taoism “abandons righteousness and benevolence”, which seemingly disdained morality, but actually adopted the paradoxical linguistic in the negative way\(^{56}\), to express their moral norms and voice their own political ideals. They criticized the hypocrisy of Confucian morality, believing that the robbers would not cease to exist until the sages have died, regarding such Confucian conceptions as benevolence, righteousness and propriety as a product of moral bankruptcy.

It seems that to Laozi the person with the greatest morality and virtue would not pursue virtue outside nature and thus retain their virtue (Those who possessed in highest degree the attributes did not seek to show them, and therefore they possessed them in fullest measure), and the Taoists believed that something would be achieved if it was left undone. Therefore, noninterference, no desire, and non-contention became the basic moral tenets of Taoism. From this perspective, Taoism attaches great importance to accumulating virtues and cultivating oneself through religious doctrines. He said, “With that repeated accumulation of those virtues, there comes the subjugation (of every obstacle to such return). Of this subjugation we know not what shall be the limit; and when one knows not what the limit shall be, he may be the ruler of a state. He who possesses the mother of the state may continue long. His case is like that (of the plant) of which we say that its roots are deep and its flower stalks firm: – this is the way to secure that its enduring life shall long be seen.” Thus, morality became the tool of world governance. Morals and politics thus stay in harmony. Confucianism and Taoism are indeed quite contrary.

From this, we can see that Chinese philosophy is subject to moral and political forces. Serving the needs of politics and stressing morality are the distinctive features of Chinese philosophy.

Sima Qian, the great historian in the Han dynasty took it as his duty to “study the occasion of Heaven, through the past to present”. It was the pursuit of their life for philosophers in the Song dynasty “to ordain conscience for Heaven and Earth, to secure life and fortune for the people, to continue lost teachings of past sages, and to establish peace for all future generations”.
The geographic environment and economic structure of ancient Chinese society also determined ancient Chinese culture, which was bound to become the type of culture that sought good governance. From the perspective of geographical environment, Chinese culture was born and matured on the East Asian continent, isolated from the external world. Many scholars have already pointed out that ancient Chinese culture was a kind of “continental culture”.

Chinese ancestors lived in the East Asian continent; to its east was the vast Pacific Ocean, on its northwest was the long stretches of the Gobi, and on its southwest stood the Tibetan Plateau. This was a geographical situation wherein one side faced the sea, and the other three sides presented obstacles and difficulties to land transport, creating greater leeway inside its vast territory, while remaining relatively isolated from the outside world. The mountainous environment caused difficulties for traffic, resulting in a mutually closed and self-sufficient economy, creating favorable conditions to the feudal separatist forces. Just as some commentators pointed out, ancient Chinese culture obtained a special comprehensive “isolation mechanism” from its semi-enclosed continental geographical environment, which is exactly the prerequisite for the continuation of an independent ancient cultural system. Therefore, from the Qin and Han dynasties to the Sui and Tang dynasties, the ancient Chinese cultural system maintained its own style even though the Central Plains culture of China had in-depth communications with the grassland culture of Central and West Asia as well as the Buddhist culture of the subcontinent. Unlike Indian culture which was invaded and destroyed by the Aryans, Egyptian culture which was assimilated with the Greek because of the Hellenistic occupation of Alexander the Great, and Roman culture which was “interrupted” by the German invasion from the south.57

Owing to China’s special geographical environment, its unique political and economic structures and the self-sufficient mentality of the Confucian culture, Chinese people had for a long period in history seen theirs as the main body or the center of the world. It always had “the imperial state” mentality, disdaining surrounding foreign lands and ethnic peoples. Therefore, the rulers in all the dynasties were not committed to building friendship with neighboring countries, but to rectifying the internal order and winning the hearts of their people.

The special Chinese economic social and political structure also gave birth to despotism as the core structure and concept of imperial authority. Therefore, to consolidate and strengthen the monarchy and the royal supremacy became the fundamental issue on which the feudal emperors of all generations exerted strength and wisdom.

Along with this, on the one hand, there were numerous times in the history of China in which the emperor’s wife’s family, eunuchs and local separatist forces coveted the throne or rebelled against the imperial power. On the other hand, there had also been countless instances of resistance, the peasant uprising of the masses concentrated manifestations of revolt against the autocratic monarchy. The secluded geographical environment and the closed vision, together with a scattered peasant economy, provided this struggle with broad room for maneuver.
Just because of this, the periodic circulation between good governance and troubled times of ancient Chinese society became a commonplace phenomenon. As the opening passage of the Chinese classic novel of *The Romance of Three Kingdoms* put it, “The general trend under Heaven is that there is bound to be unification after prolonged division and division after prolonged unification.” Perhaps this might not be under the guidance of a theory of rational generalization, but it came instead from a perceptual experience drawn from historical fact. Precisely because of this, the feudal rulers on the one hand took advantage of the state power to suppress the destroyers of the ruling order to seek governance amid chaos and on the other, they made use of the power of ideology to impose feudal ethics in order to enlighten their subjects to abandon evil and promote good.

These various aspects are mutually connected, resulting in strong social utility and psychological effect, leading ancient Chinese culture to become a kind of ethical and political culture that sought good governance. This type of political and ethical culture was characterized by the coexistence of the good and the bad which played different roles in orientating different people’s life.

**II. Characteristics of the studies of ancient Chinese culture**

The pattern of Chinese culture is closely associated with its characteristics. The pattern of culture determines the cultural characteristics, which in turn embody the type of culture. Meanwhile, as the core of Chinese traditional culture, the characteristics of Chinese philosophy are, in fact, the manifestation of cultural characteristics. However, as Chinese culture and Chinese philosophy are not the same in extension, Chinese culture may contain Chinese philosophy, while Chinese philosophy cannot fully generalize Chinese culture. Therefore, the characteristics of Chinese philosophy cannot represent the characteristics of the entire Chinese culture.

Examined from a global perspective some basic features of Chinese culture, functioning throughout history and covering all aspects, can be broadly summarized.

**(A) Humanism**

At the core of the established value system and the evolution of the basic spirit and main content of Chinese culture, was clarifying the objectives and meaning of human life significance, putting them into practice, and dedicating them to moral cultivation. Therefore, we can say that the inner spirit of the cultural value system is based on the contemplation of people’s life and their mind.

Chinese culture based upon the contemplation of the life and mind of its people is primarily characterized by humanism.
Even though overseas Chinese scholars from Hong Kong and Taiwan, and the scholars from mainland China differ in specific value judgments, they all agree that Chinese culture has transcended religious feelings and functions. In other words, in Chinese culture, theism does not always play a dominant role. On the contrary, humanism became China's basic style.

In Chinese culture, people are at the center of the universe. People should “assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth”, and they may form a triad with Heaven and Earth. They should examine everything in the universe, and discern the workings of the things in the world. They should both “inquire up in Heaven about the logos of the universe”, “test its validity down on the earth”, and more importantly, “put it under scrutiny among the people in the world”. People have become a constant measurement of everything in the universe.

The traditional thought of the harmonious union between man and nature emphasizes reasonable unity. On the one hand, to attribute the human behavior to Heaven's destiny helps to obtain an external theoretical framework. On the other, people often regard human ethics and emotions as the consequence of “Heaven's Law” and render it personified, an embodied object and external manifestation of consciousness. Heaven has thus become the embodiment of reasoning and morality.

The feudal emperors claimed that they “follow the providence of Heaven when issuing imperial edicts” while the uprising peasants said that they “enforce justice on behalf of Heaven”. In both cases the thinking patterns and the psychological framework were essentially the same, differing only in their manifestation. It was, after all, people “following providence” and “enforcing justice”. “Heaven” became a means of achieving the moral ideal, not an end.

Even theological thinkers like Dong Zhongshu, who advocated a theory of interaction between Heaven and mankind, claimed that humankind should adapt to the laws of Heaven, and that human activities were subject to the logos of heaven. Yet at the same time, he said that Heaven should also adapt to the life of the human, and that the law of Heaven is embodied in humans themselves. Heaven is not another world that exerts external forces opposite and alien to the human, but resides in the physical world perceptible by human body and mind.

In this way “Heaven” was restored to human beings, and “the laws of Heaven” become a projection of human activities. Theocratic imperial power was nothing but another expression of imperial power in reality. Moreover, Dong Zhongshu attributed human feelings such as joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure to the changes of nature, interpreting Heaven's law by means of human ethics in order to achieve harmony between the nature and man. In this sense, Dong Zhongshu's theory of the unity of man and nature was essentially a reflection of this humanist ideology, although it did take the hue of theological teleology. As such Dong Zhongshu's effort to launch a god-creating campaign were ultimately unsuccessful. One of the important reasons resides in its internal conflict: god was created, but also had to serve the people.

Chinese culture, with Confucianism and Taoism as the main sources of its thought, is an ethics-based culture. Both Confucianism and Taoism considered
moral practice as the utmost priority. While the Confucian ideas sought to be sincere, rectify the heart, investigate things in the world, extend knowledge, self-cultivate the people, regulate families, manage the state, illustrate virtue, renovate the people, and to rest in the highest excellence, Taoists advocated self-cultivation and doing good deeds. Buddhism advocated punishing evil and promoting good. The Neo-Confucian doctrine of “maintaining the heavenly truth and exterminating human desire” took it as its ultimate purpose to fulfill moral ideals.

It is even invariably the case for the Chinese literary and painting theory. In ancient China, paintings were required to play a role in ideological and moral education, as was put in the sayings that the evil in the world should be revealed in paintings in order to warn people, and the good should be illustrated to their descendants, and in the saying that the paintings should help the people be aware of the ups and downs in history. It was also said that that it was the drawings that preserved goodness, meaning that paintings had the function of guiding life and cautioning behavior. Such sayings and writings ran throughout classical literary theory. They indicate the humanistic characteristics of Chinese culture, or as some scholars said: “ethical humanism”.

Another manifestation of “ethical humanism” is that Chinese culture always examines people in some kind of relation. The emperor and the ministers in political relationship, the father and son, the husband and wife and brothers in the family relationship constitute the so-called “five relationships”, i.e., the five kinds of ethics relationship. Each of these five relationships has its particular moral code of conduct. For instance, the emperors should be upright and the ministers should be loyal, the husband is respectable and the wife is obedient, and the brothers should be friendly with each other. Everyone is in the five cardinal relationship networks, and at the same time they are in the patriarchal political network of relationships where the state and family was integrated as an entity. Therefore, there was a set code of ethics corresponding to the relationships. Everyone in society should follow these codes, playing certain roles and fulfilling certain obligations. These relationships were interrelated and mutually restraining, in order to maintain the functioning of society and realize the individual’s value. The moral humanism of Chinese culture raised moral practice to an unrivaled position, and therefore, has enriched the moral and ethical aspects of Chinese people's life.

However, more importantly, it also confined people's vision to socio-historical aspects, and even to moral aspects, preventing people from undertaking scientific research. Traditional Chinese society contemptuously called the artifacts and utensils of manufacturing insignificant skills, while the study of human life and their body and mind as an “avenue” deserving lifelong pursuit.

(B) Valuing Logos more than craftsmanship

Moral humanism, based on the contemplation of the life and mind of people, is primarily characterized by valuing logos more than craftsmanship. This was
manifested in its contemplation on the relationships between justice and benefit, society and nature, name and body, subject and object, and other issues.

Regarding the relationship between justice and benefit, it was maintained that justice should be valued more than profit, or the former should be achieved at the sacrifice of the latter. In the cases where life and justice were irreconcilable, life should be discarded to achieve righteousness. When logos was in conflict with one's honor, the latter could be sacrificed to elucidate the former. We will not elaborate on this issue since it will no doubt be familiar.

In terms of the relationship between society and nature, society was valued more than nature. Owing to the life principles that were based on ethics and the morality oriented value system, people's thinking and practice were confined to the socio-historical areas. All the pre-Qin schools of learning “arose to rescue China from its maladies at the time”. Turbulent social conditions, and a deep sense of crisis further intensified thinkers’ mindset of valuing individual moral cultivation, and showing their social concerns.

In the Han dynasty, the role of ethical and humanistic Confucianism as the guiding thought was reestablished, the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues being the standard norms of people’s speech behavior. The struggle for power and mutual strife within the ruling class, together with the people's rebellion, primarily in the form of the peasant uprising, forced the rulers and thinkers to consider the relationship between Heaven and man as well as the changes in history, so that the socio-historical issues like the rise and fall, good government and chaotic turbulence became popular concerns among the court officials and common people.

All the thinking activities and outcomes were invariably intended to form good customs, and to help cultivate the people and develop harmonious human relations. They had no other purposes but to provide historical mirrors for the rulers. Filial piety, which was both the appeal for, and the standard of officialdom was open to the intellectuals which, in turn, became the driving force for them to take an official career and to administer the state.

As regard for the relationship between fame and body, Chinese culture valued fame more than the body. Because moral judgments became the guiding principle for people to understand and evaluate everything, people were dedicated to the recognition and pursuit of the good, deriving the greatest satisfaction from famed perfection. As was summarized by the Neo-Confucian philosophers in the Song dynasty and universally accepted, “starving is merely a small matter, but being disloyal is something big”, which is a typical cultural mentality on the relationship between fame and body.

As far as the relationship between subject and object is concerned, greater importance was placed on the cultivation of the subject's morality than on exploration and transformation of the object. Such sayings as “reflecting and trying to find fault in oneself” and “becoming sincere after self-examination” became prevalent in Chinese feudal society. The reason why moral cultivation became something with great significance in one’s life did not only reside in the patriarchal
social structures, but also in the traditional culture with Confucianism as the main body, which set up individuals in a certain relationship to others. And according to traditional Chinese ideas of the golden mean, individuals in society constitute certain network relationships and social groups which cannot be destroyed. The harmony and stability of the network can only be maintained by each individual's restraint and comity. Therefore, people will inevitably pursue their own inner world, trying to transcend narrow personal interests through the realization of the good. In other words, they attempted to achieve the goals and values of their life through self-transcendence. Following such logic, the wings of people's thinking can spread naturally in the realm of individual moral cultivation, but can never fly freely in the natural world. This is why the study of ethics was very sophisticated and rich in Chinese feudal society, and natural philosophy was relatively poor.

Valuing theoretic knowledge while despising craftsmanship, after all, is valuing the spirit more than the material, valuing argumentation more than manufacturing. It enriched the inner spirit of the Chinese nation, stabilizing emotional psychology and developing self-adjustment. Moreover, it has a strong cohesion and astringent effect in terms of value identity and cultural psychology. All these played a fairly active role in the development and growth of Chinese culture.

On the other hand, valuing theoretical thought while despising craftsmanship has serious drawbacks. It makes people despise nature, abandon and hold skills in contempt, hindering the development of science and technology. This was especially the case when Chinese society stepped into the modern world. The idea of valuing theory more than craftsmanship became one of the ideological reasons for the policy of seclusion, and being beaten by other countries. Today, our country is building a modern country, and we should abandon the old concept of valuing theoretical thought more than craftsmanship, based on the mode of production of the natural economy, and value both theoretical thought and craftsmanship, making them the two wings that will raise the development of modernization.

(C) Statecraft and cultivation

Chinese culture has a strong practical spirit, advocating pragmatism and abandoning illusion. Since “Tao” is not the externally imposed absolute spirit or extrinsic philosophy, but a kind of theoretical generalization from the actual relationship between ethics and social and political life, this channel has its own metaphysical reality and cultural soil.

The famous orthodox Confucian Han Yu in the Tang dynasty, stated in The Original Tao that the core “Tao” is righteousness. He believed that “fraternity of mankind is benevolence, practicing it aptly is righteousness, and Tao arises from them.” “Tao” has two aspects or features and functions: First, it can consolidate ethical feudal relations between “the emperor and officials, father and son, hosts and guests, elder and younger brothers, husband and wife” and maintain the feudal
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Hierarchical order. It seemed to Han Yu that in order to defend the hierarchical order of Tao, “The emperor should give orders, the officials should execute the orders among the people, and those people should be sentenced to death if they refuse to produce rice and food, manufacture tools and utensils, and exchange goods and treasures for the emperor...”

Another aspect of the function and content of Taoism required that the emperor should understand and sympathize with the people in his state, and give due considerations to the survival of the people, making “helpless widows and widowers, orphans and the lonely, as well as the sick and the disabled, well cared for”. Taoism is to serve the need of running the state, to assist the ruler and to become talented in statecraft. It can be said that such an argument for Taoism by Han Yu was very representative of Chinese intellectuals in feudal society.

Since Tao was considered feudal ethics and hierarchical order, it was also the governing technique. Therefore, the mastery of Tao was attainment of the highest state and ideals of sanctification for an individual's life accomplishment. So, even though the real path of life was strewn with thorns, people were still keen on government administration, attempting to realize their ambition of saving the world. Thus, the thought of statecraft characterized by government administration has become one of the most significant features of Chinese culture.

Confucius was the most influential thinker in history to advocate the thought of statecraft and enlightenment. He made this very clear in his statement that “though a man may be able to recite the three hundred odes, yet if, when assigned with a governmental charge, he knows not how to act, or if, when sent to any quarter on a mission, he cannot give his replies unassisted, notwithstanding the extent of his learning, of what practical use is it?” From this we can see how much Confucius stressed the practical utilization of theoretical knowledge and how much he saw the practical value of literature. In his famous saying “The Odes serve to stimulate the mind. They may be used for purposes of self-contemplation. They show how to regulate feelings of resentment.” Confucius emphasized the educational and instructive function of poems. He said “from the odes one learns the more immediate duty of serving his father, and the remoter duty of serving his prince”. He used “having no depraved thoughts” to summarize the political and ideological content of “Three Hundred Poems”, and required that people should “start from love but be restricted within the moral standards” when they had desire for somebody or something, which also embodies his thought on statecraft and enlightenment.

Xu Zi required that people “follow the examples of the emperors and sages when they give speech or make commentary”. He believed that “the essence of running a state is the Way. When the mind conforms to the Way, explanations conform to the mind, propositions conform to explanations” He also believed that ritual ceremony is as important as the law and both should be advocated and promoted. These were exactly the embodiment of the thought of statecraft. And in his famous essay “On Encouraging Learning”, he gave a full expression of the enlightenment function of learning.
Ever since Confucius and Xunzi, the thinkers in the succeeding generations all advocated the statecraft and enlightenment function of learning. The *Theory of Three Classes of Human Nature* by Dong Zhongshu, the discrimination between “nature of things” and “the nature of temperament” by neo-Confucianism, the thought on the opposition between heavenly principle and human desires; all these theories were intended to provide theoretical basis for the ruling class to educate and cultivate people and provide argument for the lower-class people to be cultivated. It seemed to the orthodox Confucian view that the enlightenment process itself is a process of governance and statecraft. Statecraft and enlightenment were mutually conditional and facilitating, and they both played a role in maintaining feudal governance.

Theories of ancient Chinese paintings also reflected the feature that Chinese culture emphasized on the function of education. *The Disguising Portrayal of Hell* by Wu Daozi, the famous Tang painter, was praised by people in later generations as having the effect of “orientating people towards good virtues and refraining from evil”. He thus exclaimed: “who says that painting is nothing but a trivial skill?” And “the emperors, high-rank officials, learned scholars are painted invariably because of their accomplishments... and the people today can learn the classical system of rites and music from them”.

Mi Fu, painter and calligrapher in the Northern Song dynasty also said: “The ancient drawings were invariably for the purpose of exhortation”. Song Lian in the Ming dynasty gave a historical description of the content of the paintings and revealed the role of statecraft and enlightenment paintings. He said: “The painters in the ancient times invariably preferred to adopt the classical works as content of their paintings, such as *The Book of Songs*, *The Book of Filial Piety*, or *Analects of Confucius* and *Spring and Autumn Annals*, or *The Book of Changes*. Even in the following dynasties like Han, Wei, Jin and Liang, there were paintings from such classical works as *On Learning*, *Inquiry about Rites*, and *The Benevolence and Wisdom of Women*, so that both the history and the paintings were passed down to later generations. These paintings have contributed to spreading the ethical teachings, so they deserve being viewed”. It can thus be seen that ancient Chinese paintings were not only pure artistic works, but they were a media for transmitting ethical theories on human relations as well.

The system of academy of classical learning that was unique to China combined education and discipline. It could reflect the feature of statecraft and enlightenment of Chinese culture. Zhu Xi, Master of neo-Confucianism drafted “The Rules of White Deer Grotto Academy” which were followed for the next 700 years, a good illustration of this educational purpose. The school rules were very concise in style and content:

Between father and son there should be affection; between sovereign and minister righteousness; between husband and wife attention to their separate duties; and between old and young respect; and between friends fidelity.

These are the instructions regarding the five relations. And the observing of them was also enforced by Yao and Shun, who appointed Su to be the minister of
instruction and to teach carefully the relations of humanity. Scholars should learn about it. The students should learn them in the following regular order.

   Study them extensively, inquire about them accurately, reflect upon them carefully, discriminate clearly, and practice earnestly.

   Such is the order of learning: study, inquire, reflect, and discriminate thoroughly by examining the principles. In regard to the cultivation of moral conduct, the most important thoughts are as follows:

   Let the words be sincere and truthful, the actions honorable and careful, the anger restrained, and the lust chastened. Reform and be good.

   Above is the fundamental of self-cultivation.

   In regard to the managing of business affairs two things are necessary, the action must be orderly without scheming to gain profit, and the doctrine must be thoroughly understood without counting too much the toil in getting the mastery of it.

   Above is the fundamental of managing business.

   In regard to making acquaintance with others, the important part to be remembered is: not to do to others as you would not wish others to do to you; and when you do not realize what you need, then turn inward and examine yourselves in every point.

   Above are the fundamentals of making acquaintance.

   Needless to say, we can understand the feature and characteristics of “The Rules of White Deer Grotto Academy” which had a deep and broad influence.

   As to the ideal of “internal saints and external kings” that Confucians advocated and pursued, it was merely another form of statecraft and pragmatism. The Confucian ideology of statecraft and practical application shaped the politics, economy, and culture of feudal China as well as the inner spirit of national character. The persistent consciousness of hardship characteristic of Chinese people towards the nation (such as the saying “Everyone is responsible for the rise and fall of his country”), and their relentless faith in self-cultivation were both the manifestation of the ideal of inner saint and outer king.

   It is noteworthy that, after its historical development, the statecraft ideology has been transformed into a universal social psychology. Chinese intellectuals generally embrace the ambition of statecraft. If they had great aspirations, they would “plan and worry ahead of the people, and enjoy the fruits after the people”, and put the interests of the country above their personal benefits. On the other hand, if these intellectuals had their own selfish desires, they would be bent on personal gain and take pleasure in coveting for higher officialdom. In either case, Chinese intellectuals had a strong political desire for being a high-rank official. This officialdom mentality has become a kind of mindset among the Chinese people. It seemed to them that only a political office, especially that of high official, could help them to realize their ambitions and the value of life. This situation has had profound impact until today. Although Sun Yat-sen once exhorted the students: “Students should be aspiring to do great things, not to be high-ranking official” it yet seems that these remarks came to no avail.
(D) Worship the past and respect the old

Chinese culture has a significant feature of exalting the past and respecting the old. Due to the fact that Chinese society is patriarchal, patriarchal ethics inevitably require people to worship the ancients, which gives rise to social mentality and value principles entailing that elderly seniors should be respected and their instructions followed.

Traditional Chinese society was agricultural, and this production mode requires experience to acquire. In general, in the traditional agricultural society, the accumulation of experience was in parallel with the growth of age, so the status and value of the elderly was particularly important. In fact, just as Confucius recalled his own life path “at thirty, I stood firm. At forty, I had no doubts. At fifty, I knew the decrees of Heaven. At sixty, my ear was an obedient organ for the reception of truth. At seventy, I could follow what my heart desired, without transgressing what was right.”

This was an experiential attitude that highlighted the relevance of mastering common sense with the growth of age and the accumulation of experience. Meanwhile, from the textual clue, we can see this was apparently Confucius’ understanding of life in his later years, reflecting the mentality of the elderly. However, it is thought-provoking that such an experience-based mentality of the elderly was recognized and even favored by wider society.

As traditional Chinese society was a patriarchal one, its fundamental spirit was to show filial respect to the elderly. The words and deeds of the elderly served as a model for the whole society to follow. Therefore, if one advocates that “one should not blindly follow old conventions set by the ancestors”, as Wang Anshi did in the Song dynasty, it would be considered as great disrespect to one's seniors and would therefore not be tolerated. The thought of worshiping the past has further enhanced the status and values of the elderly. The prevalence of the ethical and political principle of “avoid mentioning the names of those respected as well as those seniors” in feudal society shows that the elderly were regarded as equal to the respected. From this we see the importance of the elderly. Scholars at home and overseas have pointed out that in a secluded agricultural society, the elderly dominated society, and the world was ruled by the elderly. The old proverb “despise not the discourse of them that are ancient and wise”, and the idiom of “a great talent takes time to mature.” both highlight the value of the elderly and derogated from different perspectives the creativity of youth. The so-called “late bloomer” sometimes becomes a self-consolation when they encounter adversity in their careers, or a self-eroding agent that hinders creativity.

The cultural features of worshiping ancients and respecting seniors played a positive role in the accumulation of social history and culture, and in the inheritance and development of tradition. However, it also permeates society with lifeless lethargy, affecting the young to play their due roles, making the whole society appear, aged and shrinking the national spirit. Therefore, we should transform such an ideology of worshiping the past and respecting the seniors. The past experiences,
of course, are worth learning, but they are not worth paying homage to or worship. The elderly should be respected and supported, but their power and knowledge should not be a monopoly. The world should not only be theirs.

(E) Combining governance and morality

Morality and politics were entangled and mutually inclusive, which is one of the characteristics of Chinese culture. Ethics served the needs of politics, and good governance required pure morals. Morality represents politics, which is, in turn, contained in politics. This is a common phenomenon in Chinese culture.

Traditional Chinese society was autocratic and based on the patriarchal clan system, with country and family closely tied to each other. Aided by the monarch, the patriarchal system went unobstructed, and the monarchical power was established by means of the patriarchal system. Thus political and ethical forces forged a close bond. Filial piety and loyalty to the emperor was the application of the principle of submissiveness at different levels. The moral conventions used to adjust the mutual relations within the family, when extended to the social sphere, became a political principle of maintaining the ruling order. In the early Han dynasty and the Wei dynasty, “Ruling the Country with Filial Piety” was a characteristic expression of combing ethical morality with political principles. Confucius categorized Ren (Benevolence) - a manifestation of “love” - to Li (Courtesy) which belonged to the political sphere, integrating Ren with Li and making them complementary to each other.

Ruling by rites has a moral flavor, and morality has political functions. That Mencius proposed commiserating governance based on a commiserating mind was an embodiment of the thinking pattern and value system wherein politics derived from morality. The so-called, “treat with the reverence due to age the elders in your own family, so that the elders in the families of others shall be similarly treated; treat with the kindness due to youth the young in your own family, so that the young in the families of others shall be similarly treated” was exactly a means of emotional adjustment and interpersonal communication through one’s own feelings to others, and ultimately attained to the political effect that “the kingdom may be made to go round in your palm” Mencius’ doctrine of benevolent government through “compelling submission by kindness” was, in essence, to truly implement the Confucian vision of integrating monarch and patriarch. Dong Zhongshu in the Han dynasty advocated ruling the country by virtue and implementing the policy of “Morality first and penalty second”, in order to establish the political order of the three cardinal guides: ruler guides subject, father guides son husband guides wife. The Neo-Confucian doctrine of honoring reverence and sincerity and cherishing Heaven’s law was, after all, intended to maintain the eternal stability of the feudal order.
The three cardinal guides in the feudal society were both political principles and ethical norms which broke down the barrier between the royal power and the power of the patriarchal clan, typically reflecting the isomorphic features between nation and family clan.

The integration of morality with politics made the tyrannical ruling of feudal China appear tender, with a sense of human kindness, even though the ruling was essentially cruel and heartless. This feature enhanced the humanistic flavor of Chinese culture that was based on ethical relations, while also strengthening the rule of the autocratic monarchy.

**Valuing conformity and collaboration**

Another feature of Chinese culture is that it lays stress on the maintenance of the interests of groups or institutions, promoting collaboration between individuals to achieve social harmony.

Chinese feudal society was characterized by unified and autocratic rule, requiring harmonious interpersonal relationships and political order. The Confucian idea of cherishing the mean and maintaining harmony met the needs of the patriarchal politics and became the bridge of ethical affections between people. Confucius said: “In practicing the rules of propriety, a natural harmony is to be prized”. Mencius said: “Opportunities of time vouchsafed by Heaven are not equal to advantages of the situation afforded by the Earth, and advantages of situations afforded by the Earth are not equal to the union arising from the accord of Men”. The *Book of Rites* also claimed: “harmony is the universal path which we should all pursue”.

The Confucian principle of benevolence and loyalty extends individual feelings to others. Its cultivation of personality is intended to correct oneself and others, and to lead oneself and things to accomplishment. Its ideal realm consists in internal saints and external kings. Its human-oriented concept is to love all creatures. Its feeling is that all under Heaven is one family. All these are rooted and expressed in just one word: “harmony”.

To achieve the purpose of harmony, there should be identification of value orientations, ways of thinking, personality pursuits, ethical conceptions and other aspects, which require people to have shared morality and spirit. In fact, the laws and edicts issued by the autocratic monarchy and the ethical conventions they advocated representing the will of the feudal state, were all mandatory requirements for the purpose of unifying speech and behavior.

All schools of theories in traditional Chinese culture advocated and practiced the morality of collaboration. Confucianism advocated effective rule, educating the family and cultivating oneself. The Buddhists sought “Bodhi (supreme wisdom or enlightenment) from one’s own heart,” and said that “Buddha is just inside one’s inner nature and cannot be accessed externally”. Taoists advocated the conception of inaction, no desire and no dispute, as well as the social norms of loyalty to the
emperor, respect of the elderly, and being humble and courteous, which were recognized by secular society. These schools expressed their own norms of collaborations from different perspectives, and strove to transform them into collaborative acts. Anyone who violated the moral principle of collaboration would be regarded as violating all the heavenly laws of morality and filial love, would be treated as the chief culprit of destroying harmony, and would therefore be despised by the society.

Collaboration was a means of maintaining the harmony, stability, and conformity of people's behavior. It suppressed the individual mind and personal interest, to maintain the interests of the whole society; the inevitable demands and logical consequences of the agricultural and patriarchal society. It was also an expression of the thinking mode in the natural economy. From the perspective of historical process, collaborative ethics played a positive role in normalizing people's behavior, maintaining and strengthening a unified political situation, and enhancing solidarity and cohesion of national culture. This was particularly the case in the early and middle stages of feudal society.

However, due to its use by feudal rulers, because the ruling class were the expansion of the national will, morality became a synergistic, anti-competitive, anti-independence awareness tool. Today when the commodity economy is flourishing, we still need to give a full display of the role played by collaborative morality. But more importantly, we have to establish and enhance the competitive spirit, in order to enrich and transform the traditional collaborative morality and serve the needs of modernization.
It is the idealists that push history forward. Cultural tradition is the concentrated expression of the national spirit. We have discussed the culture for ten years until today, and the discussion of the relationship between ideologists and cultural tradition has a significant theoretical value and practical meaning for deepening culture research and the construction of new modern cultural systems.

I. Thinkers and connotations of cultural traditions

Thinker is not a politic concept, but a cultural concept in a wide and general sense. Unlike the politicians and militarists, the thinkers have an irreplaceable function in the formation of cultural traditions and construction of ethic spirit. However, what is thought-provoking is that there is no one who is willing to discuss the relationship between thinkers and cultural construction on the mainland during the past 40 years (including the cultural discussions of the 1980s) or in the academic circle across the Taiwan Strait for more than ten years. What is also noteworthy is that the well-known reference books on the mainland such as Cihai, Encyclopedia of China, The Encyclopedia Dictionary of Chinese Language published in Taiwan, only contain the entry of “thoughts” but no “thinkers”; we can perhaps see how scanty the research has been on this issue.

However, this does not mean that the Chinese nation only has “thoughts” but does not have “thinkers”. Indeed, the saying of “had Confucius not been born, the long Chinese history would have been in ages dark as long nights” were just the statements made by the later Confucian scholars in honor of their former master. However, as the thinker and creator of an original theoretical system, Confucius has profoundly influenced the construction of the Chinese national spirit, and built up national cultural traditions in many respects. This is in fact indisputable. Thus, acknowledging the existence of thinkers, and exploring their influence on the development of national culture, should be an important part of cultural research.

Since the studies on the connotations of “thinkers” are mostly speculative, devoid of theoretical analysis, and the definitions of the concept of “cultural
tradition” vary with individual scholars, it is necessary for us to sort them out and break through the barrier of intuitive thinking.

According to the historic reality of Chinese traditional culture and my own understanding of cultural conditions since the “May 4th Movement”, those who are called thinkers, refer to those people who can recognize the spirit of the times, criticize and inherit the traditions, continue with the past and open up the future with creative thought, and who have shaped their own systems. For example, the Confucian masters such as Confucius, Mencius, and Xunzi in the Pre-Qin dynasty, the masters of Taoism Laozi and Zhuangzi, Legalism’s Han Fei, the founder of Mohism, Mozi; Dong Zhongshu and Wang Chong in the Qin and Han dynasties; Wang Bi in Wei and Jin dynasties; Hui Neng in the Sui and Tang dynasties; Chen Yin, Chen Yi, Zhu Xi, Lu Jiuyuan, Wang Yangming in the Song and Ming dynasties; Wang Fuzhi, Huang Zongxi between the Ming and Qing dynasties; Dai Zhen in the Qing dynasties, and so on.

These people critically summarized the thought of their predecessors, shaped relatively complete thinking systems of their own, came up with a series of extraordinary views, and promoted the development of culture. In general, these thinkers had their own thinking system, and the works of their thought constitute an indispensable part of Chinese cultural history; they have made their own unique contribution to Chinese culture, having profound influence on the formation of traditional Chinese cultural forms and its inner features. These people are regarded as the thinkers in this book.

Semantically speaking, the meaning of the concept of “cultural tradition” is a clear issue. However, just as the focus has been on “thinking” rather than “thinkers”, people have always been keen on exploiting tradition while ignoring “cultural” aspects. What is more important is the experiential and holistic thinking, the integral thinking paradigm, which has descended as part of Chinese national culture, and enables people to be used to holistic and intuitive thinking.

As a result, the two totally different concepts of “traditional culture” and “cultural tradition” are often confused and conflated, and the academic circle has to differentiate them. Actually, the concept of tradition refers to the cultural behaviors and social mentality including thinking approaches, value concept, ethos, and social customs that have formed in history, with stable structures and ideological elements that still influence people.

It is usually represented as “culture without consciousness”, and it is a kind of transformative power of spirit, while the cultural tradition refers to the thought and habits of behavioral patterns that are limited by the specific value systems of cultural types. They have been formed over a long history and accepted by most of people of the nation.

II. The major cultural tradition promoted by thinkers

The historical development of ancient Chinese culture has shown that thinkers are closely linked with the formation, consolidation, development and transformation
of culture. The thinkers' spiritual activities and social practices have facilitated Chinese cultural traditions. Generally speaking, cultural traditions that are constructed by the thinkers contain the following aspects:

(1) The cultural conservative tradition

The cultural conservative tradition means that, based on their own experiences and understanding of their own history and culture, thinkers examine the current state of culture and foresee the trend of cultural development in the future during the typical historic cultural developmental stage. Conservative thinkers affirm the basic spiritual values of historical culture, and then elucidate and transform the basic spiritual values creatively. In terms of the process of traditional Chinese cultural development and the inherent cultural tradition types, the cultural conservative tradition is the longest and strongest.

The cultural conservative tradition manifests itself as maintaining the consciousness of previous achievement, orthodoxy conception, tradition worship, ancient admiration orientation and the thinking patterns of Confucian classics, etc.

Maintaining the consciousness of previous achievement is mainly reflected in Confucianism. The pre-Qin dynasty pursued the control of “conventional practice”, and preserved the existing cultural structure, social atmosphere and family ethic order earnestly. Confucius opposed the social reform of the day, and preserved the “Tao of the Zhou dynasty”. He advocated maintaining and consolidating such ordered political ethical standard as “let the king be a king, the minister a minister, the father a father and the son a son”. He abandoned the thoughts and behaviors that went beyond the traditional standard. After all, they wanted to promote the existing historical cultural tradition, and make sure that the cultural tradition and atmosphere would not be lost due to the changes of conditions of the times.

Mencius’ benevolent governance theory advocated the thought of stabilizing and unifying society through benevolence, and he also maintained the concept of the former sovereign. In fact, he used the previous value concept to regulate people’s hearts, to rectify society, and to maintain constant order.

Dong Zhongshu in the Han dynasty created the heaven-human induction theory, and came up with the three principles and five virtues as the feudal moral principles, aimed at safeguarding the unification of the Han dynasty, and offering the theoretical basis for maintaining the permanence of feudal order. His idea of “the Tao won’t change if Heaven doesn’t change”, is the typical expression of Confucian conservatism.

All in all, the Confucians were keen on preserving the existing stable social and political situation. More often than not, they held a critical attitude towards changing political order and value concepts, at least the dissociative attitude. This kind of mentality, through the advocacy, propaganda and practice by the Confucian school from one generation to another, especially through reinforcement by the
rulers in the systematic and ideology culture, has gradually become a stable cultural concept and a common social mentality widely accepted by the public.

The concept of Confucian orthodoxy was also an important component of the cultural conservative tradition. Starting with Confucius, Confucianism took delight in talking about such a tradition of “sages from one generation to another” as in the order of “Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, King Wen of Zhou dynasty, King Wu of Zhou dynasty”. Mencius also continued the Confucian orthodoxy concept. He held the proposition that “there must be a kingdom that could become prosperous within 500 years”, and Mencius maintained that Confucius continued this orthodoxy concept established by all these sages, later it gradually pervaded throughout the whole society, and became the cultural identity resting on a wide range of social foundations.

Han Yu in the Tang dynasty confirmed the historical value and realistic significance of Confucian orthodoxy theory, and he believed that the orthodoxy concept was able to preserve the inherent culture and convert to the historic tradition. Cheng Hao, a neo-Confucian in Song dynasty, advocated the Confucian orthodoxy theory in order to “distinguish the heresy, avoid the fallacy, and let the sages’ theory shine in the world again”, in order to preclude the situation wherein “the human desire is rampant and the celestial law is perished”. Obviously, Cheng Hao wished to win the hearts of the people with the help of the Confucian orthodoxy, and to make the obstructed “Tao of sages” (the previous cultural tradition) come to life once again.

The concept of worship in the cultural conservative tradition has been based on the previous cultural achievements and the tradition of the ancestors. In ancient China, the traditionalists always held a dominant position in social culture. They appreciated the former morality, system, mentality and behavior, and they even prostrated themselves in worship.

The Confucian classic *Book of Filial Piety* exhorted that: “people should not presume to wear robes other than those appointed by the laws of the ancient kings, nor to speak words other than those sanctioned by their speech, nor to exhibit conduct other than that exemplified by their virtuous ways”. Zhu Xi said: “how dare we discuss the sages’ behaviors and traditions?” Li Gong, a person who emphasized real learning expressed his idea: “From Fu Xi to Confucius and Mencius, the tradition was quite complete, the later generations should follow that”.

These are the abnormal phenomenon oppressed under the tradition of cultural worship. Under that condition, anyone who dared scorn or go against the tradition would be condemned both in speech and writing. Shang Yang and Wang Anshi’s political reform was in essence a revolt and transcendence of tradition. “One should not fear changes under Heaven, one should not blindly follow old conventions and one should not be deterred by the complaints of others” is what Wang Anshi advocated and practiced. He made these remarks towards the chronic illness of tradition worship. However, this kind of revolt against tradition was finally defeated. This reflects the “martial power” of tradition worship.
Ancient admiration is also an important part of the cultural conservative tradition. In traditional Chinese culture, the words and deeds of predecessors had been the model for everything, believed to provide the basis for the self-cultivation, family harmony, management of the country, and maintenance of world peace. All conduct ought to be in accord with the established principles made by the ancestors, which has been the irreplaceable value standard the universal thinking “norm”. Whether it was the ruler’s administration of the country, or ordinary people’s behavior, both needed to seek a theoretical basis or typical examples from ancient times in order to strengthen persuasion and authority.

The Qin dynasty declared its unity was the inheritance of “virtue” in the Zhou dynasty. The medical book *Nei Jing* is under the name of the Yellow Emperor to show its orthodoxy and long-standing tradition. This orientation has enriched the cultural conservative tradition, and has made conservatism and Confucian orthodoxy take the lead for a long time in the traditional society, gradually forming and strengthening the conservative trend.

Another important content in the cultural conservative tradition is the thought of Confucian classics study. The basic feature of Confucian classics study was to stick to the old conventions. They did not wish to break away from the old thinking frame, value system and ethics standard, but just handle tasks in accordance with tradition, and preserve the purity and supremacy of the classics. Thoughts, ideas, interests and mentalities ought to be expressed through the annotation of the classics, which is known as “annotation should not break the classics”, and should not “replace the scriptures with biography”.

These sayings were the “classic” normative and authoritative expressions to prove that conservatism has been accepted by the society. The formation and profound influence of the Confucian orthodoxy in ancient society indicates how powerful and limitless the cultural conservative tradition is as an inertial power! We may also say that the interference of Confucian orthodoxy is an important reason for all the difficulties of cultural criticism and reconstruction since the modern times.

(2) Cultural reform tradition

In contrast with the cultural conservative tradition, the cultural reform tradition also existed in traditional Chinese society. This kind of tradition is the cultural reconstruction work motivated by the conditions of the times. Thinkers should be based on the contemplation of the previous cultural tradition, and proceeded through the social practices.

In ancient China, when talking about reform, it usually refers to “transforming the old into new”, which mainly refers to the reform of the system and law. It is said in the *Book of Rites*: “The designation of the measures of weight, length, and capacity; the fixing the elegancies of ceremony; the changing the commencement
of the year and month; alterations in the color of dress; differences of flags and their blazonry; changes in vessels and weapons, and distinctions in dress: these were things, changes which could be enjoined on the people’.

That is to say, the scale of the reform is mainly about the material and systematic culture. Correspondingly, the ideological cultures such as the relationship between relatives, and elders are “unchangeable ones”. Examining the cultural evolution process, it is clear to see the main targets of reforming the cultural tradition were the material and system cultures. This is exactly what was said by the Confucian master Dong Zhongshu: “the uniform of different dynasties may be changed, but the Tao would never be changed”. This kind of cultural reform guided by the basic idea mentioned above was in fact progressive and mild evolution.

This cultural reform tradition is fully reflected in the Confucian scholars. In the late Warring States Period, with the condition of the times as the point of departure, and based on the basic Confucian ideological framework, Xun Zi introduced legalism theory into Confucianism, so that the new Confucianism emphasized both “rite” and “law”. He transformed the Confucian benevolence-propriety ideological system into a new propriety-law system. And in this case, Confucianism developed in the new era, and the Confucian features were updated in the systematic culture.

In the Han dynasty, according to the requirement of grand unification and its politics, Dong Zhongshu created a strict and elaborate theoretical system. In this system, the theoretical framework was yin-yang and five elements, and its main body was Confucian ideas, combined with many other schools of thought. On the basis of these theories, he clearly asked the rulers to change the title, the day of commencement for a lunar year, the color of cloths, and to build up new culture, education and selection system for officials, and the policy of “proscribing all non-Confucian schools of thought and espousing Confucianism as the orthodox state ideology”, which was combined with the officials selection system and education system together.

By so doing, he created the new situation of Chinese culture and the development of Confucianism. Dong Zhongshu’s reform theory, three universally-oriented principles of history conception, all built up the “norm” for the later cultural reform in China. The cultural practice conducted by Han Yu in the Tang dynasty reproduced this reform “norm” in a new circumstance.

Han Yu was not only the flag-bearer for the Confucianism renaissance, but also the master of an ancient literature movement. In order to confront Buddhism and Taoism, and to renew the past authority of Confucianism, he wrote some famous works such as Yuandao and Yuanren, and started the move of the Confucian renaissance. He made some attempt to bring order out of chaos at a high level, reconstructed traditional Confucianism and the framework of traditional culture since the Wei and Jin dynasties. The Confucian idea of universal love elucidated by him and his thought of systematic, theoretical Confucian orthodoxy, not only deepened the traditional Confucianism, but it was also a progressive and included mild reform.
Based on a Confucian framework, Zhu Xi, a great Confucian scholar in the Song dynasty, absorbed Buddhism’s speculative thinking and the cosmic vision of Taoism, and eventually managed to update Confucianism, rendering it a mature system of Neo-Confucianism. This is a typical example of reforming cultural traditions in ancient China.

(3) Tradition of cultural criticism

In contrast to the cultural conservative tradition, the cultural criticism tradition has always existed in Chinese cultural history. There have been two forms of criticism on cultural traditions, the anti-tradition tradition and the heresy tradition.

Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi, two masters of Taoism, were both the central figures of criticizing and opposing tradition. They held critical attitudes towards the cultural tradition with humanity, justice, propriety and wisdom as its purpose, towards the tradition that one should be enthusiastic about knowledge and learning to develop culture, and towards all the existing political and ethical standards. Through criticism towards conventional thinking, they denied the so-called eternal value, absolute truth, and expressed their anger with the anxiety and alienation that had come into being in the development of human culture.

They always affirmed their thought by denying other issues, but not the other way round, which showed that they were anti-traditional in terms of their thinking approach. The metaphysicians in Wei and Jin dynasties despised Tang, Wu, Zhou, and Confucius, they criticized the classics but advocated natural being, and they revolted against tradition.

Hui Neng, the sixth patriarch of Zen, reformed traditional Buddhism. He advocated that “the Buddha is in the heart” and that “one becomes a Buddha through inherent intuition”. He claimed that one should not read the classics, neither should he show respect to Buddha, nor should he sit in meditation. What one needed to know is nothing but to know “his own conscience”. That is, “an ordinary individual is Buddha”. Through this kind of secular, common expounding, Hui Neng propagated the Buddhist spirit in a witty way, and made an indelible contribution to the promotion of Buddhism in China. We can see it was also the product of anti-tradition thinking. The emergence of Zen and its approach to promotion, as well as its theoretical system itself were deviations from the tradition.

Another important content in cultural criticism to tradition is heresy, which not only launched radical attack on realistic politics and did not cooperate with the rulers, but scorned the existing tradition, showing expectation for and cultivation of a new tradition.

Starting with Wang Fu’s On Latent Man in the East-Han dynasty, to Li Zhi’s Hiding Books and Burning Books in the Ming dynasty, then to Tang Zhen’s Latent Books in the Qing dynasty, the central themes and important features of these
books were mainly about noncooperation with rulers, and penetrating criticisms into the dark politics at that time.

Wang Fu who was “upright, outstanding and unconventional”, he never wanted to be an official, lived in seclusion to write books and criticize current politics. He summarized all kinds of disadvantages in the East-Han dynasty as “the affairs of a declining dynasty”.

In the society that “solely worshiped Confucius”, Li Zhi expressed his idea openly that people should not regard Confucius’ statement as the ultimate criteria of judging whether something was right or wrong. He believed that the reason why Chinese could not tell right from wrong was that “all the people regard Confucius’s idea of the right and the wrong as the criteria, which leads to the situation where there are no rights and wrongs”. His astonishing saying shocked the world and was rebuked as “heresy” by the traditionalists.

Tang Zhen pointed out the essence of the rulers in a straightforward way: “all the rulers have been the renegades of their states since Qin dynasty”. This kind of “bold and subversive” thought was totally different from the traditional concept that the rulers were the authorities and all the people should be loyal to the rulers. Huang Zongxi’s criticism was that the emperors in history were the “most corrupt ones in society”, and the malignant tumor which caused the separation of families and the brutal tyrants afflicting people with great suffering. Dai Zhen exposed that the neo-Confucians “kill people by ideology”, all of which were voices that could enlighten the benighted.

Of course, judging from the theoretical categorization, there is no clear-cut division between the anti-traditional tradition and that of heresy. The anti-tradition itself is a kind of heresy; while the heresy is usually represented as the anti-tradition. However, if we give a further thinking about the complex image of the development of Chinese culture, it is not difficult for us to find out that the anti-tradition tradition and heresy tradition are different in form and cultural motivation. Therefore, we can discuss them separately.

(4) The tradition that served political needs

In the various cultural traditions, the tradition that served political needs has had a long history and greatly influenced the development of ethical culture. There is a consensus in the academic circles of mainland China and Taiwan: traditional Chinese culture has an obvious omnipresent moral color.

Of course, this is only the realistic judgment. When it comes to the evaluation, it will be: “the society would be separated by Taoism (the Way)”. Actually, if we examine the issue more closely, the so-called omnipresent moral theory is limited by politics and serves its needs. On one hand, the rulers required the intellectuals and ordinary people try their best to serve them voluntarily. They were expected to endure humiliation, take the ruler class’s interests as the priority, and cater for the
emperor's favors, even when they were maltreated. On the other hand, the ordinary people, especially the intellectuals, would consciously identify themselves with the rulers' politic standard and social order and they were honored to become an official of the state, and some of them even treated that as their highest ideal situation in achieving their life's value. Loyalty to the emperor was equivalent to the love of the country, while defying one's superiors would be held in contempt by all the people. Self, family, state, and the world was considered to be in a progressive relationship going from one layer to the next in order to maintain the political state of grand unity.

The Confucian in Han dynasty maintained the principles of “the ordinary people could suffer the grievance, but the ruler should not”, and “ordinary people should be loyal to the ruler”, which aptly summarized this tradition. The ultimate goal of “Knowing the relationship between natural phenomenon and society, and understanding the changes in all ages”, which has been spoken highly of and practiced by the intellectuals consciously, was to administer the country and rule the people. Doubtless, contained in the saying were the lofty sense of historical responsibility and the mission of the times. However, this sense of responsibility and commitment turned into the utilitarian goal of serving political needs which were sublimated up to the achievement of personal realm, thereby strengthening the consciousness of political service, and later this consciousness became a kind of “collective unconsciousness”.

What the scholar-officials were delighted in and fascinated about was “making a mind for Heaven and Earth, setting up the Tao for human beings, restoring the lost teachings of the past sages, and building a peaceful world for all future generations”. Filial-piety and the thought of “governing the world with piety” which ran through the feudal society were exactly the vivid manifestation of “everything serving political needs”.

There is no doubt that this tradition was advocated and cultivated by the rulers, and of course they would take advantage of it. However, it cannot be denied that this tradition has indeed increased the centripetal force and cohesion of national culture, strengthened people's sense of historical responsibility and commitment, and it has had profound significance in promoting the spiritual realm and minimizing the awareness of the self.

III. The main approaches taken by the thinkers to shaping cultural traditions

It is obvious that the formation of the cultural traditions as described above is closely related to the spiritual activities and the social practices of the thinkers. In other words, there is an extremely deep spiritual bond between the cultural tradition and the thinkers.
As the theoretical embodiment of spirit of the time and the heirs of the national culture, the thinkers were not only the representatives, but also the creators of tradition. However, the construction of the tradition by the thinkers is to be completed through multiple aspects and the complicated social system.

The top priority of constructing tradition is the gathering of the national spirit, the generalization of the spirit of the times, especially the abstraction of the historical and cultural theory, the comprehensive analysis about complicated and variable cultural phenomena.

The ideological system of “integration of benevolence and propriety” held by Confucius had summarized the cultural spirit since the Western Zhou dynasty, and it expressed his own cultural value conception. He tried his best to make it become socialized and popular in order to put people's heart in order. This was the theoretical abstraction of the national spirit at that time and also the cultivation of cultural tradition.

Dong Zhongshu followed the trend of social development in the Han dynasty, took the advantage of the popular “yin-yang and five elements” conception, brought into full play the function of the cultural integration of the Confucian thought, completely elucidated the thought of the unity of Heaven and man. He inherited the thought of Confucius and Mencius and exceeded them, and absorbed a great variety of cultural ideological thought into his heaven-human induction system, and integrated them into the cultural framework based on Confucian ideas. Since then, the typical Chinese cultural conceptions such as the unity of Heaven and man, the heaven-human induction, the three principles and five virtues have gradually become the common thinking trend and criteria of value for society, and became the new tradition.

Another important approach the thinkers took to shaping traditions was to promote the spiritual life of national culture and spread the basic conception of the value system. The ancient Chinese thinkers paid much of their attention to the discovery of cultural life and the spreading of value conception. According to this position, they guided people to show tribute to the cultural lifeblood of their ancestors, and then gradually formed the sense of history and commitment to emphasizing and identifying tradition.

Confucius went hither and thither in order to make his belief in kindness come true. Though he suffered a lot, he never yielded to hardships or difficulty, and showed his unyielding persistence in humanity and human dignity. He opened a private school, and cultivated 3,000 disciples and 72 worthies by his dauntless efforts, and made an unprecedented contribution to the discovery, continuation and spreading of national cultural life.

After him, thinkers such as Mencius, Xunzi, Dong Zhongshu, Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming inherited and developed Confucius's spirit of “the human beings can promote thought”, and tried their best to explain and spread the inner spirit and active life of traditional culture. They also brought up disciples, wrote books and built their own theories, and they made their due contribution to the grandness of Chinese culture.
In other words, the main contents of the Chinese traditional cultural value system, such as benevolence, justice, propriety, wisdom, loyalty, filial piety and sense of honor, were deeply rooted in the hearts of ancient people, and this was closely related to the creative activities of the thinkers. More importantly, because of this, the conservative tradition of ancient Chinese culture was well established and deeply ingrained, which indicates that the thinkers’ activities had great influence on, and made contribution to building the cultural tradition. Indeed, standing at the height of today’s situation, opinions may vary as to the merits and drawbacks of the tradition constructed by the thinkers. However, it is an indisputable fact that the thinkers built the tradition at that age.

Updating the existing ideology and culture is also a significant procedure for the thinkers to build up the tradition. Thinkers of different dynasties, when facing up to different cultural heritages, tended to take different historical responsibilities. Inheriting the previous basic cultural spirit, combining it with the condition of the times, bringing forth the new from the old, and offering the new ideological system for the innovation of culture, all these have become the duty for thinkers in all dynasties.

Starting with the Confucian thought of benevolence and Dong Zhongshu’s heaven-human induction theory, and Zhu Xi’s universality and particularity framework, with the guidance of meeting the changes with constancy, and of using the changes to supplement the constancy, the Confucian thinkers created a distinctive ideological system, updated the old ideology and culture, and opened up the new spiritual orientation for the development of culture. Similarly, from the imitation of nature theory in the Pre-Qin dynasty, to the school of the Emperor Huang and Lao Tzu’s governance by doing nothing between the Qin and Han dynasties, then to the view on function and structure in the Wei and Jin dynasties, Taoist thinkers changed minds with the times.

They continuously adjusted their theoretical ideas and mental restraints, and expanded the way for the inheritance and innovation of tradition. The Legalists’ law, method and power thought in the early time which were integrated into a system by Han Fei in the late Warring Period embodied the evolutionist thought that: “the ideas change with the changes of the times”, which was the clear proof of the innovative initiatives of discarding the old to achieve the new. The above ideas and theories have all opened and enriched ancient Chinese cultural evolution from different aspects.

Regulating people’s behavior through the construction and consolidation of a cultural system is also a significant approach the thinkers took to build tradition. If the advocacy and practicing of benevolence, propriety and morality by Confucius, Mencius and Xunzi remained at the ideological culture level, we can say that the series of political activities and cultural practices advocated by Dong Zhongshu improved the operational state of the system of culture construction.

The moral argument about the three principles and five virtues systematically demonstrated by Dong Zhongshu is actually the combination of the inner and outer social control constructive level of the family system, political system, cultural and
education system. In the three cardinal guides of “Ruler guides subjects, father
guides son, husband guides wife”, the targets of guides and purposes of regulation
were different, but their ultimate goal was to maintain the stability and harmony of
political order, familial order and social order, through which the supremacy of the
monarch’s authority went from beginning to end.

What is more, the orders that followed by these three principles all belonged to
feudalism. The theory of the ruler guides subjects was the indication of the central
autocratic system; the idea of the father guides son’s regulation produced the
“heavenly principle” that father was the head of a household; the idea of the husband
guides wife idea led to the “holy” feudal concept that man was superior to woman.
Among these three principles, the first one belonged to the political aspect, and the
latter two principles were originally the domain of the family circles. However,
through Dong Zhongshu’s integration, the three principles interpenetrated into
others, and the political and family system were combined as a whole, and the politics
became part of family while family became part of politics. This integration made
Confucian unification and benevolent governance in the Pre-Qin dynasty come true.

Besides, the officials examining system proposed by Dong Zhongshu, especially
the educational policy that discarded all kinds of theoretical schools but showing
sole tribute to Confucianism made the Confucian idea that: “Officialdom is the
natural outlet for good scholars” became practicable, and opened the institutional
way whereby scholars managed the state.

Thus, submission to authority shown in the tradition of absolute political
obedience to the monarch and the father-dominated families, and the tradition of
studying to become officials, became the pursuit of ordinary people. What is more
important, the establishment and increasing reinforcement of these traditions was
represented in the tradition of serving the political needs at a deeper cultural and
psychological level.

Another important approach for the thinkers to build up the tradition was to
participate in political activities in order to popularize their ideas and form a wide
and common social foundation through political power.

Confucius and Mencius lobbied the feudal dukes in order to make Confucianism
the national ideology. Hanfei gave counsel to the Monarchs with the wish that
Legalism could unify the country through political practices. Dong Zhongshu gave
suggestions to the court aiming at rejecting all kinds of theoretical schools, but
worshiping Confucius with the help of Emperor Wu’s political power. Han Yu
advocated the Confucian orthodoxy while remonstrating Buddhism to Emperor
Xianzong of the Tang dynasty, in order to strengthen the power of Confucianism
with the help of politics. Things like these were too numerous to cover.

The feudal scholar-officials advertised themselves as “cultivating themselves
while poor, and benefiting the people in the world while rich”. The essence of
“rich” actually means an official career without difficulties and troubles, and the
scholars became government officials with political powers; while “poor” means
the frustration and the loss of favor in politics, leading a secluded life.

These two seemingly different pursuits were essentially two sides of same issue:
in either case, the scholar-officials were subordinate to political needs, taking
Thinkers and Cultural Traditions

advantage of politics for their own benefits. There is no doubt that the thinkers' interests in politics play an important role in spreading their own thought and having an influence on society. Thinkers from one generation to the next held the same thought and value orientation would eventually be helpful for the construction of the cultural tradition. Obviously, this situation could fully reflect how universal the tradition of serving the political needs had been.

There is no doubt that the formation of the cultural tradition has its objective and natural historical process, and it is not decided by the subjective intention of human beings. However, on the other hand, we should acknowledge the great power of ideology and the thinkers in the construction of the cultural tradition. This role usually fulfilled through the cultural explanation of traditional ideology belonging to the deeper structure, and the construction of the new ideology system; meanwhile, it is also achieved through advocating the realistic system culture and the creation of a new cultural system. If we deny the limitation of the specific conditions of the times, it is non-historical and anti-historical determinism; while if we deny the vital function of the thinkers’ spiritual activities, it is the mechanical determinism, and it is not dialectical, dynamic determinism.

IV. The relationship between thinkers and the cultural traditions

The relationship between cultural tradition and thinkers is not a unidirectional decision but an interactional complex process. The tradition nurtures and cultivates the thinkers.

First, the field of vision and accomplishment are limited by the cultural tradition. People create history, and the thinkers do not create the tradition themselves. This tradition has been forged under historical conditions. It has been created under the condition which was directly met, established, and inherited from the past.

The Western Zhou dynasty’s rational awakening of “meeting the destiny with virtues” brought cultural wealth to Confucius. The conception of destiny has shaken with the rise of the humanistic spirit. Therefore Confucius could and could only build the classic humanistic spirit. It was a plain humanism tradition, and he was incapable of creating the heaven-human induction and divine right of king’s tradition, and it was also impossible for him to create the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues as specified in the feudal ethical code.

Similarly, Dong Zhongshu could and could only build the heaven-human induction, divine right of king and the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues as specified in the feudal ethical code, and it was impossible for him to create the speculative inaction-based tradition, or the “truth” based tradition that combined Confucianism and Taoism together. Thus, the existing cultural tradition would influence the resources that the thinkers used to construct the new tradition, and give them the references concerned with the conception, guiding and regulation of their behaviors.
Second, the existing cultural tradition provided the enlightenment for the thinkers' creative spiritual activities, and the theoretical preparation for rebuilding the tradition and opening the new tradition. The reason why a thinker is a thinker is that he not only inherits the tradition consciously, but also creates the new tradition actively. History shows that every single step of the developmental progression is the abstraction and theoretical reflection of the historical process. However, in order to keep the continuity and consistency of historical development, we cannot only carry on the old customs, and need to start from the existing ideological materials (though their roots are hidden in economic reality), integrate them with the conditions of the time, and create the new thought.

The wise thinkers have clearly noticed that the “tradition is a kind of great conservative force”, and there is no doubt that this kind of “conservativeness” can be regarded as the typical love of culture. More importantly, this “conservativeness” indicates a kind of resistance, and “it is an historical inertia”. Therefore, the thinkers should overcome such conservativeness and break historical inertia. They need to continue with the past, open up the future, and build up the new cultural tradition in order to inherit and brighten the existing tradition. The existing cultural tradition provides the premise for the thinkers' creative activities in the aspects of ideological material, theoretical thinking and criteria of value. This premise not only offers the thinkers a sense of belonging during the reconstruction process. More importantly, it can become the base point for the thinkers to open up the new tradition. Dong Zhongshu of the Han dynasty and Zhu Xi of the Song dynasty all inherited and innovated traditional Confucianism, and modern Confucianism’s hard work on practicing the “pondering over the past and turning over the new page” is convincing evidence.

In addition, the existence of the cultural tradition and its profound impact give people in certain eras value guidance, and provides a broad basis for understanding, practical experience and the existing cultural tradition. As a kind of national spiritual heritage, it could always become the consciously accepted spiritual food for people living in the classic society, and turn into the “collective unconsciousness”. This kind of reality objectively opens people's hearts to accept culture. When people are ready to accept a certain culture, the explanation, development, and transformation made by the thinkers towards the existing culture would also be accepted. When thinkers are creating new tradition, the obvious psychological obstacles can be avoided. All these have been proved by the development of culture in ancient China, and they are quite familiar. Therefore, there is no need to give a further explanation.

V. Absorbing historic resources and reconstructing the cultural traditions

Today, we are living in a changing reform and opening-up era. The relationship between thinkers and cultural tradition, and the identification on the basic spirit of the cultural tradition and its main content, have significant theoretical value and practical meaning for us to construct the modern new culture.
Seen from the development of ancient Chinese culture history, the cultural tradition constructed by the thinkers has been the great mainstream tradition. Be it the cultural conservative tradition, or cultural reform tradition, or cultural criticism tradition, or the political service tradition, all are great in this respect. This kind of great cultural tradition is solemn and magnificent, with a stable structure, meaningful content and sophisticated thought, and it represents the condition of the national culture; this tradition is inherited by one generation to another, nurturing the mind, and those people who are influenced by this tradition develop a strong sense of tradition.

This is helpful for people to improve their value consciousness, which makes people develop a sense of belonging and of cultural consciousness. It will also promote the consensus of the value conception of the common culture, and increases the recognition of national cultural value. Besides, it will accelerate the maturation and consolidation of culture mode, and help to spread culture in a realistic and direct manner. It not only makes the variety of integrated culture elements achieve the traditional continuousness, but also the new cultural system determined by this cultural mode will gain maturation and the possibility of continuation; it has a strengthening effect on the value system so that the categorical patterns of culture might become more prominent.

It can thus be seen that the construction of the great cultural tradition plays a significant role in the development of national culture. In this case, we should absorb the ancient thinkers’ experience from the construction of great cultural tradition, and contribute to the creation of new type of modern Chinese cultural tradition.

The historical experience has showed that when building the new type of modern cultural system, we should pay high attention to the construction of the culture tradition; meanwhile, we should attach great importance to irreplaceable role of thinkers when establishing the cultural tradition.

Some people are calling for the “reconstruction of tradition” from the perspective of resolving the culture crisis. To be honest, this is a wise action in the broad sense. But the problem does not lie in the “reconstruction”, but rather in what to construct and who should be in charge of the process. It would be undesirable if we were to construct the neo-Confucian tradition of “pondering over the past and turning over the new page”, the sort of ancient tradition that attached importance to human relations while despised the natural predisposition, or the tradition of “maintaining the truth but exterminating the human desire”.

It would be a disaster if those who reconstruct cultural tradition were not thinkers but the venal politicians who seek profit at the sacrifice of conscience, or the calculating merchants, or those restless and short-sighted people! We are living in an opening and reform era, the responsibility of reconstructing the tradition should (and must) be inevitably shouldered by the group of thinkers. If (just “if”) there is no such a group of thinkers (please note the word “group”), there is no doubt that it would be produced in time, with the further development of reform and opening up.
The Study of Ancient Chinese Culture and the Spirit of the Times

Since the 1990s, Guoxue (literally the Chinese national studies, meaning the traditional Chinese cultural studies or the study of ancient Chinese culture) has gradually become popular, and the trend has burgeoned throughout China. With the upsurge of the study of Chinese culture, the controversy concerning its connotation, content, scope and value is becoming even more intense. Today, when cultural reconstruction has become increasingly important, in particular, there is a need to promote Chinese culture, and to build the common spiritual homeland of the Chinese people. How to determine the meaning and scope of traditional Chinese cultural studies, and how to look at the status and role of Chinese culture is not only a serious academic subject, but also an important practical issue. Therefore, it is significant to examine Chinese culture from the perspective of the spirit of the times and the strategic development of contemporary Chinese culture.

I. The connotation, content and scope of studies of ancient Chinese culture

According to its historical development, the connotation, content and scope of the study of ancient Chinese culture can be roughly divided into three periods, namely, the ancient period, the modern period and the period of the last two decades.81,82

(A) The studies of ancient Chinese culture in the ancient time

The term Guoxue, in fact, existed in the ancient times. It appeared in the ancient book of The Rites of Zhou,83 which said: “The musicians were responsible for managing Guoxue (literally meaning the national study), and for teaching the children to dance”. Here the “national study”, refers to the establishment of the country’s schools. Since then, the basic meaning of national studies in ancient
China, refers to the schools and educational management organizations established by the state, such as the imperial schools of the Han dynasty and the state college of the Jin and Sui dynasties.

There was a stone tablet in the Confucian family temple set up in the fifth year of Dade in the Yuan dynasty (AD 1301) on which was inscribed: “The emperor has great merits and virtues. All the states in the world are intermingled as an entity and the cultural artifacts are immense in number. Established within our country is the school of the state, and educational officials are appointed to the shires and counties. Due attention should be given to the offspring of the ancient sages in order that they be well educated, with the expectation that they themselves will become a Confucian sage with great virtue, and their descendants will be recognized for their achievements with titles and honorary peerages.”

“The school of the state” as mentioned here, is actually the school run by the state in order to undertake “national learning”.

(B) The Studies of Chinese culture in the modern time

The term of the study of the state in the modern sense was originated in the late Qing dynasty and the early years of the Republic of China. In the autumn of 1902, Liang Qichao wrote a letter to Huang Zunxian, discussing with him about founding a new newspaper “National Studies Journal”, stressing that the aim of the paper was to “retain the quintessence of Chinese culture”. In the same year, in his “On the Changing Trend of Chinese Academic Thinking”, he repeatedly mentioned the term of “National Studies”. In his works during this period, Liang Qichao used the term of “National Studies” to refer to “Chinese Studies” which he had been repeatedly using, but more attention was paid to the essence of “Chinese studies”.

In 1906, Zhang Taiyan founded “The National Studies Society” in Tokyo, and subsequently set up “Revitalizing Chinese Culture Society”. Deng Shi, a scholar of the quintessence school published an article entitled “Notes on the National Seminar” in 1906 in the “Journal of Quintessence of Chinese culture” in which he asked: “So what is the study of Chinese culture? It is in fact the study of everything in our country. The land will become a state when there are people living on it. Where there is a state, there should be studies about it. Why do we need such studies? We need to study everything about the state for the service of the state, in order to run it well”.

In the first half of 1922, Zhang Taiyan delivered a course on the study of Chinese culture in Shanghai, and the lecture notes was edited and published by Cao Juren with the title of A General Introduction to National Studies. This book considered the main body of the national studies constituted Confucian classics, historical records, philosophical writings and miscellaneous works which were classified as Confucian classics, philosophy and literature. In the “advertisement” of Revitalizing Chinese Culture Society, Zhang said that the society would issue handouts,
with 6 volumes in one year, namely: the study on the Chinese philosophers, the study on literature and history, the study on the institution, the study on the classics of Buddhism, the study on the Neo-Confucianism, and the study on Chinese history.

Hu Shi said: “It seems to us that “the study of Chinese culture” is the shortened form for “the study on ancient Chinese cultural heritage”. All of China’s history and culture in the past belongs to the domain of the study on ancient Chinese cultural heritage, which is shortened as the study of Chinese… All that occurred in the past, including academic thought, a work or a folk song are history, and thus belong to the domain of studies of Chinese culture…The mission of the study of Chinese culture is to enable us all to understand the cultural history of China in the past, the method it adopts is to reorganize the cultural history in the past, and its purpose is to reshape the Chinese cultural history.”

Wu Mi said: “The study of the state is to study Chinese culture and its academic works as a whole”. In his Outline of Chinese Academics published in 1931 by Shanghai Wisdom Publishing House, Cai Shangsi said: “China is a country, and learning is academic study. Therefore, the study of China is the academic study of the country. In China, it can be called the study of Chinese culture... China’s traditional culture cannot go beyond the scope of the study of the state”. When these scholars are talking about the study of Chinese culture, they refer, in essence, to traditional Chinese culture.

Quite unlike the aforementioned statements, a number of scholars have expressed their doubts over the concept of Chinese cultural studies. In his article entitled as “The Study of Chinese Culture” published in the magazine Pioneers in July 1923, Chen Duxiu expressed his different viewpoints: “We are quite unclear about what the study of the state actually means...Honestly speaking, even when I have examined the term for another hundred years, its meaning remains unclear to us, because the term of ‘the national Chinese study’ was originally a vague and confusing term.” More than six months later, in February 1924, Chen Duxiu published another article with the same title in the third issue of the magazine Pioneers in which he sharply pointed out: “Learning does not have boundaries, ‘the study of the state’ does not deserve to be a term. The term even incurs two drawbacks: First, the study may become the incarnation of the ancient culture. Second, it may become the suspected disciple of the oriental cultural sage. In the former case, one (such as Shizhi and Xingyan) is like seeking perfume in the feces, who are studying Mohism and Chinese logical study, and come up with something existing in the Western logical theory. What is the point of making such a fuss!”

Zheng Boqi made a further critical remark, saying: “The term of national Chinese study is a very general term, and the term of national Chinese study campaign is more difficult to understand”. While Cao Juren appreciated the study of Chinese culture, he also expressed his doubts on its concept. He said: “Although the term of Chinese culture has become popular in the country, its meaning is still vague and ambiguous, with no clear idea of its own!” Qian Mu said in his General Introduction to Chinese Culture published between 1920s and 1930s, “Academic studies do not have boundaries. The term of studies of ancient Chinese culture has
The central point of the argument discussed above constitutes three points: First, is the concept of ancient Chinese cultural study clear enough? Second, what is the scope of such a study? Third, what is the value of its orientation? It seems to those who think this is an indisputable issue that the Chinese national study is the study of the state, which constitutes the study of the past and the study of Chinese history, culture and academic thinking. For those who think this is a controversial issue, traditional Chinese cultural studies cannot be included in the existing paradigm of academic studies. As Chen Duxiu pointed out, Hu Shi was an expert in the history of philosophy, Zhang Taiyan was good at phonetics, philology and history, Luo Zhenyu is skillful in archaeology and epigraphy, and Wang Guowei is an expert in literature, all of whom have specific areas of knowledge, “In addition to these knowledge, we really do not understand what is Chinese culture?”

The skeptics also objected to the concept of Chinese national study from the perspective that scientific research should not have borders. In fact, the concept of national heritage proposed by Hu Shi is essentially a neutral concept. In Hu’s mind, national heritage is not necessarily a good or bad thing. He had explicitly said: “The term of ‘national cultural heritage is the most appropriate, since it is a neutral term, without positive or negative significance. ‘National cultural heritage’, therefore, contains both ‘national quintessence’ and ‘national residue’”.

(C) The traditional Chinese cultural studies in the last two decades

The debate about the study of ancient Chinese culture which started from the 1990s was similar to the situation described above. That is, there was also debate about the concept of traditional Chinese cultural studies, the delineation of the content of Chinese culture, the value orientation of the study of ancient Chinese culture and other aspects. What differs is that the two world situations and the developmental goals of the country are not the same in these two debates.

The opinions about the connotation of ancient Chinese cultural studies were divergent in academic circles. Zhang Dainian said: “The ancient Chinese cultural studies is the abbreviation of the academic study of Chinese culture...the reason that we called the academic study of Chinese culture as the Chinese cultural studies
is because the study of a country’s culture is conventionally called the study of the state.” He believes that ancient Chinese studies is composed of the study of philosophy, classics, literature, history, political science, military science, natural science, and religious art, etc. While the natural sciences consist of astronomy, mathematics, geography, agronomy, water, medicine, etc. “These are the contents of ancient Chinese cultural studies. The meaning of Chinese cultural studies is the study of its own culture of China” "Zhang Dainian expressed similar views in his three papers “How to study ancient Chinese culture,” “A Talk on Chinese Classics”, and “Chinese culture and the time”. Jin Jingfang and Lü Shaogang said: “By studies of ancient Chinese studies we mean the academic studies of China having not yet been contaminated by Western learning”. The scholars in the late Qing dynasty advocated the thought of “Chinese cultural studies as fundamental, Western learning for practical use” in which the Chinese cultural studies, as opposed to the Western learning, is in fact the study of ancient Chinese cultural studies”. Lou Yule said: “The ancient Chinese cultural study is the study of traditional Chinese culture. If we put all of the knowledge about China within the scope of Chinese cultural studies, this scope will be too broad. We should limit the scope to the study of ancient Chinese culture”. Zhang Liwen said: Chinese cultural studies are “created by the academics and culture of the Chinese people in the course of historical development, and therefore it is the sum of the academics and culture of the Chinese nation”. "Li Zhonghua maintained that Chinese cultural studies “refer to the sum of ideological and cultural heritage that has been accumulated during thousands of years’ social development”. Ji Baocheng believes that Chinese culture is traditional Chinese academia, and the essence of traditional Chinese culture. The study of ancient Chinese culture is the main carrier of Chinese civilization which embodies the spirit of the Chinese nation, and it is therefore the root of Chinese civilization.

There are also plenty of people who question the concept. Shu Wu wrote a special article questioning the study of ancient Chinese culture. He said: “The so-called ‘study of Chinese culture’ was, in fact, a pretext that some conservatives used from the late years of Qing dynasty to the ‘May 4th Movement’ in order to resist the Western ideas of ‘science’ and ‘democracy’, and it is a narrow-minded, conservative, vague and downright stubborn slogan…and such stubborn and conservative stuff is against the progress of humanity, against science and democracy, and against cultural change”. “The so-called Chinese cultural studies are not a concept of the traditional culture”. “What is ‘the study of Chinese culture’? It is basically the thought of Confucianism with values of feudalism”. “The studies of philosophy, history, literature and natural sciences all belong to various disciplines and what is the point of having an independent domain of the study of ancient Chinese study?”

With Shu Wu’s questioning as the target of his attack, Jiang Guobao proposed the rectification of the name of Chinese culture studies. Jiang Guobao believed that the study of Chinese culture as was advocated by the scholars of late the Qing dynasty and the Republic of China, does not refer generally to traditional Chinese
culture, neither does it refer to Confucian studies. “The term is a cover term that embraces the academic studies within the scope of the traditional Chinese humanities”. Wang Shengping said that transforming and sublating the concept of studies of Chinese culture is the proper meaning of the studies of Chinese culture. “If we started from the historical reality rather than from the concept, the modern Chinese culture also belongs to the domain of the study of Chinese culture, but it is in essence more advanced than the scope delimited by the classical scholars of Chinese studies”.  

Zhu Weizheng argues that there is a lack of measurement in the studies of ancient Chinese culture. As he pointed out, the study of Chinese national culture should be built on two premises: first, the spatial scope of ‘the nation’ refers to all the areas within the boundaries of China, including Taiwan; second, we must recognize the Chinese nation is a complex, and the study of Chinese culture should also include the culture of all ethnic groups.” “It is improper to say that the core of the study of Chinese culture is the study of Confucius and Confucianism.” “The concept of ‘the study of nation’ originally refers to the studies of individual nations and it is a general term and not specifically used to refer to the study of China” Interestingly, one of the grounds of Shu Wu’s objection is that there are no studies of the nation in other countries of the world and, therefore, the concept of the study of Chinese culture is not justified. Su Shuangbi said, “The denotation of the study of Chinese culture is not clear,” and “now that its denotation is not clear, its status as a field of scientific inquiry is called into question”.

The European countries and the United States do not call the academic studies of the culture with the characteristics of their country as “the study of the nation”. For instance, Marxism originated in Germany. However, it is a product of the times, not merely a product of the country.

**D) Controversial issues concerning the study of Chinese culture**

The following problems arise if we look historically at the disputes on the study of Chinese culture, especially in the last two decades:

**Problem 1: The ambiguity of the concept.**

The academic works of the nation; the national academic research; the studies of the nation's history and culture; the study of the nation; the quintessence of the nation; the traditional culture; the feudal culture; etc., all these are concepts of different levels, but the scholars often confuse them with one another.

The academic works of the nation are texts or objects of study; research on the academic works of the nation is the rational inquiry into the academic works. Similarly, the nation's own history and culture is a kind of state of civilization in its natural development, whereas the study on the history and culture of the nation is
a categorized discussion of the state of civilization. In other words, the former is “original” history, while the latter is “written” history. As for the traditional culture and feudal culture, they are not synonymous, which has become common sense after years of cultural discussion. Traditional culture, Confucianism, and the thought of Confucius are clearly not the concepts at the same level of significance and they should not be confused. As for Chinese culture, Confucianism, the quintessence of the nation, the difference between them is even more obvious.

However, many scholars tend to take them as homogeneous or synonymous concepts, based on the grounds of value judgment. Unfortunately, in the debate on the study of Chinese culture during the last hundred years, especially in recent years, many people tend to confuse, consciously or unconsciously, concepts with different meanings. They first set a vague concept in advance, and then fabricate one topic, and then indulge themselves in giving justification to the idea, hence a state of confusion arises.

**Problem 2: The blurred content and scope.**
What is the content and scope of the study of ancient Chinese? There is no consensus among the scholars, who are basically talking to themselves. In terms of content, some say it refers to Confucian classics, historical records, philosophical writings and miscellaneous works of ancient times, while others argue that it mainly refers to the study of Confucian classics. Yet more others maintain that Confucian classics should be included in the study of ancient Chinese culture, and there are also those who say that Confucian classics, philosophy and literature should be included while history should be excluded from the scope of ancient Chinese cultural studies. Some say that it embraces all schools of thought in ancient times, while some others believe that it specifically refers to Confucian theories. Some say that it ought to include the ancient study of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences while others say that it specifically refers to ancient Chinese culture, and in particular, the history of ancient academics and ideology. As far as the time of ancient Chinese cultural study is concerned, some say that it refers to the study of ancient culture, while others believe that it should include the modern and even contemporary culture as well as the culture of ancient times, and so on and so forth. Owing to the fuzzy scope of the studies on ancient Chinese culture, its content, of course, cannot be determined.

**Problem 3: Unclear thinking.**
Chinese culture is a factual judgment, and it is a neutral concept. However, there are no lack of scholars who force other people to accept their value judgments. They tend to regard ancient Chinese culture as the essence, or as a pure and excellent value system to be worshiped blindly, while some other scholars just take ancient Chinese culture as nonsense or a scourge to be completely eradicated. Such a confusion between value judgments and factual judgment results in unnecessary
controversy. In addition, some scholars prove their points by personal wishes or subjective speculations, without sufficient basis. For example, some scholars tend to think other countries do not have studies of the culture of their nations, based on their subjective imaginations, and therefore, China should not have the study of ancient Chinese culture.

Let us leave aside for the moment whether it is proper that we cannot have something if others do not have it, since the logic in it is too simple. In fact, other countries also have the study of the culture of their own nations. Japan, for example, has the study of Japanese culture. The concept of the quintessence of Chinese culture itself is imported from Japan, which, in its process of modern development, when confronted with the victory of Christian culture in Japan, had a rise of an ideological movement, the “Revival of Japanese national culture”, which indicates “a self-awareness and self-reflection of a new view of the world”. What is more, Korea also has its own study of the Korean culture. Professor Li Tiancheng at Sungkyunkwan University pointed out that, in order to collect and preserve materials for the study of Korean culture, and strengthen the research and popularization of Korean culture in the birthplace of Toegye studies-Dosanseowon, located in Togye-ri, Dosan-myeon, Andong-si, Korea also set up a research institute specialized in researches of Korean Studies- the Korean Studies Advancement Center. It is obvious that it is not true that the other nations do not have studies of their national culture. Some scholars hold such an argument because they do not understand the situation. Notably, the so-called Korean studies refer to the study of Korea’s own nation, that is, the study of the country’s traditional culture. Professor Li Tiancheng pointed out that as early as 1965, supported by the South Korean government, “The Korean Culture Advancement Association was established for the purpose of inheriting and promoting national culture, and actively promoting the cultivation of the country’s translators as well as the translation of Korean classical works (with the “Korean anthology series” as the most representative). The educational institute of the Literature Translation Institute of Korea… is also under construction.” Some scholars have pointed out that there are also national studies of Turkey, so-called “Turkology”. Similarly, there also exist Egyptology, Assyriology, and Indology.

(E) The connotation, content and scope of the study of ancient Chinese studies

Obviously, there is little controversy on the schools or educational institute set up by the central government to study Chinese culture as “the learning” of the “country” in its ancient times. However, people may not have been aware that the denotation, content and scope of the study of Chinese culture have changed considerably since it began to popularize in the late Qing and early Republic period. In general, it can be said that the studies of national culture in late the Qing and
earlier Republic period refers to the Chinese traditional (ancient) culture and thought within the domain of the humanities.

The so-called “country”, of course, refers to the country of China; and “the learning”, refers to the academic areas of traditional Chinese culture, history and culture. Even those who objected to or questioned the concept did not deny it at this point. Such as Chen Duxiu, Zheng Boqi, Qian Mu. Chen Duxiu, for instance, pointed out the specialty or lack of expertise of some advocates of ancient Chinese culture from the perspectives of philosophy, history and literature which, in fact, objectively acknowledged that the scope and content of the studies of ancient Chinese culture constitute the studies of China's traditional humanities, history and culture. Qian Mu, on the other hand, questioned the scientific nature of the concept of the study of ancient Chinese culture, but, on the other hand, admitted that the study of Chinese culture is a term for a particular era. The content and scope of his well-known book entitled Introduction to the Study of Chinese Culture was nothing but the intellectual history of academic ideas, Confucian thought and the Six Classics, Pre-Qin Scholars, Old and New Text Confucianism in the Han dynasties discussions on metaphysics in the Wei and Jin dynasties, Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasties, and the philological studies in the Qing dynasty, which indicates that the study of the nation as Qian Mu discussed in his book, is exactly the study of ancient Chinese culture and history.

In fact, if you put aside prejudices and discuss the issue with a mild mind, then we can be close to an agreement on the connotation, scope and content of the study of Chinese culture. It can be generally concluded that there are no disputes among the scholars as to the study of the nation in ancient times, as the school or education authorities sponsored by the central government. The study of the nation in the late Qing dynasty or in the modern time mainly refers to academics, history and culture belonging to the areas of humanities and social sciences in ancient times. Compared with Western academic studies, the study of Chinese culture is the study of the Chinese nation; compared to the modern academic study, it is the study of ancient Chinese culture. Compared to the academic practice, it is a theoretical study. The study of Chinese culture in the last two decades refers both to the study of ancient culture and Chinese culture in the modern time. It embraces the traditional areas of humanities and social sciences which also includes the natural sciences.

The so-called study of Chinese culture refers to the study of the culture of the Chinese nation. This study refers both to the traditional culture, but also refers to studies of traditions. “The Four Classic Books” belong to the traditional culture, while The Discourse Annotation of the Four Classic Books is the study of traditional culture. With the development of history, An Annotated Discourse on the Four Classic Books itself later became the object of study (which also became part of the traditional culture), and A Concise study on the Annotated Discourse of the Four Classic Books was a study on the traditional culture, which certainly belongs to the scope of the study of Chinese culture. The General Introduction to the Study of Chinese Culture respectively written by Zhang Taiyan and Qian Mu decades ago were studies on traditional Chinese culture, which, however, have now become the research object of the studies on traditional Chinese culture itself.
In recent years, the so-called national studies are, in essence, studies on traditional culture. As far as the time scope is concerned, the studies on traditional culture constitute the ancient traditional culture and (pre-) modern traditional culture (excluding contemporary culture). As far as the discipline of the subject is concerned, the study of traditional Chinese culture includes humanities and social sciences as well as natural science. As far as the country of the study is concerned, it is the study on Chinese culture, not Western culture. As far as the content of the study is concerned, “Thirteen Classics,” “The Collective Works of the Chinese Thinkers”, “The Yellow Emperor’s Canon of Internal Mediciner”, “Compendium of Materia Medica”, “Zhou Bi Suan Jing”, “Art of War”, “Sun Bin Art of War” “The Twenty-Four Histories”, etc. all belong to the domain of studies on traditional Chinese culture, while the folk customs, the Lantern Festival, Spring Festival, Qingming Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, etc., are also within scope. The reason is very simple, since the so-called traditional culture is a broad statement, which includes ideological culture, institutional culture, material culture, behavioral culture, and also includes the lifestyle, customs and beliefs of the Chinese people, it should not be confined to a certain school or doctrine.

II. The essence of the debate about ancient Chinese culture is how to achieve China’s modernization

What is the essence of the debate on the studies of ancient Chinese culture in the past hundred years, especially in the past two decades? The issue is concerned with where Chinese society will go, and how China will become modernized.

In the one hundred years from the Opium War to the present day, the social development process of China is fundamentally a process of achieving modernization, making China strong and powerful, and rejuvenating Chinese civilization. Guided by such a central theme, all schools of thought and ideas were concerned with the issue of whether modernization could be achieved, how to achieve modernization and what kind of modernization can be achieved.

The ideological and cultural movement centered around the debate on the study of traditional culture of China, and highlighted and reflected the theme of social development of (pre-) modern China. From a macro perspective, the debate on the studies on Chinese culture since the late Qing dynasty can be roughly divided into the following, phases if we can concentrate on the concept of the modern sense of the emergence of Chinese culture:112 The debate on the concept of the studies on Chinese culture (between the late Qing dynasty and the early years of the Republic of China about 1900–1915), the debate on eastern and Western culture (between 1915–1927), discussion on China’s modernization (1930s), the debate on the future of the Chinese Culture (1930s–1940s), “The Cultural Craze” and “The Craze for Traditional Chinese Culture” and the argument and controversy around them (since the mid-1980s).
The Study of Ancient Chinese Culture and the Spirit of the Times

(A) The value of the studies on traditional Chinese culture as represented by the debate over eastern and Western culture

The preceding text has discussed the debate on the concept of traditional Chinese culture in the late Qing dynasty and early Republic years, which will not be repeated here. The issues emerging from the debate on eastern and Western culture, discussion on China's modernization, the debate on the future of the Chinese Culture, the Cultural Craze and The Craze for Traditional Chinese culture and the argument and controversy around them, are all essentially the issue of how to look at the studies on traditional Chinese culture, how to establish the main body of national culture, how to build national cultural awareness and how to treat foreign cultures and traditional national culture. Regardless of the attitude towards Chinese culture, that is, whether one recognizes or appreciates its worth, or disapproves or criticizes it, it is noteworthy that both sides of the argument hope that China will achieve modernization, and the difference lies only in how to achieve modernization and what kind of modernization to realize.

Liang Qichao was a vigorous advocate of the studies on traditional Chinese culture. He published the well-known *The Theory of New Citizens* between 1902 – 1903 (At this point, he is vigorously promoting Chinese culture), in which he expounded his theory of new citizens aiming to fundamentally change the quality of nations. The basic idea in Liang Qichao's New Citizen Theory was to remodel citizenship among the people, and he put forward the ideas of liberty, progress, self-autonomy, self-respect, public morality, right and obligations as the basic characters of modern citizens, with a view to achieving prosperity, wealth and peace for the country. Liang explained himself: “The so-called new citizen does not necessarily mean that we should abandon our old national characters to follow others. About new we mean two things: on the one hand, we should forge and refine what we already have and renew it; and on the other hand, we should replenish what we do not have with what is new. There are two meanings of new: one is that they present a severe quenching of the new; second is, as its exploitation and replenishment of the free and the new. Both of them are indispensable and if one of them is missing, nothing would be achieved”. 113It seems to Liang that the traditional Chinese culture as he advocated was not a rigid and stagnant ideology, but to keep pace with the times in order to enhance the essence of inherent Chinese culture, absorb the outstanding elements of a foreign culture in order to remold new culture, and cultivate new citizenship to achieve modernization. Later on in his book *Impressions from the Trip to Europe* Liang made it clear that the development of Chinese culture and the progress of Chinese society should “take the Western civilization to expand our civilization and take our civilization to supplement Western civilization, and a new kind of civilization can therefore be merged in this way”. Notably, Liang's *Theory of New Citizens* made use of the concept of, and approach to renewing the people from the Chinese classic *The Great Learning* in order to expound this ideology with a modern feel. This in itself shows the reasonable value of the outstanding elements of traditional culture in the in the new era of enlightenment.
movement. When the progressive thinkers took in the superior element of Western civilization, they did not completely negate their own cultures. It can thus be seen that enriching and advancing the outstanding elements of traditional Chinese culture and recognizing the reasonable values of Chinese culture, does not run in contradiction to acknowledging the reasonable values of advanced Western culture, transforming the national character, and achieving modernization.

Hu Shi, a scholar favoring Western culture proposed that China should learn from the West, and chase the West, so as to achieve modernization. Hu said that China will and should realize “scientific governance by the people”. He believed that Western civilization can liberate the human mind, transform the physical environment, change social and political systems, meet the spiritual needs of the people, and therefore it is a kind of ideal and excellent culture and civilization. Therefore, there is no conflict between sorting out “national cultural heritage”, holding in esteem the “national quintessence”, and learning the excellent culture from the west, abandoning the “national dregs” with the help of excellent culture and civilization of the West, and the two can complement one other.

Following Liang’s Theory of New Citizens in 1902, in 1905 Chen Duxiu, who strongly opposed the study of the traditional Chinese culture, proposed that The New Youths should possess these qualities: autonomous rather than enslaved, progressive rather than conservative, aggressive rather than reclusive, opening the door rather than isolated from the world, practical rather than unrealistic, scientific rather than visionary. These ideas apparently have a modern sense of humanism. It is generally believed that both Hu and Chen were important figures favoring the Western culture. Even though they both belonged to the school of scholars favoring the Western civilization and thought, Hu and Chen held very different attitude to Chinese culture. Hu recognized the value of traditional Chinese culture, and believed that the two are interconnected, whereas Chen firmly rejected traditional Chinese culture and maintained that eastern and Western cultures were fundamentally opposite. However, both of them seemed to take a different path toward the very same goal since they had a shared vision of the prospect of Chinese culture and both of them believed that China would be sure to achieve modernization.

Those proponents of total westernization like Chen Xujing had criticized the position of westernization as taken by Hu and Chen as not thorough enough. He criticized: “The westernization as maintained by Mr. Hu was nothing but merely partial westernization, not holistic westernization”. We should say that Chen's criticism of Hu was pertinent. As early as in 1919, Hu proposed that we should “do academic research, take in scientific principles, sort out the national heritage and rebuild civilizations”. The value orientation underlying this proposition was that we should learn from the West, reorganize the national cultural heritage, and reconstruct Chinese culture. The approach he took was one of modern scholarship that combines eastern and Western culture, and it is a creative approach in terms of cultural modernization. Judging from Hu's academic activities and social practice in later years, he abided by such a concept of modern scholarship. Therefore, Hu is not
a proponent of holistic westernization in the real sense. Chen Xujing also criticized Chen Duxiu’s Westernization: “The westernization that Mr. Chen proposes is nothing more than democracy and science. There is nothing more except for these. Therefore, the westernization that Mr. Chen is proposing is not the totality of Westernization… Mr. Chen is incapable of actively advocating and accepting westernization, Mr. Chen is able to open up a new era in Chinese ideology, in that he completely denies following Confucian doctrine in China, not in that he advocates total Westernization”.

It is therefore obvious that even those proponents of westernization like Hu and Chen cannot repudiate traditional Chinese culture in the real sense.

Liang Shuming published a book in 1921 entitled *Eastern and Western Cultures and Philosophies*, which he claimed to be a work of “converting to Confucianism”. The book elaborates on the issue of Westernization or Easternization (or alternatively, Confucianization or Europeanization). It gives a comparative analysis of three types of cultural patterns, that is, the Western culture, Chinese culture and Indian culture and reveals the value of Chinese culture. The book reconstructs the subjectivity awareness of Chinese culture and puts forth the claim that future culture in the world will see the revival of Chinese culture. The book demonstrates a multicultural awareness with a view of the world, breaking away from the western-centric paradigm of culture prevailing at the time.

Professor Luo Rongqu at Peking University, a renowned expert in modernization, believed that the book was “a pioneering work on the modernization of Confucianism,” and “the Enlightenment movement of Chinese modernization was mainly directed against Confucianism. Nonetheless, it is precisely in the climax of anti-Confucianism movement that the first important treatise on the modernization of Confucianism got its birth”. It should be said that this comment made by Luo Rongqu is pertinent. It can thus be seen that even a “conservative” of the studies on Chinese traditional culture like Liang Shuming could not run counter to the trend of modernization. On the contrary, the influential figures of modern neo-Confucianism like Liang Shuming were the true movers and pushers of Confucian modernization. This in itself shows that the powers of protection of traditional Chinese culture and the pursuit of modernization are not diametrically opposed to, but can mutually merge with each other.

Judging from the debate of the relationship between eastern and Western culture which involved representative figures such as Liang Qichao, Hu Shi, Chen Duxiu and Liang Shuming, none of them could extricate themselves from the central theme of the modernization of China, regardless of their political stance and academic viewpoints. The crux of the issue lies only in how to achieve modernization and what kind of modernization is to be realized, in which the attitude of traditional Chinese culture is a very important part. Liang Qichao’s neologization (and the Confucianization evolved after World War I), Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu’s westernization, Liang Shuming’s Confucianization were invariably linked through the issue of how to perceive Western culture and traditional Chinese culture. Therefore, our claim that the essence of the Chinese culture debate is concerned with the orientation of China’s modernization is not an exaggeration.
(B) Viewpoints on the studies of traditional Chinese culture in the debate on the issue of modernization

Subsequent to the debate on the eastern and Western culture was the discussion on the issue of modernization in the 1930s. According to historical documents, “modernization” as a proper noun had emerged during the debate on eastern and Western cultures. In the 1920s Yan Jicheng, Liu Keshu and other scholars had clearly used the concept of modernization. Hu explicitly made the proposition of whole-hearted modernization in his well-known essay of “Cultural Conflict” published in 1929. In July 1933, The Shun Pao, a monthly journal in Shanghai, published a special issue on “Chinese Modernization” to commemorate the founding anniversary of the journal. In the preface, the editor of the journal earnestly stated that if China “do not hurry along the ‘modernization’ direction, not only will it lack enough soldiers, it will not have enough food. The whole nation will be reduced to the misfortune of being eliminated or even eternally doomed beyond redemption”.

It is over 80 years since the publication of this special issue. However, there is still a sense of enlightenment when we read it today! We could not help recalling the common agreement reached in the whole nation in the early years of opening up in the eighties of last century: Being backward will leave the whole nation vulnerable to being attacked! If we do not step towards modernization, the Chinese nation will be deprived of the right to live on the earth! How strikingly similar are the warnings of “The whole nation will be reduced to the misfortune of being eliminated or even eternally doomed beyond redemption” in more than twenty articles in the special issue and the alarm of “being deprived of the right of living on the earth” given decades later!

The twenty articles in the special issue, highlighted two problems, the first was concerned with the prerequisite problems and obstacles of realizing modernization in China, and the second was on how to achieve China's modernization. The background to this discussion was also two-fold. First, there was an urgent awareness of the crisis the nation was encountering, and second, there was an understanding of economic crisis in the world.

The recognition of the crisis of the nation originated from the reflection of the tradition of national culture and an understanding of the outstanding element of Western civilization. On the other hand, an awareness of the crisis on the world economy originated from damage brought to the human being by the First World War, and a resulting reflection on the biased identification of Western culture, in particular an understanding of the crisis of the world economy between 1929 and 1933. The logical consequence of such an understanding will lead to a reflection on the actual conditions of the nation (including the historical and cultural traditions and the present political and economic realities), and an understanding of the vulnerability of Western civilization. It can thus be said that the discussion on the issue of modernization typically reflected the intellectual thinking about the relationship between tradition and modernity, between China and the West, and it was a deep pursuit of the debate into these issues during modern times.
Since then, with the thinking about these issues becoming deeper and broader, people from different circles were involved in the discussion. *Chinese and Western cultures and cultural revival* written by Hu Qiuyuan in 1938 and published in 1943, was a monograph on the approaches to the revival of Chinese culture, namely the issue of modernization. In his opinion, had it not been for the conquest of central China and the policy of keeping the door closed and the people ignorant, “China might have already been a modernized country”. He believes that “the purpose of the Chinese revolution is to establish a modern China. The reason why we resisted against the Japanese invaders is to break the barriers to modernization; the reason why we need to found a nation is that we need to build the foundation of a modernized China”. “The so-called modernization is nothing more than industrialization and mechanization, that is, national industrialization. China must achieve modernization in order to survive in the modern international environment. Only in this way can we wash and brush away our backwardness and shame, our shallowness and void. And modernization is the natural promise of China”.\(^{120}\)

Chen Xujing, a vehement advocate of total Westernization, wrote in 1932 a paper entitled “The Chinese education and modernization,” which was published in 1933, refuting the sinicization of education popular at that time. He believed that the so-called Sinicization was in fact resistant to modernization. And the trend was backsliding by rejecting modernization on the pretext of the actual conditions of the nation. His conclusion was: “All Chinese culture should be thoroughly modern, and especially all of the education is to be completely modernized”. Only the modernized education, is alive, fresh and new, and therefore, education must be “quickly, seriously and thoroughly modernized”.\(^{121}\) The modernization as he called it is in fact complete Westernization: “Westernization is an inevitable trend. We have to understand that we must change ourselves, and we should not wait to be changed by others”.\(^{122}\)

Hu Qiuyuan and Chen's way of thinking and value orientations were quite different, and they were particularly different in perceiving the studies of traditional Chinese culture. Yet they had similar opinions on the point that modernization must be achieved in China and that modernization will indeed be achieved. Therefore, the debate on the issue of traditional Chinese culture was permeated with the spirit of modernization, regardless of the subjective consciousness.

In fact, the debate on the issue of China's modernization and the controversy about the future development of Chinese culture, were not only temporally linear and successive, but interwoven and intermingled. The discussion on the issue lasted from the 1930s to the late 1940s. According to the literature reviews, there were a considerable number of books and monographs explicitly entitled as “modernization”. For example, Yang Xingzhi's *On the Chinese Modernization*, Yi Ying's *On the Right and Wrong Track of Modernization* (1933), Zhang Sumin's *The Premise and Methods of China’s Modernization* (1933), Dong Zhixue's *The Essential Issues of Modernization in China* (1933), Chen Gaoyong's *How to Realize China’s Cultural Modernization* (1933),\(^{123}\) Zhou Xianwen's *Traditional Chinese Thinking Modernization,* (1948), and Wu Shichang's *The Issue of Chinese Culture and Modernization* (1948), among others.
Between Tradition and Modernity

(C) The role of the studies on traditional Chinese culture in the debate of the future direction of China

Closely related with the issue of modernization, there also arose the question of the future direction of China. In early 1935, the new king of life, 10 professors, including Wang Ximeng, Tao Xisheng, Sa Mengwu, Huang Wenshan and some others made the “Declaration of Cultural Construction based in China”. The Declaration claimed that the cultural meaning of China was gone, and the political form, social organization, the intellectual form and content had lost their original characteristics. The people under such conditions cannot be regarded as Chinese people. “We are sure to say that from the viewpoint of culture, there is no China in the modern world, and there are no Chinese people within the territory of China”. The author believes that: “For the Chinese to rise in the field of culture, and for Chinese politics, society and ideology to have Chinese characteristics, we must undertake China-based cultural construction”.

“The Declaration” thinks that, in order to engage ourselves in China-based cultural construction, we must review the past China, get to grips with the present-day China, build the future China by taking a critical and scientific approach”. To this end, other alternative means like returning to the ancient, westernization (imitating Britain, America, Germany and Italy), following the steps of Russia, were not fitted to China’s national conditions and practical needs, because these claims “have ignored the particularity of Chinese space and time”. “The Declaration” suggested that “We should pay attention to the here-and-now needs, that is, the China-based needs”.

It does not make sense that praising and cursing the Chinese system and thought in vain. We should examine our attitudes towards everything in the past. “Preserve what should be preserved, discard what should be discarded. Good systems and great ideas of the past should be carried forward and contribute to the world, while the harmful systems and despicable thought should be exterminated without pity. Based on the position of such principles and values, we should absorb what ought to be absorbed from the European and American cultures, but we should not indiscriminately take in everything”.

“The criteria for the discrimination should be determined by the needs of modern China”. The construction of China-based culture means coming up and creating, and “its purpose is to enable China and Chinese people, who have lost their distinctive characteristics in the field of culture, not only to keep pace with other countries and their people in the field of culture, but also to make the most precious contribution to the treasure house of the culture of the world”. The construction of China-based culture ought to stand on some basic stances: there should be basic position: we must have self-awareness, but also need a vision of the world; we should have the magnanimity of not shutting the door to the world, but also the determination of not blindly imitating others. We should neither be conservative nor follow others blindly. Not being conservative means eliminating the old cultural dregs and preserving the quintessence, making every effort to open up a new road. But blindly following others means learning from other’s strong points to make up
our own deficiencies, finding the good way and following it without losing our own understanding. Ultimately, “China will be able to recover the past glory in the field of culture and re-occupy an important position, becoming a strong and vital force in promoting the development of the universal world”.125 “The Declaration” caused uproar since its publication. Owing to the limitation of the theme and length of this, we will not go into the details of controversies around “the Declaration”.

If we examine the issue from the perspective of cultural construction, the subjectivity of cultural construction as well as the nationality of culture, “The Declaration” highlighted the subjective awareness of cultural construction and heightening the spirit of subjectivity, enhancing the national identity through cultural construction, taking in the excellent elements of foreign cultures, and promoting the revival of the Chinese national culture. These ideas still have some positive significance even today. The crux of the matter here is the attitudes these authors took towards the authors for the analysis of the attitude of their own culture: they should take a positive attitude towards the essence inherent in their own culture and criticize or even reject the dross in it.

It can be said that “The Declaration” deserves a considerable degree of approval since its point of departure was to revive Chinese civilization from the perspective of the unity between the cultural identity and its characteristics of the times. This is so because the thread of thinking in “The Declaration” is how China could preserve its consciousness of national identity and promote the cultural construction of subjectivity under the impact of Western civilization.126 This issue of the “cultural base” of “the Declaration” was, as a matter of fact, concerned with the issue of constructing a culture with Chinese characteristics, namely, the issue of Sinification, which further emerged in the subsequent discussion on culture.

For instance, Zhang Shenfu specifically wrote an essay “On Sinification” (1939) Ai Siqi wrote an article “On the Particularity of China” (1939), Ji Wenfu wrote “A Random Talk on the Sinification of Academics” (1940).127 Although the title of Sinification did not appear in other essays and articles, the actual content, however, was concerned about the issue. Of course, these authors were not consistent in their views, and sometimes even quite contradictory. For instance, the viewpoint of Zhang Shenfu, Ai Siqi and Ji Wenfu were very different from each other. However, the issue of “Sinification” in the modernization model, and the issue of the modernization of Chinese culture, as well as the issue of achieving Sinification were indisputably the focus of attention. This in itself also reflects the essence of the debate, reflecting the inseparable relationship between Chinese culture and modernization processes, the spirit of the times, and the national spirit.

(D) The concept of Chinese culture during the Cultural Craze and the Craze of National Culture in the last two decades

The existence and development of the studies on traditional Chinese culture did not appear to be a problem in the first few years after the founding of New China. The
reason is that, with recognition of its values by the top leaders of the country, Chinese culture was treated as a resource available for social development and cultural construction. As early as 1938, Mao Zedong said: “Today’s China is a development of China in history. We are Marxist historicist, we should not cut ourselves off from history. We should sum over and inherit this valuable legacy of history passing down from Confucius to Sun Yat-sen”. In 1940, Mao Zedong expounded his views on the issue of culture in his “On New Democracy”. It seemed to him that “China has created a splendid ancient culture during its long history of feudal society. Sorting out the development process of ancient culture, excluding its feudal dross and absorbing the essence of democracy in it, are the necessary conditions for developing national culture and improving national self-confidence”. “We must respect our own history, and we cannot separate one part of history from the continuum”.  

It is in accordance with such a historical reasoning that, in the early years after the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), traditional Chinese culture were deemed historical and cultural resources that could be “inherited through criticism” and received considerable attention. However, with the changes of the domestic situation of China in the 1950s, there was also a significant change in Mao Zedong’s attitudes towards intellectuals as well as historical and cultural heritage. The “Cultural Revolution” is the extreme performance of a complete denial of Chinese history and culture. During this period, the traditional culture and ideology and culture was regarded as a bad example and as the target of complete negation. Paradoxically, even during the period of the “Cultural Revolution”, the historical and cultural traditions, and in particular the ideological culture, was “paid attention to” for a while and served as a tool of political struggle. 

Typical examples of this sort were the movements of “Commenting on Confucianism and Criticizing Legalism” and “Criticize Lin Biao, Criticize Confucius”, both of which brought ruin to the nation’s history and culture to an unprecedented extent. This proves from a negative perspective, that the studies of traditional Chinese culture we are talking about today have exuberant vitality. Whether admitted or not, it is an objective reality that cannot be denied. This can even affect the social and cultural construction of the real world. The difference lies only in different concepts we use to refer to it at different times. At the time of “total dictatorship” during the “Cultural Revolution”, such words as “feudal culture”, and “reactionary culture”, have been respectively replaced by “traditional culture” (“Chinese culture”, “national culture”), and “traditional Chinese culture” since the 1980s. 

After the reform and opening up, with economic and social development and with the restart of the process of modernization, the cultural craze initiated in the mid-1980s has lasted more than twenty years. The boom of cultural discussion of the last twenty years can be divided into three stages. The first period of the cultural craze in the 1980s was characterized by radical colors with a clear tone of westernization. The second period in the 1990s carried forward the banner of traditional culture with clear conservative colors. The third period starting with the
new century witnessed a craze of traditional culture driven by the intervention of the mass media and public participation.130

During the cultural craze of the 1980s, the term *studies of traditional Chinese culture* was not yet used. The relationship of Chinese traditional culture and modernization became a nationwide concern and the cultural craze swept up the whole nation and its effect could even be felt overseas. The reasons for it are as follows. First, it is the outcome of our reflection on the traditional Chinese culture, through which people wish to understand and resolve the issue of the relationship between traditional culture and modernization. Second, after opening up and reform, Western culture swarmed into the country, imposing both grim challenges upon the local culture and real problems requiring a rational response to the impact of Europe and America. Third, with the further development of reform policy, there was a need to emancipate the mind, to promote changes of cultural values, and to construct an ideological and cultural system to meet the needs of modernization process. Fourth, there was a rational analysis of the consequences of the radical anti-tradition of the “May-Fourth Movement” and complete rejection of traditional culture during the years of the “Cultural Revolution”.131 In this context, the central theme of the cultural discussion during 1980s was basically anti-traditional, with relatively strong westernized colors.

The concept of national study of the traditional Chinese culture was explicitly used during the cultural craze of the 1990s cultural seminars. Explicit use of the concept of Chinese culture, carrying forward the traditional culture, hold high the banner, and a strong “conservative” colors, the 1980s just stark contrast. Different kinds of books, movies and television programs and all kinds of lectures intended to “promote” traditional cultures began to appear on the stage.

Repackaged enlightened reading materials on traditional culture, a variety of newly edited books on the studies of traditional culture ranging from single books to series, from the original ancient books of Chinese culture to the books on studies of traditional culture, the books with thousands and even millions or trillions of words began to appear on the scene in quick succession. In shopping malls, in official circles, on campus, in the factory, suddenly, it seems everyone was concerned about Chinese culture, everyone was interested in the promotion of traditional Chinese culture to a truly unprecedented degree in modern times! The craze of traditional culture during this period was largely an enthusiasm in sorting and mining the historical resources of traditional culture, which indicated a new recognition of the historical and cultural values of the nation.

The passion for traditional Chinese culture continued to rise in the new century. During this period, the craze for studies of Chinese culture had all the characteristics of the Chinese culture craze in the nineties, but it also had some new features. That is, a wide range of mass media and social forces outside of academic circles were involved in the spread of traditional culture of China. CCTV’s “Lecture Room” became an important base for popularizing Chinese culture. Yu Dan gave talks on the “Analects of Confucius” and “Zhuangzi”, Yi Zhongtian talked about “The Three Kingdoms”, as well as other lectures on history and culture given by other scholars, helping to intensify the trend and make the studies of traditional culture
even more popular. The Qianyuan Chinese Culture Classroom of Peking University, Qianyuan Chinese Culture Blogosphere jointly launched by Peking University, Guangmin Daily and sina.com, invited about 100 scholars studying traditional Chinese culture to join in, “in order to join hands together to constitute the first phalanx of Chinese culture studies, and to build the leading platform for popularizing the studies of traditional culture through internet”.

Liang Shu, the chief-editor of the Chinese Culture Studies Column made it clear in his letter to the bloggers for the Qianyuan Chinese Culture Blogosphere that “it is the responsibility of every scholar of Chinese cultural studies to promote the popularization of traditional Chinese culture”. Guangming Daily opened a special column on “traditional cultural studies” in order to research on and popularize the studies of traditional Chinese culture. There were numerous websites, whether they had the title of traditional Chinese culture or not. There were all types of conferences and lectures on traditional Chinese culture officially supported and sponsored. There was also a great variety of activities on traditional Chinese culture in primary or middle schools.132

Compared with the 1990s, the craze for traditional Chinese culture was more rational and practical, and it involved more participants and a greater audience. The relationship between Chinese culture and modernization was investigated not only from the academic perspective, but also from the perspective of its specific content. These investigations took into account the value and functions of traditional Chinese culture, and explored cultural resources for the practical needs of cultural construction and society.133

If we can say that it is a bias to completely deny the traditional Chinese culture in favor of westernization, it is also a bias if we blindly follow the craze of traditional Chinese culture under the banner of promoting and carrying forward the traditional culture, as in the nineties. Yet the study of traditional culture in the new century has become more rational and practical, preferring to understand the value of traditional cultural studies from the perspective of national aspect of culture.

The traditional Chinese cultural studies at this time meticulously examined and critically assessed the studies on traditional Chinese culture out of the realistic requirement of reshaping contemporary culture as well as from the strategic perspective of globalization, so that the studies of traditional Chinese cultural studies can serve the needs of reviving the Chinese nation.134 To apply the triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, the traditional Chinese cultural study in the 1980s is thesis, those in the 1990s are antithesis, and that in the new centennial is synthesis. This synthesis is an elevation to a higher level.

III. The interaction between ancient Chinese culture and the spirit of the times

Throughout the centuries in which Chinese culture developed, you can see a clear ideological trajectory and the characteristics of the times; this is the two-way
interaction between ancient Chinese culture and the spirit of the times. Chinese culture reflects the spirit of the times, which, in turn, promotes Chinese culture and leads its development.

Each era has its unique spirit, and each era has academic thought of its own. The central theme in modern China was to strive for national independence, people's liberation, national prosperity, and to build a democratic, civilized and prosperous new China. Meanwhile, the spirit of the times throughout modern China has been to modernize our nation and make it rich and strong. This theme varies with different stages of its development. During the first half of the 20th century, the central idea of the theme was to combat against the invaders and make the country rich and strong; while in the last twenty years, the theme has become reform and innovation in order to revitalize China.

From the early 20th century, the concept of the traditional cultural studies in the modern sense was introduced into China from Japan, and the role of the studies of ancient Chinese culture in modernizing and revitalizing China has been running throughout the discussions on ancient Chinese cultural studies, and through the discussion of China's modernization in the entire first half of the 20th century. The fundamental crux of the matter, however, does not lie in whether we should revitalize and modernize China, but in how we can modernize and revitalize China, and what kind of modernization to achieve.

Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu, of course, approved of the idea of modernizing the country. The conservative neo-Confucians like Liang Shuming had no reason for not taking the road of modernization and reviving Chinese civilization! The essence of the debate on the eastern and Western culture is in fact how to modernize China and what kind of modernization to achieve, rather than whether we should insist on or oppose modernization. The discussion on Chinese modernization is, in essence, a discussion on the issues of the approaches, models and characteristics of modernization in China. This is also the case for the discussion on the future direction of Chinese culture. The so-called standard cultural construction, seen from today's perspective, is nothing more than how to absorb the advanced Western culture and adapt it to China's national conditions, to get involved in the process of integration into world civilization, to preserve its unique ethnic culture and to promote the national awareness of cultural construction, especially how to correctly handle the relationship between Chinese culture and the problem of modernization. Therefore, we can say that the debate on studies of traditional Chinese culture during the first half of the 20th century was in essence the consequence of the progress of the times which shows the spirit of the time, combating against the foreign invaders and revitalizing China.

Noteworthy is the debate on the issue of traditional Chinese culture in the last twenty years. As can be seen from the preceding discussion, the concept of "traditional Chinese cultural studies" is a complicated term that easily causes misunderstanding. Those who deny the role of traditional Chinese culture denounce it as conservative and lifeless, and think traditional Chinese culture is even used as a tool against socialist culture. Those who favor or endorse the traditional Chinese
culture believe it is the essence of our national culture, and is the study of saving the world.

There are also those who hold a neutral attitude, and they maintain that in today’s cultural construction, the traditional cultural studies should be regarded as a kind of traditional resource to be utilized or reformed, and we should absorb its excellent ingredients critically and discard its dross. Of course, there are also a wide variety of people or institutions who take advantage of the traditional Chinese cultural studies for their own benefits, trying to make the study of traditional Chinese culture commercialized, popularized or even vulgarized, which, after all, is not the mainstream of traditional Chinese cultural studies.

Those who question traditional culture in the recent years, such as Shu Wu and Su Shuangbi mainly concern themselves with whether Chinese culture can promote modernization, rather than oppose Chinese study in a general sense. It should be said that the debate on traditional Chinese culture in nearly the last two decades shows that Chinese culture is compatible with the reforming and innovative spirit of the times. Taking Chinese cultural study as a type of legacy of tradition and giving it a reasonable interpretation will add ideological resources and value options to the reform and innovation of local culture, adapt to the development trends of world civilization, which is consistent with the innovation and rejuvenating spirit of the times.

The boom of traditional culture in recent years, especially the studies on traditional Chinese culture, is the reflection of the reform and innovation spirit of the times, and it is also a response to the challenges of Western civilization. It is a manifestation of the national cultural self-confidence. Compared with the studies on traditional Chinese culture in modern China, the recent study has a new spirit of the times, and it is a recognition and exploration of the national cultural values on a higher level. If it is true to say that the emergence of the traditional cultural studies derived from the need of “defense”, we can say that today’s studies on the traditional Chinese culture is an autonomous endeavor.

It is indicated in the history of modern China’s social development and cultural development that Westernization is impossible, following the example of the Soviet Union turns out to be a failure, and accepting Confucianism completely is unrealistic. At the time of constructing a type of culture in contemporary China, to set modernization as a goal and to adhere to Chinese characteristics is a very legitimate reason. Therefore, it is of great significance to treat the study of traditional culture properly. Seen from the standpoint of academic research and the practical needs of cultural construction, the research on national cultural studies should promote the spirit of the times and prevent undesirable tendencies.

First, we must object to restoring and adhering to the past practices, preventing the revival of feudal dregs. Second, to oppose the trend of making Confucianism ideological and political. Third, we must oppose the trend of commercializing traditional cultural studies. Fourth, we should prevent the trend of regarding Confucianism as the equivalent of traditional Chinese culture.
It should be noted that we should not simply stop at the ideological and cultural level when exploring and promoting the excellent ingredients of traditional Chinese culture. Constructing a socialist harmonious society as its goal, research on traditional Chinese culture aims to promote the establishment of democratic politics, accelerate the construction of a market economy, and promote cultural development and prosperity. We need to be fully aware that these are the roles that studies on traditional Chinese culture can play and the proper functions it can perform. Therefore, traditional Chinese culture cannot be perceived as a cure-all panacea, and we should object to the attempts and practice of replacing the contemporary cultural construction with traditional Chinese culture.

Reform and innovation are today’s spirit of the times. Research and application should be guided by this spirit, which, in turn, will make traditional Chinese culture sparkle with the glow of new life. Simple rejection is certainly not acceptable, but a blind worship or faith in traditional culture is also irrational. What we need is a peaceful mind, broad vision and diverse methods, so that we can sort out the important cultural resources of our nation, in order to promote the advancement of our society.

Ambrose King, an expert in modernization in Hong Kong and Taiwan, once said: “China’s modernization is not intended to contain negative elements of destroying the tradition, but to actively explore how to make tradition become attainable goals for contemporary China, that is the positive function of tradition”. Luo Rongqi, a domestic expert in modernization from Peking University also said: “In fact, we cannot live without traditional culture, nor can we break away from it...If we abandoned traditional culture, modernization would be nothing but colonization or semi-colonial modernization, while the tradition opposite to the trend of modernization is a self-destroying tradition. The essence of modernization is to adapt to the trends of the modern world and keep innovating, and the success of the modernization movement not only resides in overcoming the resistance of tradition to innovation, but also in using traditional factors as the innovative power”.

When reflecting upon the “cultural craze” and “traditional cultural craze” during the twenty years’ reform and opening up, and in particular, when we examine the practice of cultural construction in the past twenty years, and looking into the future trends of world civilization, I think the opinions of King and Luo should be the method and principle of looking at the relationship between traditional culture, modernization and the spirit of the times. With the consensus on this methodology and method, we can truly develop a scientific attitude towards traditional culture, promote Chinese culture, build a spiritual home shared by all Chinese people, and eventually the great rejuvenation of Chinese civilization.
Ancient Chinese Culture and the Chinese Spiritual Homeland

Building a moderately prosperous society in today’s China, why should we come to explore the problem of the spiritual homeland? This issue looks very mysterious, and not closely relevant to the reality of our lives, but in fact it is a very realistic issue.

A shocking incident occurred last year: A student from China University of Political Science killed his teacher in the classroom. Killing his own teacher right in the classroom is something very rare in the history of world civilization, and it is a vicious subversion of the excellent tradition of “honouring teachers and esteeming truth” in Chinese culture, but also a vicious assault against the law of the contemporary civilization. A few years ago, there was the “Ma Jiajue Incident” in which roommates of Ma Jiajue were killed on the campus of Yunnan University.

These incidents point to two problems: on the one hand, the traditional ideological education approach in the university which is characterized by domination and forced spoon-feeding has come to a dead end, and there is an urgent need for reform and innovation; on the other hand, the college student needs psychological adjustment and spiritual repose, or more generally, a spiritual homeland. Therefore, we are not talking about the issue without grounds, but rather it has practical relevance, which is how to treat Chinese culture, how to look at the issues of spiritual repose and building a spiritual homeland, as well as how we should look at some of the social phenomenon today.

I. What is the spiritual homeland?

When talking about the spiritual homeland, everyone seems to know it very well. However, to give a definition that reveals the meaning of explanation, rather than simply explain the phenomena with an enumerated type may not be so easy. Here is one such a phenomenon: we Chinese are very particular about the place of our origin. If we examine it from the level of a spiritual homeland, you can see it as a
geographical attribution. For example, in Guangdong Province, we see a lot of people from different provinces, such as the people from Sichuan, the Northeast of China, Henan, Shandong and so on, although some of these people have been in Guangdong for two to three decades, they do not consider themselves “Cantonese”, and instead, they would say that they are the persons of a particular province, according to their ancestral past life or their workplace.

There are now more than ten million people in Shenzhen, but we rarely hear these people claim that they are the “people of Shenzhen,” including those who have worked in Shenzhen for two decades. Shenzhen is a city of immigrants. Shenzhen becomes a ghost town during the annual Spring Festival because everyone is back home for family reunions, or is traveling abroad, and those who stay in the city are basically those who cannot buy tickets to go home or the migrant workers who are forced to work overtime by enterprise. They do not think that they are Shenzhen people.

This is actually an issue of identity. The Shenzhen municipal government has taken many measures to strengthen the cohesion and attractiveness of the city, and to construct a spiritual homeland in Shenzhen, so that citizens would be able to identify themselves with the city.

Zhuhai is also a city of immigrants, and many of its residents are people from other parts of the country. In Zhuhai, people rarely claim that they are Zhuhai people, and they often say that they are from the Northeast, Beijing, Shanghai, or Henan Province, that is, the places where they or their ancestors used to live. When we live or work in a city for a long time, and have become a citizen in the local community, we still insist that we are the people of our original place. It is clear that we do not identify and integrate ourselves with mainstream society, and there is no access to spiritual repose. The situation is the same in many other places in our country. This is a very serious problem.

The construction of a spiritual homeland is on the one hand concerned with the recognition or understanding of geographical attributes, and on the other with the more important issue of cultural attributes. Cultural attributes are actually cultural identity. For example, I am not Cantonese, but I came to Guangzhou in 1982, and I have lived here ever since. Whenever I talk to others at a conference, someone will say I am not Cantonese. Yet the ancestors of those who work with me or discuss questions came to Guangzhou from other cities of Guangzhou. For example, Sun Yat-sen was from Zhongshan of Guangdong Province. Yet upon examination, his ancestral home was in Henan, and therefore, he is a Henanese. Another example is of our Sixth Patriarch of Zen pioneer, who advocated the idea of “always being the first”. The thought of Zen that he advocated and the way he promoted Zen reflected the pragmatic tradition of the Cantonese. But according to research, the ancestors of the Patriarch were from Hebei, and some generations later they immigrated to Guangdong.

Therefore, the identity of value and culture of a local place should be cultivated and nurtured over a long period. For example, I say that I am Cantonese, because, firstly, I have been a registered permanent resident of Guangzhou city for twenty
years; secondly, because my values, ideas and behaviours have a lot in common with the local Cantonese. For instance, when I am in Guangzhou, I have formed the habit of making an appointment before meeting someone, I am pragmatic, and do not like to show off, etc., and I am also a member of the panel on the municipal spirit of Guangzhou city, and at the same time I am a provincial consultant in the panel of building Guangdong as a cultural province. If I was no Cantonese in Guangzhou, who could be?

Nearly 30 years ago, I also had a sense of distance when I arrived in Guangzhou, since no one could understand Mandarin Chinese and it would be hard for me to ask the way, so I had a strong sense of alienation or exclusion, but after a long time, I had a better and better understanding of the city, and gradually I was integrated into local life, and did not reject the life here. Therefore, our identity with a new place is a gradual process of integrating into its spiritual value. This is an issue of a spiritual homeland as far as my personal experience is concerned, as we are convinced that Guangzhou is a place for spiritual repose, and we can happily accept the value and lifestyle pursued by the local people.

One would slowly melt into the local life after being exposed. This is a question of cultural attribution. Guangdong spirit is in fact the pioneering, practical, ambitious, open-hearted and dedicating spirit, and we identify ourselves with this spirit and get involved with it, so that we can construct a new spirit of Guangdong as our spiritual homeland.

As far as the nation is concerned, there is also the issue of cultural identity. A very big issue concerning the cross-strait relations between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland is that some separatists or those advocating independence in Taiwan make the problem even more complicated. One of the reasons why those Taiwan pro-independence activists object to the unity of Taiwan and mainland China is that they are not Chinese, but Taiwanese, and they cite many examples to prove it.

Ten years ago, I would debate with the minister of the propaganda department of Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party (DDP) in Macau. He did not admit that he is Chinese. I said that we do not need translators during our discussion since we have a shared language even though we use different terms for this language: in Taiwan it is called the national language while in the Chinese mainland it is known as Mandarin. Besides, we all have black hair, black eyes, which means that we have the same cultural and genetic origins. In this sense, do you admit that you are a Chinese from the cultural perspective? He admitted that he is Chinese.

It can thus be seen that the concept of cultural China has some constraining power for the Taiwan pro-independence forces, and this concept cannot be denied by the Taiwanese separatists. Therefore, cultural identity and cultural attribution is an important base upon which we solve the problems in cross-strait relations today.

For the cross-strait relations, the so-called cultural identity, or cultural ties specifically refer to Chinese culture, the spiritual bond of the entire Chinese nation, and it is the basis of our spiritual homeland. This is very important. KMT Chairman Wu Poh-hsiung visited the Chinese mainland a few months ago. After he paid
homage to the Mausoleum in Nanjing and made the inscription: “The world belongs to all, and people are in the centre”.

“The world belongs to all” is a very important concept in ancient Chinese culture, and it was a lofty ideal of promoting the common development and common progress of society. Sun Yat-sen made the inscription “The world belongs to all” in various places. People-centeredness is a position of modern democratic politics, since such a concept did not exist in ancient times, because the monarch was then the centre. Wu Poh-hsiung also said in his speech that the two sides across the Taiwan Strait belong to the Chinese nation. I think that since both belong to the Chinese nation, naturally we should identify ourselves with Chinese culture. The promotion of the concept of “the world belongs to us all” illustrates the identity of Chinese culture. So it can be seen in the issue of constructing the spiritual homeland that this is not only an issue of making a living or the peace of the mind, it is an issue concerning the development of the nation, and even the national identity of the cultural values and the coordination of cross-strait relations.

What is the spiritual homeland? The spiritual homeland is the place of spiritual repose and the resting place of the soul; in other words, this is the way that we can settle down in the world and set up our names. It is invisible, intangible, but has a real impact on our social life and economic development.

We can look at the spiritual homeland from two levels: the first is a personal spiritual homeland, that is, how everybody in the community as adults should settle his mind and body, and how s/he should interact with others, and how s/he need to struggle to make a living, and how s/he should coordinate with other people, and this is the problem of settling down and setting up our names in the world. The second level is concerned with the spiritual homeland of a group, which can be an institution, an industry, a group, or it can even be a nation. I am talking about the spiritual homeland of the whole Chinese nation. Personal spiritual homeland largely depends on individual pursuit, exploration and practice. Excepting the specialized scholar, statesman, or theorist, ordinary individuals cannot describe in theory what their spiritual homeland is, but we can choose our life goals, lifestyle, values that are fit with ourselves, and this is our spiritual homeland for spiritual repose. Each nation calls for the joint efforts of two groups of people: rational statesmen and thinkers, in order to construct a theoretical and systematic spiritual homeland for the nation, which is eventually manifested in our daily ordinary life and popular culture.

II. Ideas about spiritual repose in the studies of ancient Chinese culture

Looking at the relationship between traditional Chinese culture and the spiritual homeland of the Chinese nation, we find that its main content is the concept, ideas and basic values of spiritual repose and its significance for building a spiritual
We perceive national cultural studies as a kind of cultural phenomenon and a kind of cultural value, that is, we examine the studies of national culture in history from a cultural perspective. In other words, we are interested in the issue of what aspects of ancient cultural studies should be studied from the perspective of cultural values, cultural phenomenon and cultural systems.

(A) The idea of harmony

In recent years, great concern has been shown to the issue of harmony. The resolution of the Sixteenth Plenary Session of the Communist Party of China is to build a harmonious society, and the title of the resolution was “the Resolution on Several Great Issues of Building a Harmonious Society”. In view of this, we need to discuss and reflect on the issue of harmonious thought in ancient China. Due to limited space, our discussion will only focus on two important issues concerning the thought of harmony in ancient Chinese cultural studies. These two concepts are really two sides of the same issue.

The first idea is “harmony without uniformity”. This sentence comes from Confucius: “The superior man aims at harmony but not at uniformity. The mean man aims at uniformity but not at harmony”. The virtuous and talented gentlemen are those who have social status. This status is not necessarily economic status or political status, but those who are respected and loved. When the gentleman gets along with others, his attitude towards different ideas is “unity without uniformity”, which refers to harmony and unity when we put different ingredients together. In other words, in a group which has a great variety of different opinions, one should insist on his own position, but do not put their ideas on others, and instead recognize the existence of other people’s ideas. That is, the gentleman pursues and adheres to harmony, but does not seek harmony against his will; he will insist on what should be adhered to, and at the same recognize other people’s right to insist on what they should adhere to. An organic unity composed of different things and different elements is what we call “harmony”.

If we take away the different things, different viewpoints and different people and retain things, viewpoints and people that are congruent with our own, we call this practice “the same”. “Harmony” is characterized by integrating different opinions, while “sameness” means that we piece together the things with similar elements. The correct approach is to combine different elements together to form a new state of coordination, which means “harmony”. The incorrect approach is to piece together things with similar or identical properties to form a whole, which is “sameness”. Gentlemen insist on “harmony” but not “sameness”, that is, “harmony without uniformity”, and do “not adhere to the “same” or “not different”: the fundamental cultural value of Confucianism.

“Harmony without uniformity” is an important force that drove the development of ancient Chinese culture, and it is the manifestation of the important role of
harmony for Chinese people. There appeared hundreds of schools of thought in the Spring and Autumn Period, including Confucianism, Taoism, Moism, Legalism, military strategists, the school of positive and negative forces, and the school of political strategists, etc., forming a situation wherein “a hundred schools of thought contended with each other”. One reason for the emergence of contending schools of thought was that the contention emerged as a consequence of “harmony without uniformity”, which gave birth to the first golden age in the history of Chinese culture. It was the same case with the May Fourth Period (1919), which was also characterized by a great variety of ideas and thought contending with each other, forming the second golden age in Chinese cultural history, which was also driven and supported by the force of “harmony without uniformity”.

The idea of “the superior man aims at harmony but not at uniformity. The mean man aims at uniformity but not at harmony” in the Analects had a profound impact on Chinese culture. Today, when looking at the world situation, we believe that peace and development is the mainstream of world development, and therefore, we need to participate in the process of economic globalization, political multipolarization, and cultural diversity so that China can play a greater role and exert more influence. Besides, we need to promote the development of world civilization, so that the world will live in harmony and develop peacefully.

At the same time, we should also protect our national interests. In the recent financial crisis, the Chinese government is also involved in the international rescue operation, announcing the reduction of deposit and lending rates. In this regard, we should on the one hand stabilize our financial markets, and on the other hand, we ought to stimulate domestic demand and maintain economic growth. It was also a response to joint endeavour of international society to resolve the financial crisis. We are directly involved in this endeavour, but we have to defend our own national interests as well, without the need to care about what the USA, Germany and France might have to say. Therefore, we are adopting the “harmony without uniformity” approach.

Similar to the concept of “harmony without uniformity” is a statement in The Doctrine of the Mean, “All living things are nourished without injuring one another; all roads run parallel without interfering with one another”. All things grow without interfering with each other, and a variety of values, and spiritual methods can exist and develop together without conflict and hostility. “The Way” consists in just ideas, values, concepts and methods. “All living things are nourished without injuring one another; all roads run parallel without interfering with one another” is an important expression of the thought of harmony in ancient Chinese culture, and I think it is the essence of thinking in ancient China.

Putting together “Harmony without uniformity” and “All living things are nourished without injuring one another; all roads run parallel without interfering with one another”, we will have the essence of Chinese thought on harmony in ancient culture. Why do we associate this thought with the idea of spiritual repose? Because if an individual, a group, or a nation is to settle and have a peaceful life, they should have a harmonious environment and mental state. If we have such an
idea of harmony as support, we can get along well with different individuals, groups
and nations, we will be able to insist on what we should adhere to, and we will also
show respect to what other people adhere to. Only in this way can we settle our
minds and become calm.

(B) thinking about the individual to settle down

This issue is very important in today’s society. How to settle oneself refers to how
one can find a proper place during growth so that one can maximally display ones
capacity and achieve self-fulfilment. This needs to be explored. Ancient Chinese
people attach great importance to the issue of settling down and getting on with
their pursuit, and there is a whole set of arguments for it from the political,
economic, cultural and social perspective.

1. Spirit of arduous struggle. Chinese culture has had some consistent spirits. The
spirit of continuous self-renewal, and spirit of consistency, on top of which is self-
 improvement. Self-improvement is an important aspect of the Chinese spirit. The
16th Party Congress Report summed up the spirit of the Chinese nation as “centring
on patriotism and featuring unity and solidarity, love of peace, industry, courage
and ceaseless self-improvement”. Self-improvement was originated from The Book
of Changes: “As Heaven maintains vigour through movement, a gentleman should
constantly strive for self-improvement”. As nature runs vigourously, people should
react in accordance with the operational laws of the nature.

The theory of the unity of nature and man prevailed in ancient China. The law
of nature is lofty and sacred, and therefore, man should adapt to the operational
laws of Heaven, which should become the guide for human behaviour. Since
Heaven moves in a healthy and lively manner, man should of course act accordingly
and strive for continuous self-improvement. As an important component of the
Chinese spirit, the spirit of self-improvement has been running for thousands of
years through the nation, and it is still a great force that drives us to advance
forward. China has been carrying out the reform and opening up policy for thirty
years; it has become strong in the world, and the living standards and social
conditions have gradually improved. The reason for all these achievements is that
the Chinese people have been supported by a spirit of self-improvement. This is a
very important element of the spirit of arduous struggle.

2. Generosity and kindness. The Chinese people are very generous and tolerant,
and they are strict with themselves while treating others kindly. Being generous to
others in Chinese culture is the source of the idea. Just as the quotes from The Book
of Changes put it: “as Heaven maintains vigour through movement, a gentleman
should constantly strive for self-improvement”, which appeared in the Qian
Diagram of the book. Corresponding to the Qian Diagram, there is also such a
statement, “as earth’s condition is receptive devotion, a gentleman should hold the
outer world with a broad mind.”
The earth is immense and solid, bearing all the things of the world. It is very generous, and we should learn the spirit of the earth, in order to be generous and moral. This is the spirit of generosity and kindness. In fact, Confucius also said “He who wishes to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; he who wishes to be enlarged himself, seeks also to enlarge others”.139, “Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you” 140, these statements also mean that one should be kind and generous to others.

3. The spirit of three immortal deeds. “The Three Immortal Deeds” spirit, refers to three monumental careers for an individual. It comes from Chinese classics Zuo Zhuan: “One should, above all, establish his virtue, coming next is the establishment of his merits, which is followed by the establishment of his words. These are the three immortal deeds for a man”. The meaning of this statement is that when a man lives in the world, what is of utmost importance is that s/he is to establish good moral character, followed by a successful career, and finally he can write books to become well-known in the world. The establishment of virtues, fame and words are the three immortal deeds. This “three immortal deeds” spirit is essentially an ambitious and pioneering spirit. When a man lives in the world, he should strive for the establishment of virtues, fame and words. There is a Chinese proverb which express the similar idea, “When a wild goose passes by, its honk remains. Likewise, when one leaves, his/her fame stays. Fame stays just as honk remains”. Sima Qian expressed his goals in life, which was also what motivated him and his father when they wrote Historical Records was “exploring the nature of the universe, knowing changes of past and future, forming one school of learning”. That is, they wished to study the relationship between man and nature in order to develop an understanding of the inherent laws and basic spirit of the development and changes of society since ancient times, so as to develop an independent, distinctive and systematic school of learning. For this reason, “one school of learning” is something extraordinary.

4. Upholding justice without seeking benefits and promoting the Way without craving for credit. The meaning of this statement is that we should seek and promote moral ideals and values, without overly considering profit or material gain. The ancients people believed that the basic value norms for an individual to pursue his careers in society should be: “upholding justice without seeking benefits and promoting the Way without craving for credit”.141

This thought has influenced Chinese society for two thousand years. It was put forward by Dong Zhongshu, the famous thinker during of reign of Wudi Emperor of the Han dynasty. Dong Zhongshu was the advocator of the policy of “proscribing all non-Confucian schools of thought and espousing Confucianism as the orthodox state ideology”, which was adopted by Emperor Wudi and became the orthodox ideology of the state. The thought of “upholding justice without seeking benefits and promoting the Way without craving for credit” stressed the role of moral values, that people should not always preoccupied too much with economic interests and immediate profit, and they should instead look ahead and adhere to correct values. The reason why humans are human is that they have the basic
morality and noble sentiment. The difference between humans and animals can be very big in one sense, and quite small in another sense. Mencius stressed the differences between people and animals were very few, that is, the difference between human and animals can be negligible, because, like animals, humans also have the problems of livelihood, and offspring. From this sense, there is little difference between humans and animals. However, their difference can also be very big, because human beings have a moral conscience, etiquette and sentiment, which animals do not have. It seemed to Dong that human beings should pursue beautiful ideals, moral life and noble sentiments and live upright lives.

Some scholars in the Qing dynasty criticized this idea. They think that when we live in the world, it is impossible for us merely to live for justice without talking about profit and interest. Justice was important and it was primary, but it was not the sole thing that we live for. There are also utilitarian interests and profits beyond morality and justice. Therefore, they made a new proposition that we should “uphold justice in seeking benefits and promote the Way when craving for credit”. This means we must carry forward the good moral character, values, ideals, and sentiments, implementing the right ideals and values, but at the same time we should consider the actual results, individual performance, and personal profit.

I personally think that the latter proposition is more reasonable, since it is more relevant to human life and human concerns, in which righteousness and profit go parallel with each other and are equally important. The former proposition values righteousness more than profit and interest. This is the basic value orientation of ancient Chinese culture, which is seriously skewed from our perspective. Generally speaking, if we are to settle down in the world and set up our names, we should first of all adhere to the practice of “upholding justice without seeking benefits and promoting the Way without craving for credit”. That is, we should not only seek profit, but more importantly, we should bear moral responsibility. Of course, under certain conditions, we will have to consider legitimate material interests, economic interests, spiritual interests, and so on. In a word, on the one hand, we should be moral and righteous, and on the other hand, we can seek profit and get credit, but we should never seek the latter at the cost of the former.

5. The principle of benevolence and loyalty. This is a very important aspect for an individual if s/he is to settle down in the world and set up his/her name, and it is also an important idea in ancient Chinese culture on dealing with the relationship between individuals and between people and society. The principle of benevolence and loyalty is a basic principle of conducting oneself and interacting with others in the world. By “loyalty” we mean “the man of perfect virtue, wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to be enlarged himself, he seeks also to enlarge others”, to quote Confucius. Meaning that if one wishes to be successful in life or career, one will also wish to help other people. This idea has had a profound influence on our nation, and is related to the names of many well-known people.
Loyalty means to help other people with a genuine and sincere heart, which is the basis of looking at relationships with others. Benevolence means “Do not do to others as you would not wish done to yourself”. If one is in a bad situation or has an unpleasant experience, one does not want others to be in the same situation of being denounced, marginalized or exiled. When “loyalty” and “benevolence” are combined, one gets “the principle of benevolence and loyalty”.

“The doctrine of our master is to be true to the principles of our nature and the benevolent exercise of them to others, this and nothing more”, so said one of the disciples of Confucius. That is to say, the basic principle and approach of Confucius is loyalty and benevolence.

The benevolence that manifests in “do not do to others as you would not wish done to yourself” is of particular significance and value in today’s fiercely competitive market-oriented economy. If I do not want to have an anonymous false accusation lodged against me, or to be defamed, then I will not wrongly accuse or defame others. A few years ago I attended a conference of religious leaders in the world, and at the end of the meeting issued a “Declaration on World Religious Leaders Conference”.

“The Declaration mentioned universal ethics which are suitable for the entire human race. That is, these basic morals, ethics and thoughts will be applicable to people of different countries, different nationalities, different times. The Declaration believed that the universal ethics of “Do not do to others as you would not wish done to yourself” of Chinese culture can be accepted by the human race, regardless of countries, nationalities or races. Associated with the principle of benevolence and loyalty is another principle of getting along with other people, that is, “He who requires much from himself and little from others, will keep himself from being the object of resentment”, which means that one should be strict with himself and lenient towards others. This principle is still of positive significance today.

6. The way of great learning. The way of great learning was originated from the book with the same title. The Great Learning (大學, Daxue) here is different from the university in current higher education system (also written as 大学 and pronounced as Daxue) in Chinese. “The Great Learning” is a section drawn from The Book of Rites. Zhu Xi, a scholar of the Song dynasty drew two sections from The Book of Rites, “The Great Learning” and “The Doctrine of the Mean” and annotated them separately.

These two books, together with two other books, Analects of Confucius and Mencius, are known as the “Four Books”. “The Great Learning” elucidated the basic principles and methods of conducting oneself, administering state affairs, governing and benefiting the people. Of course, these principles and methods were explicated from moral perspectives. The way of “The Great Learning” is actually the basic principles, methods and philosophy of learning to be a great man, of learning to have good virtues and excellent abilities. It is the methods and principles of becoming a virtuous and independent man.

“The Great Learning” is concise but very rich in content. It opens with such statements as “What the Great Learning teaches, is—to illustrate illustrious virtue;
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to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence”. “Illustrating virtue, renovating the people and resting in the highest excellence” constitute great learning. Getting close to the people, striving for perfection is the way of great learning.

The first priority of great learning is “illustrating illustrious virtue”. By illustrating, we mean getting to grips with, understanding, recognizing, promoting and pursuing, and by illustrious we mean beautiful and noble. Therefore, by “illustrating illustrious virtue” we mean getting to grips with, pursuing and promoting the beautiful and noble virtues.

The second important thing is “renovating the people”, that is, we should get close to the people and love them. When Zhu Xi annotated this statement, the word “to renovate” is explained as “to renew”, which means educating, edifying and enlightening. Thus, to make the people constantly renewed and to make perfect their morals, we need to enlighten, educate and improve them.

Finally, the third important thing in “The Great Learning” is “to rest in the highest excellence”, that is, to attain to the highest level of perfection. “Illustrating virtue, renovating the people and resting in the highest excellence” are the three basic principles. However, it does not suffice if we merely adhere to these three principles. Getting to grips with, promoting and practicing good virtues, listening to, taking care of, educating, helping and promoting the people, and finally attaining to the greatest level of excellence are just abstract and general principles, and more specific, operational methods are also required.

The ancient people were very smart. Apart from these “three guidelines”, there also followed “eight practices”: rectifying the heart, being sincere, acquiring knowledge, exploring the nature of everything, self-cultivation regulating the family, governing the state, and making the whole kingdom peaceful and happy, which were known as the “eight practices”.

The central meaning of these eight practices was that we should sincerely rectify our thought; we should also get close to the people and acquire knowledge through learning and practice; cultivate ourselves and regulate our family. By so doing can we govern the state and make the whole world peaceful and happy. The practice of self-cultivation, family regulation, state governance and making the world peaceful is an ideal for ancient Chinese, especially for the scholars in ancient China, who perceived these practices as the supreme realm of the success of their career, their life, and the service of society and country.

A spirit of arduous struggle, generosity and kindness, the three immortal deeds, “upholding justice without seeking benefits and promoting the Way without craving for credit” “the principle of benevolence and loyalty”, and the way of great learning; what do all these have to do with the issue of settling down and spiritual repose?

Of course, there are very important relationship between them. If a person is to be at ease physically and spiritually, free from anxiety and nervousness, and if one wishes to exhibit his talents and values to the maximum, one should strive to improve oneself in the first place. If one does not possess the spirit of self-improvement,
one will not have a career. If one does not have a career, one will not have a sense of accomplishment, which will make one feel that society is unjust, and one will be jealous of the real talents and get frustrated.

So we need to have a spirit of struggle and make accomplishments. When humans live in the world, they not only have physiological needs and the needs of material life, and there are also the needs for being respected, the needs of safety and even for self-actualization. Therefore, we have to struggle, have a sense of accomplishment, and need to be generous and helpful to others, so that we can settle down in society. Settling down in society and having a spiritual repose are not something one can accomplish at one stroke, and it is instead a long process of learning, especially in the practice of social life.

(C) Thought about benevolence and rites

This is a very important concept in the study of ancient Chinese culture, and it is also a basic thought and spirit running through ancient Chinese culture. What is benevolence? “Benevolence” appears very abstract but in fact it is very specific. The idea of “benevolence” is consistent in Chinese culture. Confucius was the first to elucidate the thought of “benevolence” and he created a system of “benevolence” ideology. Confucius was asked what “benevolence” was, and replied: “It is the love of people.”

The love of people was one of the interpretation of the meaning of “benevolence”. Confucius attended to the individual needs and natural abilities, and therefore, he varied his interpretation of “benevolence” with different people and on different occasions. Among all these interpretations, two were most representative: one is “the love of people”, and the other is a more detailed elaboration. According to “The Analects”, When Yan Hui, one of Confucius’ disciples, consulted him about “benevolence”, Confucius said, “Benevolence is to subdue one's self and restore to propriety”.

Restrainting oneself and restoring the order and principle of rites in the Zhou dynasty was called “benevolence”. That is, one had to restrain inappropriate and improper desire in order to achieve the principles of order and propriety and a spirit of propriety. Yan Hui went on asking, “I beg to ask the steps of that process,” since restoring to the rites of the Zhou dynasty is only a principled guideline, what should be done exactly in order to achieve it? Confucius replied: “Look not at what is contrary to propriety; listen not to what is contrary to propriety; speak not what is contrary to propriety; make no movement which is contrary to propriety”.144 That is to say, one ought not to look at, listen to, speak about, or do whatever does not conform to propriety. If our words and deeds conform to propriety, the rites of the Zhou dynasty could be restored and benevolence could be accomplished. Therefore, “propriety” and “benevolence” should be combined and then we will have the thought: “integration of benevolence and propriety as a whole entity”.

“Benevolence” is a very important concept in Chinese culture. Zhang Shenfu, who was a professor at Sun Yat-sen University and one of the three founders of the Chinese Communist Party, conceived a blueprint of future Chinese culture in 1925. He proposed that the future of Chinese culture should consist of three components: the first was the Confucian concept of “benevolence”; the second the analytic philosophy of the West, because Chinese culture is characterized by intuitive, holistic and integrated thinking and lack of abstraction and analysis. Therefore, Western analytic philosophy should be integrated, and in particular, Bertrand Russell’s analytic philosophy should be learned; along with Lenin’s dialectics. In his opinion, the combination of the Confucian concept of benevolence, Russell’s analytic philosophy, and Lenin’s dialectic represented the future direction of Chinese culture.

It can thus be seen that the early Chinese communists still affirmed ancient Chinese thought of benevolence after the New Cultural Movement. When Sun Yat-sen University was founded, there was a staff teacher responsible for the affairs of the university whose name was “Cao Siwu”. Siwu (literally meaning Four Nots) in his name came from the Four Nots of Confucius’ statement of “Look not at what is contrary to propriety; listen not to what is contrary to propriety; speak not what is contrary to propriety; make no movement which is contrary to propriety”. Even today, the idea of the Four Nots remained a significant and reasonable concept. At present, ritual propriety consists in institutional and behavioural norms. Any society should have its own propriety, institutions and behavioural norms. For instance, the behaviour, words and deeds of any citizen should be in line with ritual propriety, equivalent to the basic behavioural norms of today, containing such content of modern civic education as being patriotic and law-abiding, being polite and being honest. It can thus be seen that the thought of benevolence and propriety in ancient times maintains a profound impact today, and there are still some aspects worthy of critical summation and creative interpretation.

Ritual propriety means basic institutions and behavioural norms, with a variety of understandings and interpretations. For instance, the feudal ethics codes were part of the ritual propriety of ancient society, and therefore, an analysis of the dual nature of ritual propriety should be carried out before applying it to modern society. When “benevolence” and “propriety” were integrated, it was in fact an important approach to spiritual repose in the abstract sense.

Modern democratic society is aware of the rules of fairness and justice. If we are benevolent and love people, and comply with ritual propriety, we can achieve benevolence. In this way we will realize self-fulfilment and self-improvement, and in the meantime help others and promote social progress.

As can be seen from the preceding discussion, ideas of the harmony, settling down and getting on with one’s pursuit, benevolence and propriety are the fundamental concepts concerning spiritual repose in our national cultural studies, and still have positive significance today. Some might say that these thoughts are out of date, originating in the era of an agricultural civilization, and the product of a
feudal autocratic society; what do they have to do with our life today? Can they be useful?

I think we should look at the problem in two ways: one is the *zeitgeist* of a culture. Any culture is the product of a particular era. Undoubtedly, the aforementioned ideas of spiritual repose are the product of ancient agricultural civilization, and also the product of the feudal era.\(^\text{145}\) In this sense, it cannot adapt to the overall development of our society. However, culture also has a national character. Much of our culture was extracted and summarized after a hard struggle by people of many generations and they were formed through the practice of people. It has become a kind of a behavioural norm or cultural subconsciousness. In this sense, it is the wisdom of our nation. Therefore, culture has continuity and can be inherited, and it can still be made use of today. That is why we still maintain the thought of unity without uniformity and the practice of self-improvement and being generous and tolerant to others, and so on.

It must be emphasized that when we look at ancient ideas of harmony, benevolence and propriety, we must examine them from the perspective of the spirit of the times. Our spirit of the times today is reform and innovation, and therefore we need to examine ancient thought and culture through this lense, and absorb them. Going back to ancient times and simply copying everything is inconceivable, nor can we simply cut ourselves off from the past and deny the significance of tradition, becoming culturally nihilistic. We should instead give rational reform to ancient ideology and culture. When examining harmony, benevolence and propriety through such a modern vision, they can be endowed with the spirit of the times and be reasonably inherited.

About two years ago, four university students committed suicide in Guangdong one after another, from which we can see how psychologically fragile they were. In fact, their problems can be solved, and they do not have to be troubled by the gain or loss for the moment at the cost of their lives.

Human health includes not only physical health but also mental health. In this sense, our national culture has profound examples who were unyielding in fulfilling their own ideals, for the nation, and for their own ideals, giving their best till their heart ceased to beat, and they were never intimidated by difficulties or setbacks. For example, Liang Shuming, an important figure in modern Neo-Confucianism, who was one of the well-known scholars invited by Zhou Enlai to participate the Political Consultative Conference. After the founding of the PRC he argued with Mao Zedong on the issue of farmers, and he was severely criticized by Mao Zedong, but he refused to bow to Mao or to make an apology, even when he was physically and mentally abused during the “Cultural Revolution”. Liang Shuming had a kind of confidence that he had a great responsibility on his shoulders and the truth was on his side, so he took great pride in himself and had nothing to fear.

He was 95 years old when he left the world, and he lived over ten years more than Mao Zedong who was born in the same year as he. Despite the tough environment, Liang’s longevity was due to the fact that he had really mastered the essence of Chinese culture and was able to handle the issue of spiritual repose, and
therefore, he could still adhere to academic truth, and calmly deal with political pressure, waiting for the bright future to come, even though he had to face political storms and the surging flood of mass struggle.

In addition, Professor Liu Wendian was a scholar famous for his studies on Zhuangzi. He taught at National Southwest Associated University which was located in the southwest border of China during the Sino-Japanese War. Liu continued his studies on Zhuangzi even though the area was bombed by Japanese planes. This shows how confident and aloof the intellectual was in the face of danger and great difficulty. We also have the examples of Feng Youlan and Qian Mu, both of whom survived hardship and difficult circumstances and ultimately enjoyed longevity. These scholars had a profound understanding of the fundamental aspects of Chinese culture and the spirit and core values in Chinese culture, so they had a positive understanding on how they could manage to settle down and gain spiritual repose. This does not simply mean that they were escapers, forcing themselves to give up their reputation and benefits. Instead, they had an appropriate and optimistic attitude towards life's problems and challenges.

III. Constructing the Chinese spiritual homeland

The proposition of “promoting Chinese culture and building a shared spiritual homeland for the Chinese nation”, has received enthusiastic responses from Chinese people at home and abroad, and domestic academic circles have shown great concern for the issue. In my opinion, three areas of this proposition are worth noting. First, what do we mean by Chinese culture when we say “promoting Chinese culture”? Second, what is “the shared spiritual homeland of the Chinese nation”? Third, what is the relationship between “promoting Chinese culture” and “building a shared spiritual homeland”?

Based on my years of academic exchanges with overseas Chinese in four places across the Taiwan Strait, as well as on my observations of contemporary cultural practice, so-called “Chinese culture” is the lifestyle that evolved through long-time development as well as the value system that reflects the lifestyle, including customs, social psychology, among which, the core value is the most fundamental.

It should be noted that the Chinese history of culture naturally includes the modern time from the Opium War to the May Fourth Movement as well as the cultural development process after the founding of the nation. In other words, to promote Chinese culture is to promote the excellent culture from tradition to modern times, not only the excellent culture in ancient times.

In terms of space, Chinese culture is formed within Chinese territory, including the regional cultures formed through long cultivation, such as the Central Plains, Bashu, Wu and Yue, Chu, Lingnan, and Kanto cultures, as well as the relative newcomer of the Beijing school culture and Shanghai culture. Besides, it also includes the ethnic cultures in different geographical locations.
Apart from the Han culture, the Tibetan culture, Manchu culture, Mongolian culture, Muslim culture, Yi culture, Yao culture, Tujia, Hmong and other cultures grow in the regions of China, reflecting the diversity and unity of Chinese culture. Chinese culture consisting in multi-ethnic reflects its richness and diversity, and highlights the spirit of “harmony without uniformity”. Therefore, to promote Chinese culture is actually to promote the ethnic culture of the past 5,000 years from the ancient time to the modern time, and it also means promoting all the regional cultures and ethnic cultures in Chinese territory, especially the aspects of culture still reasonable today, and which play an active role in the creative explanation and transformation of culture.

This is also what we call excellent Chinese culture. In my view, what people have been talking of Chinese culture during these years, is in fact traditional culture. If we shift down the limitation of tradition, and treat the ethnic culture from the May Fourth Movement to the establishment of PRC as “tradition”, and treat the humanistic academic culture, concepts and academic ideas in the natural science circle as “tradition”, in that way, when we talk about promoting Chinese culture and its brilliant traditions, this period should be included within scope.

Chinese culture in this period is characterized by new elements and the true meaning of modernity. If we broaden our views, and examine Chinese culture from a broader horizon, the culture created after the establishment of the PRC, especially the socialist culture with Chinese characteristics formed during the 30 years of reform and opening up, is important. When promoting Chinese culture, we should not discard culture since the May Fourth Movement and modern times, let alone that formed after reform and opening up! The culture that needs to be promoted in order to build up a common spiritual homeland is the excellent culture from ancient times to modern times, with its core being a new type of culture formed since the May Fourth Movement, especially reform and opening up. It is not confined to Confucian culture, nor does it specifically refer to Han culture. Chinese culture needs to be promoted, but reforming and creative spirits are also necessary; Chinese culture helps us to build a spiritual homeland, but we should recognize its temporal and national characteristics and we should recognise modernity. It does not mean accepting without discrimination, nor restoring to the ancient times and criticizing the modern culture by comparing it with the traditional.146

“Building up the Chinese spiritual homeland” is the creative cultural construction idea. Over a long period of time, we had no concept of a spiritual homeland, nor self-consciousness of a national common spiritual homeland, therefore we did not have the corresponding cultural construction theory and practice. In my opinion, “Chinese common spiritual homeland” is not confined to one period, level or region, but a spiritual homeland for the overseas Chinese and the whole nation. The proposal of this idea is a big step for the construction of ideology and culture.

Academically speaking, corresponding with the word “common” are such concepts as “typicality” or “specificity”. “Typicality” refers to a typical class, a type, a region. For example, such requirements as serving the people wholeheartedly, life-long struggle for communism, cannot be used for ordinary people, nor can they
be applied to the members of democratic parties. These are the requirements specifically raised for the Communists, especially leading cadres of the Communist Party. This is what is called typical.

By “common” we mean regardless of class, type and region. For instance, if one identifies with China and Chinese culture, being a good man, doing good deeds and being a gentle man, this is a common sense for the Chinese both at home and overseas. If a Chinese person identifies with the basic value of Chinese culture, he could do good things and be a gentleman; this is called common. Put bluntly, the common spiritual homeland has a cultural value baseline, which is the identity of the basic values and concepts of Chinese culture, with the basic value requirement and personal integrity of a Chinese person. From the ideological and theoretical point of view, the academic circle needs to discuss the content and requirement of the baseline of cultural value of a common spiritual homeland. We should see clearly that there is still a long way to go to build a systematic, practical and forward-looking common spiritual homeland, and therefore, we need to notice the difference between “typical” and “common” in order to identify the objects, and enhance the effectiveness of building a spiritual homeland.

There is a logical connection between the promotion of Chinese culture and the construction of a common spiritual homeland. The promotion of Chinese culture could lighten the unique charm and value of culture, strengthen national cultural identity, increase national cohesion, and strengthen the spiritual connection between Chinese at home and overseas, so that we could offer the ideological and cultural basis and ties of value recognition for the construction of a spiritual homeland.

The construction of a homeland could mobilize various favorable factors of Chinese culture, promote the cultivation of culture, enhance the cultural body of the nation, and provide a spiritual homeland for Chinese people at home and abroad. The development of Chinese culture and its value in modern times should be implemented for the whole nation’s communication, and recognition of spiritual values. In this case, we should build a spiritual homeland, and lighten Chinese culture through that homeland.

In short, this is the direction that we should strive for in order to recognize and promote the spiritual value of Chinese culture, implement its value at the spiritual homeland level, develop and strengthen the Chinese nation, and rejuvenate Chinese civilization.
Traditional Chinese culture is characterized by a profound and lingering humanistic thought. To rationally sort out and creatively transform the traditional humanistic thought has important theoretical and practical significances for discovering the relationship between traditional Chinese culture and modernization and for our ongoing cultural development in the market economy. Roughly, the humanistic thought in traditional Chinese culture falls into the following five aspects, namely observing the Way unswervingly and persistently, valuing harmony and moderation, being inclusive with the consciousness of “Cultural China”, conserving the old while making innovations and valuing morality and righteousness.

I. The indomitable spirit of observing the Way

One important aspect of traditional Chinese humanistic thought is to observe the Way firmly and persistently without yielding. This spiritual orientation centred around the Way is a good embodiment of Chinese people's pursuit of loftiness and their ideals.

The Way-observing mentality came into being and showed significant features as early as the Pre-Qin Period. Fundamentally, this mentality meant that the Way was supreme and its authority and ideological values should always be observed unconditionally and consciously. The Way-following thought of Confucius, among others, was representative.

Confucius always attached importance to the Way. In his mind, the Way was uppermost and must be observed unswervingly. And in this regard he made a series of remarks, of which the following are some examples.

“When right principles of government prevail in the kingdom, he will show himself; when they are prostrated, he will keep concealed”; “When good government prevails in the empire, ceremonies, music, and punitive military expeditions proceed from the son of Heaven”; “…when right principles prevail in
the kingdom, there will be no discussions among the common people”; “If right principles prevailed through the empire, there would be no use for me to change its state”\textsuperscript{148}; “Riches and honors are what men desire. If it cannot be obtained in the proper way, they should not be held. Poverty and meanness are what men dislike. If it cannot be avoided in the proper way, they should not be avoided”; “If a man in the morning hears the right way, he may die in the evening without regret”; “A scholar’s mind should set on truth”; “If my doctrines make no way, I will get upon a raft and float about on the sea”;\textsuperscript{150} “The superior man bends his attention to what is radical. That being established, all practical courses naturally grow up”; “Frequent the company of men of principle so that you may be rectified”;\textsuperscript{151} “With sincere faith he unites the love of learning; holding firm to death, he is perfecting the excellence of his course”;\textsuperscript{152} “A good minister should serve his prince according to what is right, and when he finds he cannot do so, he should retire”;\textsuperscript{153} “When good government prevails in his state, he is to be found in office. When bad government prevails, he can roll his principles up, and keep them in his breast”; “The object of the superior man is truth. Food is not his object. He is anxious lest he should not get truth; he is not anxious lest poverty should come upon him”; “A man can enlarge the principles which he follows; those principles do not enlarge the man”; “Those whose courses are different cannot lay plans for one another”; and “Practice righteousness to carry out their principles”.\textsuperscript{155}

Throughout his lifetime, Confucius determinedly fulfilled his Way-observing ideology, and never yielded despite various hardships. This spirit is, in effect, the sublimation of moral ideals and the reflection of value rationality.

Mencius inherited the Way-observing mentality of Confucius. Mencius said, “The Way is so lofty and exquisite”; “After a gentleman is successful, he does not deviate from the Way”; “When the Way prevails in the realm, people should abandon themselves to the Way. When the Way is lost in the realm, the Way should be abandoned in favor of people”;\textsuperscript{156} “A real man should live in a broad house, stand in the right place and walk on the thoroughfare. When he is successful, he should walk along with other people; when he is unsuccessful, he should stick to his principle. A real man is someone who is impervious to the temptation of wealth and high position, not shaken by poverty and not yielding to despotic power”.\textsuperscript{157} “Life is what I desire, and righteousness is also what I desire. When I cannot obtain both of them, I will choose righteousness over life. Although I also long for life, I have something more important than life to pursue. So I will not live disgracefully at the expense of giving up what is important”; “Benevolence is about people. When benevolence is combined with people, the Way is born”.\textsuperscript{158} “To win the trust of the king, you need a proper way, …to win the trust of your friend, you need a proper way, …to make your parents happy, you need a proper way, …to make yourself an honest and sincere person, you need a proper way, …honesty is the way of the Heaven, and pursuing honesty is the way of people”; “There is a way to gain the realm: if you gain the people, you will gain the realm. There is a way to gain the people: if you gain the heart of people, you will gain the people. There is a way to
Mencius advocated the four-pillar theory (compassion—ren; being ashamed of evil—yi; respect and comity—li; and differentiating right from the wrong—zhi) based on the theory of the original goodness of human nature, the theory that man is an integral part of nature and the theory of benevolent government, and so on. All of these reflect his observance of the Way.

The Way-observing thought of Xun Zi was inherited from Confucius. His observance of the Way was mainly represented by his theory of rituals. He said, “Propriety is the premise of law and the general principle of all rules and regulations”; and “Propriety is the end point of learning”.

In the Han dynasty, Dong Zhongshu elevated the Way-observing thought to a new height. He proposed a famous saying: “Whatever you do, you should uphold justice and forget personal interest”, elucidating the utmost controlling power of the Way. He said, “The Way is flawless forever; when the Way is lost, there will be trouble”; “The ultimate origin of the Way is Heaven. Heaven stays the same, and so does the Way” and “The king may change the system, but cannot change the Way”. The theory of Heaven-man induction and the principle of feudal and moral conduct, which he went to great lengths to argue for, are the embodiment of his Way-following mentality.

In the Ming and Qing dynasties, Gu Yanwu boldly proposed “handing out power to all people under the Heaven, because it belongs to them”. Wang Fuzhi claimed that “the realm is not the property of one person”. Li Zhi argued against the common practice of taking the ideas of Confucius as the yardstick to distinguish between right and wrong. He said, “If we always take the ideas of Confucius as the yardstick to distinguish between right and wrong, we will never tell them apart”. Huang Zongxi said straightforwardly that the king was “the biggest hazard under heaven”. Dai Zheng criticized the principle of nature and human desires of the Confucian school of idealist philosophy in the Song and Ming dynasties as “a brutal killing tool”, and disclosed that “its followers used philosophy to kill people”. Tang Zeng pointed out more penetratingly: “Ever since the Qin dynasty, all kings are bandits”. Those remarks all developed from the Way-observing thought in traditional Chinese culture.

From recent times, Chinese people have made tremendous effort to reform the country and learn about the advanced material, institutional and ideological culture of the West, for the independence and prosperity of China. This was spurred by an inner motivation, namely, the Way-observing mentality.

After 1978, the Chinese people were able to break free from rigid political doctrines and institutions and shift to the road of reform and opening up, and ultimately stepped onto the pathway of a socialist market economy. This
transformation had everything to do with the Way-observing spirit in traditional Chinese culture.

II. The ideal of worshipping the mean and valuing harmony

Another important content of traditional Chinese thought on humanism is to value harmony and advocate moderation.

In the eyes of Chinese people, harmony is the highest ideal and the most beautiful spectacle, and to behave moderately, neither overdoing nor underdoing, is the best way. This value ideal and behavioural norm ran through the course of Chinese culture, from the Pre-Qin Period all the way through to recent and contemporary times.

As early as in the Western Zhou dynasty, thinkers researched the theory of harmony. Their research was done by comparing “harmony” and “sameness”, and it was generally known as “differentiation between harmony and sameness”. At the end of the Western Zhou dynasty, Shi Bo expounded the connotation and meaning of harmony. According to him, only when different elements are combined in an organized way, can they achieve the state of consolidation and harmony. In his opinion, delicious food was possible only when different tastes were in harmonious proportion; beautiful and pleasant music was possible only when different tunes were in harmonious proportion; a king was able to create a peaceful and happy world only if he was ready to hear both pleasant and unpleasant words.

Shi Bo said: “Harmony is the principle by which things grow and develop; sameness will not last long. When different things are put together, there will be harmony and things will grow; when the same things are put together, nothing useful will be born”. When different things are combined in a proper way, there will be balance among them, and this is called “harmony”, which is the only approach to the birth of new things. If the same type of things are put together, there will only be an increase in quantity but no new creation, and in this case the development of things will come to a halt. At the end of the Spring and Autumn Period, Yan Ying from the Qi Kingdom further enriched the connotation of harmony with the theory of “mutual assistance” and “mutual complementation”. Taking the monarch-minister relationship as an example, he expounded the profound principle of “the positive and the negative complementing each other”. He stressed: “When the monarch says the pros, the minister should say the cons. This is how the pro works. When the monarch says the cons, the minister should say the pros. In this case bad effects will be prevented”. By “complementing his under-doing and impairing his over-doing”, a comprehensive balance could be achieved, so that a harmonious relationship would be established between the monarch and his ministers, and the society operate normally.

Confucius carried on Shi Bo and Yan Ying’s thoughts on harmony and crystallized it into the cultural outlook of “harmony in diversity”. His famous maxim is:
“A gentleman gets along with others, but does not necessarily agree with them. A small man agrees with other people blindly, but does not necessarily get along with them.”\(^{162}\) He elaborated: “The key to the use of the propriety is being right to the point. This was the most important thing that the ancient monarchs used for ruling the country. Anything, big or small, should be done to the right extent, but sometimes this may not work. If you look for propriety for its own sake, but do not use any rules to regulate, this is not right either.”\(^{163}\)

Confucius regarded the observance of the thought of “harmony” not only as the yardstick to distinguish a gentleman from a small man, but also as the touchstone to test a monarch's observance of the late monarch's ways. In fact, Confucius' benevolence ideology, either the exposition of the connotation of benevolence or the method to fulfil benevolence, in the final analysis, is to realize the state of “harmony”. His value criterion: "Don't look at, listen to or do anything that goes against propriety"\(^{164}\) was ultimately to maintain social harmony. In addition, the five virtues (respect, generosity, honesty, wisdom and gratitude), the principle of filial piety and fraternal duty and some other doctrines of Confucius were also to this purpose. His harmony-valuing thought exerted a far-reaching impact on later generations.

After Confucius, other Confucians further developed and consummated the harmony-valuing thought. Mencius' theory that man is part of nature required harmony among the heart, mind and nature, which marked a new development in the harmony-valuing mentality. The Neo-Confucianism of the Han dynasty, of which Dong Zhongshu was the central figure, was based on the original Confucianism of the Pre-Qin Period. It added the theory of yin-yang and the five elements to Confucianism and made it its theoretical framework. Also, ideas of Legalism, Taoism, Mohism, the school of Logicians and others were absorbed and the theoretical achievements of natural science, of which *Huangdi's Internal Classics* was representative, were also adopted. This is how Neo-Confucianism came into being, which was centred on heaven-man induction. This ideology further argued for the internal harmony and unity between individuals, between Heaven and man and between man and society, and elevated the harmony-valuing mentality to a new height.

It is worth mentioning that the famous “self-discipline and social commitment” thought in traditional culture in effect includes and reflects the spirit of harmony. Dealing with everything with generous morals is to emphasize the harmony and unity between man and nature as well as amongst people. The concrete expression of the mentality of man-nature harmony and unity in traditional Chinese culture is to conform to nature and adjust one's action according to circumstances, but not to take pleasure in conquering or harming nature. Confucius advocated fishing with rods rather than casting a big net across the river so that the fish would not die out. Mencius suggested logging in the right season, so that the growth of trees would not be disturbed. Xunzi opposed cutting down trees in the season when they grew and catching or poisoning fish in the season when they bred.
The authors of *Huai Nan Tzu* explicitly showed their objection to the practice of “fishing by drying the pond” or “hunting by burning the woods”. These examples are representative of the commendable thought of maintaining ecological harmony and stressing the man-nature relationship.

As for interpersonal harmony and unity, traditional Chinese thought and culture are reflected by the emphasis on the friendship and equality between individuals, ethnic groups and states. As for interpersonal relationships, the Teng Wen Kung in *Mengzi* proposed the idea of “five cardinal relationships”: “This is the principle for the relationship between individuals: There must be a family affection between the father and the son, there must be etiquette and propriety between the monarch and the minister, there must be role assignment between the husband and the wife, there must be a superior-inferior distinction between the elderly and the young, and there must be faith between friends”. In these five relationships, the basic principle is that the monarch should be wise and the minister loyal, the father should be affectionate and the son dutiful, the husband should be respectful and the wife obedient, and friends should be nice and respectful to each other. A well-known word of Mencius went: “In warfare, the right season and climate is not as important as advantageous terrain, and advantageous terrain is not as important as harmony and unity among the people”\(^6\), which highlighted the significance of “harmony”.

“The Qian Diagram” in *The Book of Changes* said: “When the leader comes out of the common people, the world will be harmonious and unified”. “The Law of Yao” in *Book of History* said, “When people became brightly intelligent, the myriad states became united and harmonized”. This was concerned with the friendship, harmony and unity among ethnic groups and states.

With regard to contradictions and conflicts between ethnic groups and states, traditional Chinese thought generally opposed violence and advocated peaceful resolutions. In *The Art of War*, there is a viewpoint which suggested settling warfare without fighting: “To fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting”. When it came to interpersonal contradictions and conflicts, traditional Chinese ideas always advised dealing with them in a peaceful manner. If you stand in the upright position, the basic way to conduct yourself is: “Correcting your own mistakes as well as others’ mistakes”\(^6\); and: “Don’t do to others what you don’t want others to do to you”\(^7\). In this way, conflicts and disagreements could be resolved peacefully; problems could be nipped in the bud. The great thinker Zhang Zai of the Northern Song dynasty said that this is an incisive exposition of dividing one thing in two and settling it in the contradiction-conflict way.\(^8\) This viewpoint of Zhang Zai’s was representative in ancient China and had its historical rationality.

The traditional humanistic spirit holds that the optimum of harmony is “supreme harmony”. This was first proposed by Yi Zhuan. *The Doctrine of the Mean* said: “Everything coexists and does not harm each other, and every way coexists and does not hinder each other”\(^9\), which is what was referred to as “supreme harmony” by Confucians. In “Taihe” in the *Zhengmeng*, Zhang Zai elaborated on
this. In his mind, supreme harmony was the highest peak of traditional Chinese philosophy. The Way was the highest ideal, or in other words, the best overall harmonious state. This type of harmony implicates the interaction and mutual reciprocal transformation between opposing pairs (sinking versus floating, ascent versus descent, motion versus stillness, etc.), and it is overall and dynamic.

In ancient China the harmony-valuing spirit was closely related to the equilibrium-valuing mentality. Harmony was the result of equilibrium, while equilibrium was the embodiment of harmony and the way to achieve it. Harmony had the same thinking method and value orientation as equilibrium, and the two frequently went together. The Doctrine of the Mean said: “While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of equilibrium. When those feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, there ensues what may be called the state of harmony. This equilibrium is the great root from which grow all the human acts in the world, and this harmony is the universal path which they all should pursue”. In the moderate and harmonious state, everything and everyone in the cosmos would be in their proper place and coexist in peace. Regarding equilibrium as the yardstick of harmony and equating harmony with equilibrium is the basic thinking mode and cognitive principle of traditional harmony theory.

Overall, the harmony and equilibrium theory of the Confucian in the Pre-Qin Period and the Han dynasties took The Doctrine of the Mean as its ideological basis and propriety as its value criterion. Besides, it is characterized by maintaining unity and suppressing competition ideology and behaviors. Although the way of moderation implicated the meaning of impartiality and appropriateness, it usually tried to maintain the existence of unity at the cost of efficiency, and thus became an ideology that over-emphasized temporization but despised or even restrained revolution. The solid evidence was conservatism theory of harmony such as: “The cosmos remains unchanged, and so does the Way” and: “The monarch may change the system, but cannot change the Way substantially”.170

Like Chinese civilization, the harmony and equilibrium-valuing ideology in ancient China was precocious. It was born at a time when social turbulences happened in quick succession171. Its essence and the value orientation it represented was a sharp contrast with the era when “force determined everything”. However, it presented the fundamental spirit of China’s ethic-based culture. When society was in the state of peaceful development, the value of preserving the established would become prominent. After the Qin and Han dynasties, China entered the normal course of grand unification. At that time, the harmony and moderation-valuing ideology, Confucianism in particular, satisfied the political needs of grand unification and the patriarchal society’s ethical and emotional needs for tenderness, and thus became the emotional and psychological principle of national culture. The “three cardinal bonds and five virtues” theory presented by Dong Zhongshu in the Han dynasty and the principle of nature and human desire presented by parapsychologists in the Song and Ming dynasties both took “equilibrium” as the yardstick and
“harmony” as the end, and were different representations of the Confucian harmony theory in the Pre-Qin Period.

The harmony and equilibrium-valuing ideology was the quintessence of Eastern civilization in ancient times as well as a constituent of the fundamental spirit of Chinese culture, and its positive effect outweighed its negative effect. As the whole nation values harmony and moderation, Chinese people put great emphasis on the realization and preservation of the harmonious social condition, which facilitates the society’s stability and coordinated development. For Chinese people, the common code of conduct includes trying to protect collective interests, seeking common ground on major issues while shelving minor differences, maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships and not going to extremes. This, undoubtedly, played and is playing a positive role in the cohesion and expansion of national spirit as well as in the safeguard of the national regime.

III. The consciousness of tolerance of “cultural China”

One more important content of Chinese traditional humanistic thought is to pursue the ideal of “cultural China”.

Politicians and thinkers had the ideal as early as in the Spring and Autumn Period. The following remarks are embodiments of the ideal: “All the Xia people live in the central land and the rude tribes of the east and north are outsiders”\(^1\), “The rude tribes of the east and north have their princes, and are not like the States of our great land which are without them”\(^2\); “When Xiao Ya is abolished, all tribes will invade and the central land will be in danger”\(^3\).

Legend goes that when Confucius wrote the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, he made a clear distinction between the central land and the tribes, and the standard that he used was rites and morality. When the conducts of the feudal princes did not conform to rites and morality, they were considered barbarians; when the barbarians acted in accordance with rites and morality, they were considered people of the central land. Confucius firmly believed that advanced culture was able to change backward culture, but not the other way round. His remark: “I have heard cases where Xia was used to change Yi, but I have never heard Xia changed into Yi”\(^4\) was a reflection of this belief of his. In the eyes of the Gongyang School, the difference between the central land and Yi and Di lay not in ethnic groups or geographical positions, but in the ownership of culture and morality.

According to Dong Zhongshu, a master of the Gongyang School, the reason why the *Spring and Autumn Annals* commended Chu State as conforming to propriety and justice and condemned Jin State as going against propriety and justice was that the book had no general rule, and its evaluation criterion was conformity to propriety and justice. Even though Jin was a Xia state, it “turned into Yi and Di” because it disregarded propriety and justice; Even though Chu was located in the land of Yi and Di, it “turned into a gentleman”\(^5\) because it scrupulously abided
by propriety and justice. There existed no impassable gap between Xia and Yi. This highlighted the cultural criterion and significance of the distinction between Yi and Xia, and strengthened their cultural and psychological bond. This idea of reciprocal Yi-Xia transformation was an important component of ancient China's rationality and was an important goal that the ideal of cultural China pursued.

In modern China, open-minded thinkers proposed “learning foreign people’s advanced techniques”, and that was in fact admitting that “foreign people” preceded Chinese people in material civilization. Tan Sitong sighed, “The mindsets, customs and political institution of China are far behind those of Yi and Di, and they have nothing to do with ‘Xia’.” This suggests that the yardstick that differentiated Yi from China was the level of civilization and progress. From the perspective of modern civilization, of course, it cannot be denied that this thinking had some contempt for other nations. But more importantly, one should understand that this distinction was not an externalization of a national complex, but a reflection of the concept of advancement and civilization. In other words, this was a differentiation between civilization and barbarism and a spiritual sublimation that valued civilization but discarded barbarism. Moreover, those thinkers repeatedly explained that the distinction between civilization and barbarism was the possessing of propriety and justice. When China loses its propriety and justice, it becomes Yi and Di; when Yi and Di gain propriety and justice, they become China. From this, it can be said that the China-foreign country distinction was mainly a cultural concept.

It seems that the benevolence theory of the Pre-Qin Period, of which Confucius and Mencius were representative figures, advocated the individual's personality independence and moral cultivation. And the advocacy for the pursuit of the individual's spiritual freedom, of which Lao Tze and Chuang Tze were representative figures, was a further study and enrichment of the previous ideal. This ideal was not well received because it went against the trend of conquering the world with force, yet from the perspective of the historical course of Chinese culture, it certainly presented an orientation of ancient China's cultural spirit. The Qin regime's extreme extravagance and luxury and excessive taxes went precisely against the ideal of cultural China. On the other hand, the institutional reform of the Western Han dynasty, which valued Confucianism and ruling by civilian means, was a renewal and fulfillment of the cultural China ideal. Obviously, the ideal of cultural China had great inclusiveness. And its inclusiveness was represented not only by the rich cultural connotation of Chinese people's value measure, but also by the great coverage of its very content, as well as its diversified value orientations.

In recent years, overseas Chinese scholars put forward the concept of “Cultural China”. Some of them look at this issue from the viewpoint of China's reunification, some regard traditional Chinese culture as a useful spiritual treasure from the angle of exploring spiritual resources, and some treat the Chinese people and foreign sinologists influenced by the spiritual values of Chinese culture as a whole, and in this way explicate the value and position of Chinese culture.
Among them, the viewpoint of Professor Du Weiming from Howard University was representative. As Du pointed out, the “Cultural China” concept was proposed in relation to “Political China” and “Economic China”, and it is intended to open up a public sphere where daily life is carried out and artistic beauty, ethical concerns and religious sentiment are displayed, apart from discourses focusing on power and money. In his opinion, “Cultural China” contains at least three worlds that have different meanings. The first world is the society made up of Chinese people, including mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao and Singapore, as well as the ethnic minorities in those regions. The second is the Chinese communities scattering all around the world. The third world consists of those who have no genetic connection with Chinese people and are not necessarily in a marital relationship with them, but who have an indissoluble bond with Chinese culture. They may have diverse backgrounds and jobs, and may come from the academic circle, the press, enterprises, religious institutions, governments or non-governmental institutions. “China is not only an economic entity, a political structure or a social organization; it is also a cultural concept,” Du Weiming emphasized. Du has roughly the same comprehension of the “Cultural China” concept as we do, i.e., “Cultural China” is not a political or geographic concept, but a cultural one.

Some domestic scholars argue that in terms of the regionally differentiated development of Chinese culture in the world, the structure of Cultural China can be roughly divided into the following five layers. The first layer is Cultural China in the Chinese mainland. The second is Cultural China in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. The third is the Cultural China of the Chinese communities in countries in South-eastern and North-eastern Asia. The fourth, owned by Chinese people scattered all over the world. The fifth, promoted by foreigners doing sinology research. These five different layers of Cultural China traverse the boundary of human geography, society, and politics as well as economy, ethnicity, school and language.

As far as the preservation, promotion and recognition of Cultural China are concerned, they are closely related to each other and consistent. On the other hand, when it comes to the acceptance, enrichment and development of Cultural China, each of them has its own achievements and special features, showing complexity and diversity. Cultural China has transformed into many varieties, which show a common characteristic. Although these varieties have embarked on different roads, they are headed for the same destination. “The concept ‘Cultural China’ not only covers the culture of ethnical Chinese all over the world, which is a comprehensive concept, but also includes various ever-expanding and deepening research on Cultural China conducted by scholars, authors and friendly personages from every part of the world.” Based on this, we may be well aware that “Cultural China”, as a cultural concept, in itself has great inclusiveness and broad reach, which enables it to keep a foothold in different countries and regions of the world, adapt to various local environments and make itself stronger while communicating with other civilizations. In a manner of speaking, it is the spiritual motivation and value guidance of this concept that makes people from different parts of the world who
appreciate Chinese culture communicate with and learn from each other. From these exchanges, they elevated the quality of Chinese culture and refine themselves. For this reason, the inclusiveness of the “Cultural China” concept and its value idea have played and are playing an irreplaceable role in connecting Chinese people in and out of China.

IV. The conservative and innovative consciousness of evolution

Another important content and marked feature of traditional Chinese humanistic spirit is to preserve the old and meanwhile innovate, and to innovate in the process of preservation, and to preserve the old through innovation. Its main manifestation was respecting tradition, emphasizing the conventional way and valuing the established.

Traditional Chinese culture, one of whose leading factors was Confucianism, put stress on the continuity and sustainability of cultural development, and therefore attaches great importance to and shows respect for tradition. As for this historical fact, the academic circle has reached an agreement. Yet opinions vary on the evaluation of this issue. In recent years, in the academic circle there even exist conflicting views on the connotation and effect of the concept of “tradition” itself. Therefore, it is necessary to make some differentiation and analyses over this question.

Friedrich Engels said, “Tradition is a great resistant force and the inertia of history. Yet because it is only negative, it must be destroyed”. 182 He also said: “In every ideological sphere, tradition is a great conservative force”. 183 Here, Engels is revealing the social functions and era significance of tradition from the perspective of social revolution.

Edward Shills, a contemporary US sociologist, argues that tradition is a behavioural mode that takes shape around different spheres of human activity, handed down from generation to generation. It is a cultural power that regulates and morally impels social behaviors, and it is also a deposit of humans creative imagination in the long course of history, including physical goods, ideas, concepts, conventions and institutions. Moreover, tradition is the cultural heritage of a society, or an ideological expression composed of various institutions, beliefs, values and behavioural patterns that people have created. It helps maintain a certain continuity and sameness between different generations and different historical periods, which constitutes a secret code with which a society creates and recreates its own culture and brings order and meanings to human existence. According to Shills, the essential and most obvious connotation of tradition is something passed on from generation to generation, or anything in existence to today; it is a product of human action, ideology and imagination, and is passed on from one generation to another. 184 This view of Shills’ is concerned with the inheritance and stability of
cultural-psychological structure, as well as its stabilizing effect on social order in terms of value orientation, and its rationality is considerable.

In China the exemplary definition of tradition is found in *Ci Hai*: “A force of social convention handed down in history, existing in institution, ideology, culture, moral and other fields...has invisible control over people's social behaviors. Tradition represents the succession feature of historical development”. In my opinion, tradition should have such features as historicity succession, stability, liquidity, spirituality, reality, etc. Therefore, what is referred to as tradition is particular concepts, ideologies, social mentalities and behavioural habits which came into being in history and have been passed on till today, which have stable organizational structure and ideological elements, and which are still affecting people.

From the above comprehension, we can tell that the tradition-respecting concepts and behaviors were common and long-lasting in traditional Chinese ideology and culture, and its concentrated expression is the profound and lingering Confucian orthodoxy, which came into existence as early as in the Pre-Qin Period. Mencius recounted the development course of “the Way”, from Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen and the Wu Emperor of Zhou all the way to Confucius, which is considered by Zhu Xi as “a successive sequence of the tradition of all sages”. Mencius hereby created a remote Confucian orthodoxy and considered himself as its successor, in order to create historical basis for his political views. The basic thinking and value orientation of this Confucian orthodoxy theory is the observance of the former kings' way, which was typical tradition worship.

In the Western Han dynasty, Dong Zhongshu established a new way of ruling based on the yin-yang and the five elements theory, under the banner of obeying the order of Heaven and following the footsteps of the ancient sages. He regarded Confucius as the “Plain King” and advocated abolishing various schools of thought and worshiping Confucianism exclusively. He elevated Confucianism, which was only one of the folk theories rivalling with others in the Pre-Qin Period, to the supremacy of the official ideology.

His basic thinking and tact was to reform and innovate under the pretext of obeying antique thought, and it was still tradition worship either in form or in essence. In the Tang dynasty, Han Yu defended “the Way of the two emperors, three kings and myriad sages” with the determination known as “I would not regret if even I have to die a thousand times”. The historical effect of the traditional worship ideologies and behavioural patterns, of which Confucian orthodoxy was representative, cannot be properly or fully revealed with words used frequently in the past, such as “reactionary”, “conservative” and “backing up feudalism”. Surveyed from the perspective of cultural genesis and the national character of culture, respecting and preserving tradition had an indelible and indispensable role in the continuity and stabilization of national culture, in the integration of values of people from different hierarchies and eras and in the forming and developing of national cohesion.
On the other hand, some rulers used tradition to serve themselves and even undermined or distorted tradition, to the point of disuniting people and hampering the healthy development of society, which was another issue, deserving our rigorous research and criticism. Yet it was not associated with national tradition itself. This can be illustrated with the analogy of the relationship between modern weapons and thugs. When using a modern weapon to do evil, the thug admittedly must be punished severely, but the modern weapon itself is innocent. The modern weapon is the result of human civilization and progress and it does not deserve our punishment. As has been proved by historical fact, in ancient China's farming-centred feudalist societies dominated by the patriarchal system, which valued the antique and worshiped ancestry, tradition was a spiritual bond connecting the past with the present and the old with the new. Innovating under the banner of tradition and going forward on the road of tradition was historically the only way at that time. And this is exactly one of the most significant features of traditional Chinese thought and culture, characterized by innovation in preservation.

Like the tradition-respecting concept, the valuing of convention was also an important content and a significant feature of the innovation-in-preservation evolution consciousness. Since traditional Chinese societies were based on the small-scale natural economy, the powerlessness of the individuals posed a sharp contrast to the mighty power of nature. People were willing to take things as they were, and did not expect any drastic social change, not to mention any natural abnormality. As a result, expecting stability and emphasizing convention became an important part of the traditional spirit and culture. In regard to social institutions, customs, behavioral patterns, etc., Confucius always stood up for innovating on the basis of inheriting and for adjusting on the premise of sticking to the conventional.

Confucius advocated the state-managing policy of “ruling with propriety”. He believed that propriety was able to “manage and stabilize the state, keeping the people in order and benefit the descendants”. Propriety was not only a social, cultural and educational rule, but also a moral standard and code of conduct, as well as a principle that one must abide by when acting and making a living. He suggested: “Don’t look at, listen to, say or do anything that does not conform to propriety”. Propriety was one of the basic ideological principles obeyed by Confucius. On the premise of sticking to the basic ideological principle of propriety, Confucius also pursued the principle of flexibility. When it came to some necessary articles for rites, he upheld thrift, rather than rigidly adhering to the traditional way. In order to revive the rituals of the Zhou dynasty, Confucius even attempted to participate in Gongshan Furao's uprising against Ji.

Zi Lu, a student of his, criticized him: “Even if you have no way to go, there is no need to go to Gongshan Furao and support his rebellion”. To uphold the order of propriety, Confucius would rather violate the principle of not “defying your superiors and starting a rebellion”, which he had strongly advocated. Here, he showed surprising flexibility. It is thus obvious that Confucius advocated a certain
degree of reform on the premise of adhering to the convention of propriety. This was a typical thought of innovating in preserving and developing in inheriting.

After Confucius, almost all Confucians scrupulously stuck to this theory and principle. Mencius said: “Males and females not to allow their hands to touch in giving and receiving is the general rule; when a sister-in-law is drowning, to rescue her with the hand is a peculiar exigency”. Hereby, he stuck to the conventional practice of propriety, and under this precondition, he approved of being flexible to a certain extent according to circumstances. Xunzi said, “Whatever always remains unchanged after many generations should be considered a constant rule”, which stressed the continuity, succession and exemplary role of conventional practices. Dong Zhongshu said, “The cosmos remains unchanged, and so does the Way”, and asserted that the Way was flawless in all times, and that anything flawed was not the Way, but a breach of the Way. He referred to the conventional practices as “Jing”, and variation as “Quan”. Jing was sacred and was not to be doubted or shaken, while Quan was a moderate variation and a supplement of Jing. In ruling a country or conducting oneself, one should use both Jing and Quan, but should give Jing the dominant role. “Although Quan does not conform to Jing, it must be within a proper limit”, because Jing is yang (primary) and Quan is yin (secondary). Dong Zhongshu said, “The principle one can learn from Spring and Autumn Annals is that convention coexists with variation. Convention and variation affect each other and prevent each other’s shortcomings, but do not hinder each other”. Convention and variation both had their significances and were non-contradictory. In a word, the conventional Way was eternal and sacred, and was not supposed to be doubted or changed; but as its supplement, adaptability and a little increase or decrease was tolerable. In fact, surveyed from the new Confucian system and the basic ethical principle of the Western Han dynasty, which was established by Dong Zhongshu, his basic thinking principle was indeed respecting convention while not rejecting adaptability, innovating while preserving, and facilitating and consolidating preservation by means of innovating.

In concert with the tradition-respecting and convention-valuing cultural value orientation, valuing the preservation of the established is also an important content and a significant feature of traditional ideology and culture.

In Chinese culture, people have always thought highly of preserving the established. The creations and achievements of the predecessors are respected and are not readily negated. What was known as “following the footsteps of Yao, Shun, Zhou Wen Emperor and Zhou Wu Emperor” was in effect a preservation mentality which respects the thinking of the predecessors and succeeds their achievements. The deeply-rooted former king-worshiping mentality in ancient China was circumstantial evidence of the advocacy of conserving the existing.

“The Zhou Emperor offered sacrifices to Hou Ji at the suburb to match the Heaven, and offered sacrifices to Wen Emperor at the ancestral temple to match the late emperors”. Their sacrificial offerings were by no means for their own sake, but an indication that their causes had cultural kinships with their ancestors and that they were inheriting their ancestors’ causes. This was an important embodiment of
the former king-worshiping thinking as well as its value. Confucius said: “The ritual system of Zhou inherited that of Xia and Shang. It was so wonderful, and I will follow it”. Whenever Mencius spoke, “he would mention Yao and Shun” and he claimed, “If my idea does not conform to Yao and Shun’s ideas, I would not dare to explain it to the monarch”. These are all evidence that the individual carried on the causes of his predecessors and recognized the historical succession and continuity of the development of things.

The conservation-valuing thinking is also represented by the debate of offensive and defensive. At the beginning of the Western Han dynasty (264 B.C.—24 A.D.), the advisers of Emperor Liu Bang put forward the theory that: “The way to gain new territory should be different from the way to maintain existing territory”. By learning from the lesson of the quick extinction of the brutal Qin Regime, they said that the “long lasting way” was that of “the benevolent person and the righteous person”; advocated retaining political power by fair means after capturing it by foul means, and ruling by combining force with nonviolence. They suggested “formulating rules and systems and prospering rites and music” This in fact was intended to succeed and recover the system of rites and music of the Pre-Qin Period and maintain the existing political and educational mores, so that a new prospect would emerge.

In ancient China, the study of Confucian classics, of which the basic mode was annotation, was a typical representation of the conservation mentality, either in its basic method or theoretical thinking. Taking the classics of the ancient people as value orientation, researchers of Confucian classics tried to expound the ancient people’s thinking by making annotations, and elucidated their own thoughts and views. In both ancient and recent studies of Confucian classics, people used the predecessors and the classics to express their own ideologies. The ancient study of Confucian classics had great disagreement with the recent study of Confucian classics. Yet from the perspective of thinking mode and value orientation, they both boosted the development of learning on the basis of recognizing and maintaining previous achievements, and thus propelled social development.

To sum up, respecting tradition, valuing the conventional and conserving the established are all representations of the evolution consciousness (creating in preserving) in traditional Chinese culture. This consciousness, which has distinct Chinese characteristics, requires one to explain and transform the world in a progressive and mild manner and to duly respect our predecessors and history. It stresses the historical succession and generational continuity of the development of spiritual culture. This tendency is usually criticized as conservatism. In reality, any historical tradition is not supposed to be cut off completely. In order to develop, any ethnic group and any culture must maintain its own existing achievements. If not, its development will be rootless, drifting everywhere. From the development course of China’s history, it is exactly thanks to this creating-in-conserving that the cultural accumulation of the Chinese ethnic peoples is profound, their value integration successful and their root consciousness strong. In this way, the “extensive, profound,
long-standing and well-established Chinese civilization” becomes the pride of 
Chinese people.

Nevertheless, every coin has two sides. If one goes too far in respecting tradition, 
one may slide into tradition worship and find it hard to free oneself. In this case, 
there is the risk of becoming a revivalist. On the other hand, when one over-
emphasizes the conventional, one will become a believer of the idea that: “The 
cosmos remains unchanged, and so does the Way”, or a metaphysician or a 
doctrinaire when it comes to the development of history. Maintaining the established 
to an excessive extent will make one complacent and inactive, thus becoming a 
conservative or a nationalist. In fact, the ideologies like respecting tradition, valuing 
the conventional and conserving the established were used to various extents by the 
rulers in history, and they exerted negative effects.

However, as fundamental elements of the national culture and important 
contents of traditional culture, they played such historical roles as unifying public 
feeling, integrating different values and gathering different forces. In the ongoing 
construction of socialist culture with distinct Chinese characteristics in the market 
economy, one should tap into their positive effects, endow them with the time spirit 
and use them for the good of contemporary China’s cultural construction and the 
coordinated development of its politics, economy and culture.

V. The pursuit of morality and justice

The pursuit of morality and justice is another important content and characteristic 
of China’s traditional humanistic thinking.

In traditional Chinese culture, morals were constantly stressed, and moral 
judgment was the main content and basic standard of value evaluation. As early as 
the Pre-Qin Period, moral advocacy was the mainstream of social thought. In “24 
Years in Xiang Gong” in The Commentary of Zuo, Shusun Bao had a debate with 
Fan Xuanzi over the issue of “death with immortality”. Fan Xuanzi thought that 
immortality meant preserving the ancestral temple so as to maintain the bloodline. 
Shusun Bao disagreed: and he argued, “This should be called generational 
emolument, but not immortality...I heard ‘When one’s ancestor has established 
morality, and then made contributions and then written books’, these things do not 
decay even after a long time. These are called the three immortalities”.

This renowned “three immortalities” concept had far-reaching impact on the 
later ages. Among morality, contributions and books, morality came first. 
Confucius’ remarks about “dying for a just cause” were typical examples of the 
“morality and justice first” idea. Mencius’ idea about the distinction between 
humans and animals had the same principle. In the eyes of Mencius and other 
similar thinkers, what distinguished humans from animals was the ownership of 
morality. Teng Wen Gong in Meng Zi said: “A human should have the right 
principles. If he had adequate food, clothes and houses but is poorly educated, he
is like an animal”. To be better than animals and become a moral person, one must promote the virtues of the human. He transforms the “four virtues”, namely the sense of compassion, the sense of shame, the sense of politeness and humility and the sense of right and wrong, into four moral characters, namely benevolence, justice, propriety and wisdom. Living in the world, one must be an upright and courageous “real man” and must “not be impervious to the temptation of wealth and high position, not be shaken by poverty and not be yielding to despotic power”.

Dong Zhongshu was opposed to “gaining profits by means of hypocrisy” and “following others blindly” for fame and money. Tao Yuanming “could not make curtsies for the salary of five bushels of rice”. “The way of great learning” advocated by the Confucian classic *The Great Learning* was “to illustrate the illustrious virtue, to refresh people and to achieve consummation”, which regarded the pursuit of perfect morality as “the most significant thing”. Proverbs universally accepted by all walks of life, such as: “Even if a gentleman likes money, he will gain it by proper means” and “Better a glorious death than a shameful life”, were all reflections of the morality-valuing concepts.

When morality was valued, so was justice. The reason was simple: justice is within the scope of morality. In ancient China, morality and justice usually went hand in hand. But because the justice-valuing mentality was particularly emphasized and had profound influences on the later ages, we discuss it as opposed to the advocacy of morality.

“Yi” (justice) refers to moral ideals and value pursuits, and is usually a synonym of “the Way”. The denotation of “Yi” was properness. Rational and appropriate words and acts are referred to as “Yi”. *The Doctrine of the Mean* in *The Book of Rites* said, “Yi means properness”. Mencius said, “Ren (Benevolence) refers to one’s cosy home; Yi refers to the correct path. If one rejects the cosy home and the correct path, that would be a shame”. He also said something similar: “Ren means one’s heart; Yi means one’s way. If one abandons his way and his heart, that would be regretful”. “Yi” means the right way that people are going. When one deviates from the right way, he will surely turn to the crooked way and do unethical things, which would be very woeful.

Confucius went to great lengths to advocate “the essence of treating the people”, insisting that people should be educated morally. He argued that as long as the ruler adhered to justice, the common people would consciously follow him. This was referred to as “If the ruler values justice, the common people would not dare to disobey”. This was a manifestation of the Confucian idea of correcting oneself before correcting others. Confucius put great emphasis on the value and significance of justice. He said, “A gentleman should put justice first. If a gentleman has courage but no sense of justice, he will become a rebel; if a small man has courage but no sense of justice, he will become a thief”. If something matches the requirements of justice, it should be done determinedly. If not, it should be rejected flatly. In this regard, he had a series of commentaries. For example, “One should strive for anything that matches justice, and he would not be despised or detested because of
Justice is the yardstick to differentiate right acts from wrong ones and tell the gentlemen apart from base people. The old saying “The gentleman knows justice and the small person knows profits” was good testimony. For this very reason, “the gentleman takes justice as his essence” and “sticks to justice in order to achieve his ambition”.

Carrying forward justice became the inevitable road to one's ideal. If one's wealth and rank were gained in a way that went against justice, he would be despised by gentlemen: “Riches and honor gained by unjust means are like floating clouds to me”. Mencius also elevated justice to the uppermost position, and he advised the ruler: “Why bother to talk about interest? If you have benevolence and justice, that will suffice”. Lu Jia, a thinker of the early Han dynasty, said, “Justice is the learning of the sages,” “One should achieve success by means of justice”, “The gentlemen help each other out of justice, and the base people cheat each other for interest”; “The regime remains unshaken for thousands of years because benevolence and justice are used for ruling”.

Dong Zhongshu argued that interest was intended for nourishing one's body while justice was intended for nourishing one's mind, and that: “Justice plays a more important role in the nourishment of humans than interest does”. In his famous remark: “upholding justice without considering interest and pursuing the Way without considering the amount of work”, he mentioned justice in the same breath as the Way. Since the Han dynasty, the influences of justice-related Confucian ideas were increasingly far-reaching and became an important ingredient and marked characteristic of traditional humanistic thought in China.

Morality and justice-valuing mentality had a crucial impact on the development of the Chinese nation and society. This value pursuit led people to break free from the constraint of material desire, fame and money and raise their spiritual elevations, thus becoming a noble, ethical and socially recognized person. This enhancement of an individual’s moral altitude had the “side effect” of standardizing popular feelings and unifying different values to make them convergent, which greatly strengthened the nation's recognition of cultural identity and sense of belonging and made the cohesion of the Chinese nation increasingly powerful.

In this sense, the pursuit has very a great deal of historical rationality. However, this ideology over-emphasized the supreme of morality and dispelled material gain with justice, negating the rightness of material pursuit. It used moral education and moral cultivation to equate or replace everything, resulting in the prevailing “morality inclusiveness”. This restrained or even strangled the individual’s initiative, independence and creativity. This mentality, which negated interest subjects and one-sidedly upheld moral subjects, had a negative impact on the multi-variant development of the national spirit in the later ages and on the sustainable development of China’s ancient societies. Hereby, we should keep a watchful eye and take substantial measures to make remedies.
VI. The function of traditional Chinese humanism

The above-mentioned traditional Chinese humanistic thought, as a crystallization of the combined intelligence of the Chinese nation and an important component of human civilization, had unique functions. Roughly, these functions are national cohesion, spiritual stimulation, value integration and conduct normalization.

National cohesion is its fundamental function. The traditional Chinese humanistic thought went through a historical development. Its quintessence is primarily represented by the basic spirit of Chinese culture. To be more specific, following the Way unswervingly, pursuing humanism while forgetting about material gains, valuing harmony, moderation justice and morality and being inclusive, innovative but conservative, and so on and so forth. (Regrettfully they cannot be elaborated one by one here.) Since recent times, when traditional humanistic thought was critically inherited, created and transformed, it has been influenced by Western culture. Through the practice of social reform, in particular, several ideologies gradually came into being, such as the pursuit of science, democracy, freedom, prosperity, national strength, rule of law, self-reliance and national independence. Since reform and opening up, more concepts emerged, such as autonomy, the unification of efficiency and fairness, the agreement between morality and material gains and the contract concept. These ideologies met the needs of society and reflected the spirits of different times, and therefore had great rallying and unifying power. It allowed individuals to transcend the boundaries of regions, times, races and social classes and to overcome many limitations of their own for the long-term interests of the collective. By doing this, they would find the roots of their cultural mentalities and the basis of their value norm, and thus make unremitting efforts to promote the collective and long-term interests of the Chinese nation.

Spiritual stimulation is another important function of China’s traditional humanism. Traditional humanism represents the basic essence of Chinese traditional culture as well as the nation’s fine tradition and culture. It should and must represent the healthy development orientation of Chinese culture, and it is capable of arousing individuals’ national dignity and pride. It stands to reason that it must act as a spiritual power that helps maintain the national unity and make it an ideological source to fuel the progress of the nation. The ideal of Cultural China motivates the Chinese people to constantly develop their culture and elevate its quality, surpassing barbarism and crudity and overcoming geographical boundaries, so that it will embrace more of those who pursue civilization and advance towards higher civilization. The harmony and moderation-valuing spirit instructs individuals to strive for harmony and rapport. It advocates moderation and objects to extremes. It does not value pointless conflicts, but suggests conditional and principled concessions for the sake of a united and harmonious state, so that they can better protect and develop themselves while safeguarding the interests of the collective. Adhering to the Way firmly and pursing morality and justice have irreplaceable immersing and catalyzing functions for the promotion of value rationality and the sublimation of one's spirit.
Value integration is another important function of China’s traditional humanism. Ancient Chinese culture developed in a unity-in-diversity environment. Qilu Culture, Bashu Culture, Jingchu Culture, Wuyue Culture, Lingnan Culture, Yanzhao Culture, Sanqin Culture and the like were all created by ancient Chinese people in their prolonged practice. Each of these regional cultures has its own natural, environmental, social and humanistic features and reflects various values, and none of them is equal or replaceable. However, all of them emphasize toughness and hard work, recognize China as an entirety and revere ideals. This is a representation of the “Great Unity” amongst diversity, i.e., the unity in value orientation. Urged by this common ideal and thought, the diversified regional cultures gradually mixed together and became an important component of the entirety of Chinese culture. Meanwhile, after different regional cultures were blended into the overall framework of Chinese culture, the various cultural genes that used to exist in different regional cultures remained, and some were rediscovered and refined by thinkers and transformed into a common spiritual wealth for the whole nation.

It is worth noting that the forming and expanding of the great tradition of culture was an important way in which the value integration function of thought and culture played roles. With prolonged historical elutriation, especially with the theoretical creation and publicity of thinkers and the advocacy of politicians, such ideologies gradually became a cultural concept widely recognized and consciously observed by the whole society. These cultural concepts transcended the boundaries of region and hierarchy and evolved into a common cultural mentality. One not subject to the impact of outer forces, material or spiritual, and thus one that became the great cultural tradition of the Chinese nation. In the context of the great cultural tradition, the small cultural tradition of the original regional cultures absorbed more generalities of Chinese culture and maintained their own individualities. There was a moderate tension between the two, promoting the overall development of Chinese culture and the steady progress of Chinese society.

One more important function of traditional Chinese Humanism is to normalize conduct. Although the way of thinking, values, ideal personality, ethical norms and aesthetic sentiment implied by humanistic thought are profound and not easily perceived, it nevertheless reveals the function of conduct normalization after it is displayed from political institution and economic life and other aspects, especially after it is shown by concrete individual behaviors. Once these ideologies (self-discipline and stabilizing others, correcting one's own and others' mistakes, trying to become holy and virtuous, making the state stable and orderly, treating all people as brothers and sisters, observing the four cardinal virtues: humanity, justice, propriety and wisdom and recognizing the unity of Heaven and man) are represented by concrete individual conducts, their function of normalization become significant, and this is important. These ideologies were in effect personal ideals and value criteria in traditional societies, and they were also the principles that people lived by. They standardized people's conduct and unified them in their values and goals, and thus enhanced the vitality of national culture.
Through functions such as national cohesion, spiritual motivation, value integration and code of conduct, and with their interactions, the traditional Chinese humanistic thought governed the values of the whole nation, stimulated and identified national cultural psychology, increased the country's national cohesion, and in this way promoted the social progress and cultural development of China.

The traditional Chinese humanistic thought played different roles in different historical periods. As some experts have pointed out, the Pre-Qin humanistic spirit is represented by the civilization creation spirit “rigidness with tenderness” theoretical thinking and the “self-discipline and social commitment” ethical norm. These basic elements of ancient China's humanistic spirit have always played a role in prolonged social development. On the other hand, according to other experts, the humanistic spirit of traditional culture is characterized by taking ethics and politics as basic and lacking a theological or religious system. This is because it paid little attention to the fundamentals of nature; by not taking man out of interpersonal relationships, not separating man from nature, but regarding man as part of nature and ignoring their differences; by man not regarding nature as merely an object of cognition and not pursuing purely natural knowledge hierarchy; by opposing utilitarianism in axiology; etc. Both the “awareness of unexpected development” in Chinese culture, proposed by Xu Fuguan from Taiwan, and the “happy culture” proposed by Li Zehou from the mainland reveal and stress the humanistic spirit of Chinese culture, but both of them see deficiencies.

Apart from worry and happiness, “integrate harmony of worry and happiness” should be added, which is precisely the humanistic spirit. This humanistic spirit, as cultural heritage, melded the basic character of our nation. It had different variations in different times, each represented by different spirits.

In regard to ancient China’s cultural tradition, the specific content of the humanistic spirit includes and is represented by the basic spirit and values of Chinese culture, such as loving people and animals, self-discipline and stabilizing others, putting righteousness first, recognizing nature as having the same nature with man, being rigid and active and valuing harmony and moderation. In regard to the development history of modern culture, the humanistic spirit includes very basic values such as patriotism, nationalism, and the scientific spirit and democratic spirit.

After the founding of New China in 1949, through decades of arduous trial, especially through the vivid practice of Reform and Opening-up, the modern humanistic thought with distinct Chinese characteristics has emerged all over China. Mental factors that have socialist features and fully demonstrate the humanistic consciousness of the Chinese nation, including acting independently, self-reliance, working hard and living plainly, collectivism and patriotism, are growing constantly and have become an important cohesive and motivating force propelling national unity and social progress.

The traditional interpersonal relationships, which emphasize human feelings, are developing into contractual relationships, but human feelings still remain; the old social operating systems, which were based on the wills of the rulers, are gradually
shifting to the pathway of democracy and the rule of law; the individual egos of the past, which were based on and characterized by heteronomy, are turning into the awakening subject consciousness characterized by self-control and self-discipline and complemented by heteronomy; the old thinking mode and values that partially emphasized motivation but ignored or even belittled the result, are being replaced by new thinking modes and values that attach equal importance to the motivation and the result and disregard empty talk.216

It should be noted that the traditional Chinese humanistic thought has its own defects. Pang Pu once said: “The humanistic spirit in Chinese culture has added glory to our nation and our country, but has also built an obstacle; it has spread the light of wisdom to the world, but also created various walls between China and other countries; it is valuable spiritual wealth, but also a considerable cultural burden. Like every coin has two sides, the humanistic spirit of Chinese culture has duality”.217 “The Chinese culture is humanistic, but this humanism lacks the scientific and democratic spirit of the West in modern times. In my opinion, this point of view is incisive and profound”.218

Thought must go along with the times. On our road to modernism, we should try to transform the traditional humanistic thought, promote its merits and get rid of its demerits. By this means, we can forge a new humanistic thought with modern consciousness and the influences of the outstanding culture from abroad. While forging new cultural values and promoting the traditional humanistic thought, we should consistently promote the spirit of the time and use it to elevate the quality of traditional humanistic thought. Only in this way, will the culture of the Chinese nation constantly develop, to grow into a towering tree in the forests of human culture.
Issues of the Chinese Culture and the Chinese Spirit

I. The connotation and function of cultural spirit and national spirit

There has been considerable progress in recent years in terms of research on Chinese culture and the Chinese national spirit. However, there is all sorts of controversy over these two terms due to different positions, academic backgrounds, and the constraints of various objective factors. This controversy is not tolerable if it leads to a certain degree of confusion of terms. Therefore, there is urgent need for further discussion.

Chinese Culture is a broad term. It is also known as the basic spirit of Chinese culture. The so-called cultural spirit, according to some Western scholars, is national spirit, which is the spirit of a unique culture, or a decisive value system that is manifest in the attitude, evaluation and emotional tendencies of the people living in this culture.219

Some Chinese scholars believe that the mental foundation of long-term development of Chinese culture can be called the basic spirit of Chinese culture, which constitute the intrinsic motivation of national cultural development. The main content of the basic spirit of Chinese culture may be summarized as follows: in striving for better life Chinese people are energetic and optimistic; in life philosophy Chinese people are moderate and conservative; in dealing with materials Chinese people are pragmatic and upholding morality; in relations with nature Chinese people are advocates of harmony between human and nature.220

Actually in The Book of Changes the above spirits are expressed briefly as: “Being self-motivated all the time; carrying responsibilities with great virtue. Strengthening ourselves unceasingly, take the saintly social commitment”.221 This views expressed by some Chinese scholars mixed the above mentioned two terms into one. There are still some scholars who believe that the cultural spirit is relatively stable in a historical sense and can be regarded as the deep structure of a national cultural essence, which has “positive and negative cultural duality”.222

In my opinion, the so-called cultural spirit is the basic ethos reflected in the specific national cultural system, which is a combination of ethnic values, styles of
thinking, social psychology, aesthetics and other spiritual qualities. Cultural spirit and the spirit of Chinese culture are broad, neutral concepts with both active ingredients and negative factors. Excellent composition of the basic spirit of Chinese culture constitutes the spirit of the Chinese nation. Chinese spirit is the concentrated expression of spirit and values of the outstanding long-term component of the Chinese nation in the history of the development process, and the value-oriented spiritual power of the Chinese nation’s progress and development.

From an historical perspective, the development of the Chinese spirit can be divided into the classical, modern, and contemporary period. The so-called classical period is from the Warring States to the Opium War (1840), ranging across 2,600 years of history; the modern period is from the Opium War to the establishment of a hard and strife-filled stage of about 100 years; the so-called modern era is from the establishment of the PRC to the present time. The classical period is characteristic of unique ethical thinking; in modern times, a unique feature of the modern political thinking was formed; in contemporary times, unique economic thinking has been formed. A classical ethos reflects the ethical, conservative and moderate spirit under the natural economic and social conditions of patriarchal moral supremacy; the modern national spirit is an embodiment of hurricane like revolutionary spirit sparked by the internal and external aggression and the succeeding salvation of the Chinese nation; The contemporary national spirit is mainly an opening, pioneering and innovative spirit as the result of economic reform and globalization.

From the Warring States to the Opium War, the national spirit went through the stages of taking shape, establishment and consolidation. The academic world reached consensus that China as a cultural and national community came into being during the Qin and Han dynasties (during the Spring and Autumn Period, the spirit of the Chinese nation was in its infancy). After the Qin and Han dynasties, the Chinese national spirit as a value system was further established. The Qin dynasty to the Opium War in 1840 can be called “free development” stage; From the Opium War to today’s reform and opening up the Chinese national spirit has been undergoing a stage of “conscious development”.

However, from another perspective, the “budding” or “prototype” of the Chinese nation and spirit not only began in the Qin and Han period, but can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn, and Warring States period, or even through the entire national history, or the history of “five thousand years”.

During the Spring and Autumn Period, the current of history together with the agitation of schools of thought contributed to the progress of society and the unification of nations by the establishment of the Qing dynasty and national identification. The schools of thought were characterised by humanistic thought manifest in the valuation of human over gods and people over monarch; of patriotism in advocacy of a unified nation; of humanity in advocacy of peace and in opposition of war. This situation indicates the shaping of the national Chinese spirit.
The Qin and Han dynasties marked the beginning of this spirit with the formation of a unified pluralistic society, unified political ideas, the values and ideals of Chinese culture and the medium way of thinking, the great virtue of the unyielding fighting spirit and other basic values. Mainstream thinking of society converged, leading the whole nation forward. From the Wei and Jin dynasties to the Qing dynasty (before 1840), China underwent social turbulence and dynastic upheaval many times, but the intellectual consensus that China should be a unified country was nevertheless strengthened. Meanwhile, opposition to aggression, and efforts to avoid internal conflict and external dispute engendered awareness and action of a whole nation. In the civil world, the tradition of self-improvement and the pursuit of social commitment, together with the prevalence of social reform and technical innovation, was strengthened. Therefore, it is safe to say that this period is one of consolidation in terms of the classical Chinese spirit.

After the Opium War, Chinese society was mired in the internal and external problems of the modern era. Consequently, the classical Chinese spirit was challenged and forced into restructuring and updating. The Conservative classical ethos was converted and innovated into romanticism and heroism, which were prevalent in the revolutionary spirit for national independence and national prosperity. Such revolutionary romanticism and heroism was demonstrated when the convicted Patriot Tan wrote: “how I wish I could kill the wily to save the precarious situation of my country”; “I put the sword fearlessly on my neck, laughing to the sky”.

He dedicated his life to his political ideals and died a martyr’s death. Sun Yat-sen led the revolution which finally overthrew the feudal autocratic monarchy. And he still worried when dying that “revolution is not accomplished and there is still a long way to go”. The Communist Party of China led the new democratic revolution with the heroism conveyed in the slogan that with “fearless scarification for revolutionary ambition, we possess the courage to renew the Sun and the Moon”. After the heroic sacrifice of thousands of martyrs in the revolution, the successor fearlessly “raised their banner high, following their blood trail and marching forward,” “to defeat the enemy overwhelmingly and never yield!”

This revolutionary heroism inspired numerous people with lofty ideals towards the rise and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. The revolutionary spirit of the modern Chinese nation, after the baptism of the “May Fourth” movement, also adds new content: democracy, science, freedom, and a spirit of autonomy. It is well known that “Freedom or Death” is the banner of the “May Fourth” movement. Other resounding, popular slogans and ideas prevalent in that movement include: “neither science nor democracy is the number one issue, independence is”. Under the command of the revolutionary spirit of democracy, science, freedom, autonomy and other modern consciousness, fresh and dynamic Chinese spirit has been fostered. And an extremely important spirit that runs through the “May Fourth” movement is patriotism.

After the founding of the the construction of new China has undergone a series of hardships. But since reform and opening up, economic construction has been the
priority and China has become prosperous step by step. Inspired by the dream of the rejuvenation of Chinese civilization, all Chinese people work together as one and achieved such a good situation as today. In the course of development, the traditional national spirit has not only been carried forward, but also cultivated and rejuvenated. Development and implementation of the guiding ideology of “people-oriented, construction-focused and other corresponding guidelines and policies related to cultural construction” has effectively promoted and constructed the contemporary Chinese spirit.

The notions of “self-reliance competition efficiency, democracy, the rule of law, and the pioneering spirit of innovation” are new and somewhat different from the traditional national spirit. But now these notions have become a consensus for both the government and the public. In addition, the concept of contract, citizenship, justice consciousness, the concept of equality, reform and opening-awareness, global awareness etc. have grown and strengthened gradually in recent years as a result of the innovation and pioneering spirit of reform and opening up. It is safe to say that the above-mentioned new concepts would not be widely accepted without the pioneering spirit. A pioneering and innovative spirit has become an important connotation and basic characteristic of the contemporary Chinese spirit.

Undoubtedly, the formation and development of the Chinese spirit is the crystallization of the wisdom of the Chinese people one generation after another and the excellent embodiment of traditional culture. In terms of function, the spirit of the Chinese nation has differing significance in different historical periods. In the ancient period, the conservative classical Chinese spirit played important and diverse roles in forming and consolidating the Chinese nation under the framework of unified pluralism, and promoting development, condensation and identification of the national community.

In terms of value, the spirit of the classical Chinese spirit help to foster the unified classical values, ways of thinking pursuit of ethics as well as the formation of aesthetic taste. After the Qin and Han dynasties, the spirit of classical China helped to maintain the political, economic and cultural systems of the Chinese nation in the context of grand unification. From today's global perspective, there exist certain deficiencies (such as lack of pioneering and innovative spirit and the lack of scientific and democratic spirit), yet we cannot deny that it has especially important historic significance; historical tides and times demand different cultural spirits from each era!

In the modern Chinese period, the romantic and heroic revolutionary spirit reflects the relentless struggle against aggression and the fight for national independence. Its significance lies in the historical meaning that the era transcends the limits of the classical national spirit and absorbs the advanced Western cultural, scientific, and democratic spirit of freedom and the rule of law, which help to remold Chinese traditional culture, promoting social and cultural transformation, the realization of national independence, and the country’s modernization process.

Of particular importance is the spirit of the modern nation that has evolved from the classical conscious stage to the free stage. It is a rational spirit. With the rise and
promotion of this spirit, the national consciousness was awakened, and the fundamental spiritual strength and value criteria were cultivated in the course of transformation from traditional to Modern China. Since the reform and opening up, the contemporary spirit of the Chinese nation has been formed, which is a critical and creative inheritance of the traditional national spirit. It is an impetus for the modernization of contemporary China, and it is also a proper response to “peace and development” in the contemporary world. The modern innovative national spirit has played an irreplaceable role in the formation of the contemporary Chinese spirit, a spiritual home for Chinese people. Moreover, the modern spirit of innovation helps to promote the construction of an advanced socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, and to enhance the cohesion of the Chinese nation.

II. The relationship between Chinese culture and the Chinese spirit

In fact, in terms of academic research and social practice, there exists an inextricable link between Chinese cultural spirit and the Chinese national spirit. Nearly twenty years ago, I used to think that the spirit of Chinese culture and the Chinese nation are the same concept, with the same meaning and essence. Thus I asserted that: “The basic spirit of Chinese culture and the Chinese national spirit are essentially the same” and that both have a dual nature of positive and negative aspects; “both have the brilliant and encouraging side, which is positive, and depressive; both have a cynical side, which is negative. Both sides are potentially interchangeable”. From the late eighties of the last century to the present, after nearly two decades of studying issues related to these two terms, especially after investigation on economic and cultural aspects of contemporary modernization and the value goal of socialistic cultural construction, as well as investigations on different ethnic groups, I gradually changed my views.

Now I tend to believe that the concept of the Chinese cultural spirit and the Chinese national spirit do not have same connotation. Though they are interrelated, they differ from each other, each with its own concept. The Chinese cultural spirit is a neutral concept, while the Chinese national spirit is a commendatory concept. The excellent ingredients of Chinese cultural constitute Chinese national spirit, and Chinese national spirit is the core value and crystallization of traditional Chinese culture.

Such a distinction not only helps us deepen the study of Chinese traditional culture, to analyse the pros and cons, to transcend the confines of traditional culture, but at the same time, such a distinction may also help us to use traditional culture to promote national integrity, to sublimate the national spirit, and to better construct our culture in practice. More importantly, in foreign relations, such a distinction may help to oppose ethnic and cultural nihilism. It is for this reason that I have made the above argument. If we list the main contents of Chinese culture, they can roughly be summarized as: self-discipline, following the right path, pursuit
of harmony, being pragmatic open-minded and optimistic. Obviously it is worth pointing out that in terms of historical role these concepts and contents played both negative and positive roles. The main contents of the Chinese national spirit can be roughly summarized as the following: patriotism, unity of values, harmony, industrious and brave qualities, self-discipline and social commitment, and the modern spirit of science and democracy. This generalization not only takes into consideration the historical heritage of the Chinese spirit, it also takes into account the contemporary context, with strong historical legitimacy and contemporary values. As I emphasized earlier, it is obvious that there are strong connections and tensions between the two terms.

III. The innovative study of the spirit of Chinese culture

Chinese culture has a pluralistic pattern of Diversity in Unity, which is a reflection of a unified national creativity. The Chinese cultural spirit went through a severe test in the long history of roughly five thousand years, resulting in a conservative cultural system characteristic of small-scale peasant natural, feudal monarchical politics. Imperialism and feudalism caused the internal and external problems of modern times. In contemporary China after the reform and opening up, Chinese culture has been inspired and nourished by a pioneering spirit and the edification of the market economy. The Chinese cultural and national spirits are both updated in the time of the reform and opening up and in the wave of globalization. Therefore, we need to summarize and reflect traditional culture. Moreover, we need to interpret traditional culture critically and reconstruct contemporary culture creatively. To this end, in-depth discussion of the history and tradition of Chinese culture and spirit of the modern revolution has become urgent.

Research on the Chinese cultural spirit has been numerable, whereas systematic research monographs, as far as I can see, are written by the following researchers: Ch’ien Mu (钱穆)’s *The spirit of Chinese Culture*[^227]; Han-Ming Shao’s (邵汉明) *The spirit of Chinese Culture*[^228] (compiled by him); Si-Da Wang’s (王四达) from “the Phoenix” to “Ashes” – Reflection and Modern Transformation of the National Spirit of China[^229].

Ch’ien Mu (钱穆)’s book is a collection of his thirteen lectures on culture to Taiwan military leaders. The first lecture is entitled “Chinese Culture”, hence the book’s name. The rest of the lectures are respectively on the Chinese cultural tradition, the changes and continuities, the accumulation and openness. The book is plain and easy to understand. Han-Ming Shao (邵汉明) in his book explores the major schools of thought in Chinese traditional culture, respectively Taoism, Confucianism, Mohism, Legalism, military strategists, Buddhism and modern Neo-Confucianism. Then he compares the spirit of Chinese and Western cultures. Generally speaking, the book is both resourceful and insightful. Comrade Si-Da Wang in his book starts from the background of the development of human
civilization, and takes the national spirit and the cultural spirit as the spiritual impetus of social development. The writer discrimines on the essential spirit of religion, philosophy, history, ethics politics and etc. And he critically and insightfully interprets the Chinese cultural spirit.

It is worth noting that the above-mentioned four books form a gradual linear advance in the study of Chinese culture. Ch’ien Mu (钱穆)’s book, written in the fifties and sixties of the last century, due to the limitations of special historical conditions, fails to discriminate between Chinese cultural spirit and Chinese national spirit. Ch’ien Mu (钱穆) firmly believes, “with the spiritual support of the traditional Chinese culture, the national revival and cultural renaissance are bound to come”. And the author firmly believes that: “Chinese culture has a reason to permanently flourish in the world”.230

Han-Min Shao (邵汉明) completed and published his book in the last year of the last century the year 2000, thus clearly revealing the: “cultural duality of both the positive and the negative”. The author specifically summarizes the essence of the Chinese cultural spirit as human-oriented and moral-oriented, idealistic, pragmatic and holistic thinking, etc”.231 In terms of point of view and theory, this book is more advanced than Ch’ien Mu (钱穆).

Si-Da Wang’ (王四达)’s book was written in 2004 and was published in 2005. The author draws distinction between the national and cultural spirit, and made the analysis of historical periods and cultural characteristics, putting forward the view that the national spirit and cultural spirit may be the same, “the Chinese Communist Party has become the faithful representative of the interests of the people, and the national spirit and cultural spirit has been consistent, which proves to be a historic opportunity for the sublimation of Chinese culture”.232 This interpretation has deepened the study of Chinese culture. However, it is thought-provoking to notice that the three above-mentioned authors fail to explore the relationship between the human, Chinese cultural and Chinese national spirits. Nevertheless, this does not mean that such exploration is unimportant. In my opinion, to explore this relationship is not only necessary, but theoretically and practically significant.

IV. The human spirit, cultural spirit and national spirit

Chinese traditional culture has been consistently rich in a humanistic spirit, which is primarily focused on the dignity of the human being, an “ultimate concern”, and an idealistic and moral pursuit. In terms of Chinese traditional culture, the humanistic spirit is manifest in benevolence, self-cultivation, harmony between human and nature, self-discipline, and propriety. In terms of modern cultural development, it has developed and incorporated patriotism, nationalism, the scientific spirit, and the spirit of democracy and freedom. Since the founding of new China, especially since the reform and opening up which has lasted three decades, the spirit of democracy, the rule of law, justice and harmonious development have
been theorized and integrated into a new humanistic spirit. These newly-incorporated values and conceptions have become indispensable to the new Chinese humanistic culture.

Since the humanistic spirit of Chinese culture is a positive element in the Chinese cultural spirit, what is the relationship with the Chinese national spirit? I argue that the humanistic spirit and the Chinese national spirit are approximately coterminous. However, these two terms are not identical. In other words, the ideological foundation of the humanistic spirit is the basis of the national spirit. After the necessary theoretical integration and refinement, it is transformed into the national spirit. This integration and theoretical refinement, compared with the general cultural spirit, is easier and more straightforward. It is in this sense that I propose in the previous chapter that the excellent part of traditional culture constitutes the national spirit. The excellent content and spirit of traditional culture, which can be an important resource and basic material of the national spirit, is not directly equivalent to the national spirit, only after value integration and theoretical refinement. There is no doubt that the Chinese national spirit is rich in the spirit of humanism and science after this kind of value integration and theoretical refinement.

Analysis and distinctions of these terms are not intended to complicate simple questions. On the contrary, such analysis and distinction puts the emphasis on the enormity and complexity of ideological and cultural recreation and transformation of contemporary culture. In addition, such analysis and distinction is the reflection of attention to theoretical reconstruction and practical application. Without such an attempt, our culture study will always remain general and abstract, which is unhelpful to the revival of Chinese culture.

Research on the Chinese cultural and national spirits proves a challenging task. The difficulties of theoretical analysis and practical application should urge serious scholars to engage in the task. Revitalization of the nation and the rejuvenation of Chinese civilization have been the theme of reform and opening up. To achieve this noble goal, it is necessary to analyze rationally the historical and cultural traditions of the nation, especially the profound implication of Chinese cultural spirit. Only in this way can we explore traditional cultural resources and creatively transform traditional culture. Thus cultural study can provide exemplary models for contemporary cultural construction.
China's modernization drive, initiated by the Opium War, has lasted more than 160 years in the midst of which China has undergone great transformation in terms of material culture, system culture and ideological culture respectively. Up to now the country still remains to be modernized. In order to modernize and rejuvenate the country, Chinese intellectuals have so far put tremendous efforts into the sphere of culture represented by three consecutive “Culture Declarations” which can best manifest their pursuits in culture and the elevation of the national spirit.

The New Culture Movement was typical. Nevertheless, ideological transformations, especially their effects upon the modernization drive, were an arduous and protracted process interwoven with complex mechanisms. Therefore, in the fairly long period after the May Fourth Movement, it became the shared goal among intelligentsia to push forward China’s modernization drive through cultural transformation, especially transformation of some long-rooted ideologies.

It was in this background that Chinese intelligentsia, within about 70 years, namely, from the middle of the 1930s to the beginning of the 21st century, put forward three Culture Declarations expounding the values of Chinese culture, the relation between Chinese culture and world culture, the future of Chinese culture and world culture, thus providing rich resources for modernization.

The three Culture Declarations are respectively: China-based Culture Construction Declaration published by 10 professors including Wang Xinning, Tao Xisheng, Huang Wenshan and Sa Mengwu in January, 1935; Chinese Culture and the World: Our Common Understanding on Chinese Academia and the Future of Chinese Culture and World Culture published by Mou Zongsan, Xu Fuguan, Zhang
Junmai and Tang Junyi in January, 1958; and *The 2004 Culture Declaration* published by about 70 scholars including Xu Jialu, Ji Xianlin, Chen Ning Yang, Ren Jiyu and Wang Meng. Though different in their expositions on Chinese culture and world culture due to different publication times, the three declarations, in terms of their essence and core value, aim at promoting the modernization of Chinese culture and then the modernization of Chinese society, highlighting Chinese national culture as well as the elevation of the Chinese national spirit.

I. The main content and the value themes of the three “Cultural Declarations”

The first declaration was published in January 1935; twenty years after the start of the New Culture Movement in 1915, two years after the discussions on “Chinese modernization issue” in 1933, and four years after the September 18th Incidents. That was the year when the concept of “westernization” advocated by Hu Shih and Chen Xujing was gaining momentum, and two years before the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War. Owing to the fact that the Chinese nation was in a profound internal revolt and the midst of an external invasion, the Chinese intelligentsia were faced with the question of how to save a nation in peril, elevate and promote the value of national culture. The question had become a grave issue of practical significance as well as a fundamental issue for developing national culture.

*The China-based Culture Construction Declaration* made clear the target of constructing China-based culture. At the very beginning of the declaration, the authors made the remarks: “In the field of culture we can see nothing in China now”; “China has vanished in the field of culture along with the vanishing characteristics of its own in political forms, social organizations, ideological content and forms”; “and gradually becomes nothing Chinese”. So with confidence they stated: “Looking forward in the field of culture, there has been certainly no China in the world today, and there has hardly been any Chinese in the Chinese territory”. That is to say, within the scope of world civilization, China vanishes culturally due to the loss of its inherent characteristics.

Naturally, Chinese cultivated by Chinese culture are no more Chinese due to a lack of Chinese characteristics. In a word, it became clear that neither China nor Chinese exist culturally. These are really unprecedented earth-shattering remarks! An old philosopher says, “A state can be subjugated, and a nation can also be subjugated, but the nation’s culture will vanish forever if the nation is culturally subjugated”. The ten professors, all accomplished in culture studies, felt so worried and indignant that they were determined to reverse the tide. They wanted to “construct China-based culture” in order to make China prominent in culture and characterized by its own politics, society, and ideology. Therefore, the ten presented a basic principle, that is, to review China’s past, seize China’s present, and construct China’s future on the basis of critical attitudes and scientific methods.
The above arguments prompted the ten professors to make “a total liquidation” of historical cultural developments. Culturally speaking, they argued, China held an important position in the ancient world, and was in the course of advancement from remote antiquity to the Qin and Han dynasties. “The period of Spring and Autumn and Warring States in China can be equaled with Greco-Roman era in the West”; Chinese culture was in its prime. Nevertheless, Chinese culture, “sinking into stagnation after the Han dynasty,” did not experience fundamental change until the Opium War when the country was invaded by Western powers.

“The ancient culture began to shake, and we had been woken up from the dream of following the beaten track”. Starting from this moment, China witnessed the first Westernization Movement by Tseng Kuo-fan and Li Hung Chang, and then the Reform Movement of 1898 by K’ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch’i-Ch’ao. The Westernization Movement, the ten professors argued, was “a sheer imitation of Western techniques”, and the Reform Movement “a mere political copy”. These two movements “all reflected the concept of ‘Chinese learning as the mainstay, while Western learning as the application’” which could not meet the needs of rebuilding and rejuvenating the country because the idea lacked radical change in its nature. Later on, the Revolution of 1911, led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, targeted at “saving China fundamentally”, “catching up with advanced Western civilization” and advocated that radical changes must be carried out in China’s society, politics and economy.

The professors thought positively of the May Fourth Movement that aimed at emancipation of the people’s mind, and brought about radical changes in mentality. Consequently a national campaign swept across the country to overthrow the warlords and imperialism, which culminated in the national revolution. Chinese political reform had achieved a major success thanks to the continuous efforts in the following years. Time was then ripe for the country’s construction at various levels. So, cultural construction, having substantial effect on economic and social development, became even more pressing with political and economic construction taking place. Neither restoration of the old practices nor westernization could work, the professors argued. Ancient China had become part of history, and there was no possibility or need to repeat history. It would ignore China’s peculiarities in time and space if China wanted to “imitate comprehensively the systems of Britain, America” (or Italy, Germany, Soviet Russia). The reasons were very simple: First, China ought to have an ideology of her own. Second, China was then right in a transition from a feudal agricultural society to an industrialized society. As a result, culture construction, disregarding westernization or restoration of the past, should put itself on the right path of elevation, a path consistent with the trends in the world and appropriate for China’s national conditions.

China-based culture construction was what the professors basically upheld. About this they held that “the need at this time at this place” was the base for China, taking into consideration two factors: the peculiarity and contemporaneousness of today’s China. On this very “basis”, we preserve what should be preserved and discard what should be discarded of ancient Chinese ideologies. That is, those good
parts of it should be enhanced and disseminated across the world and those bad parts discarded without any regret. As for European culture, we absorb what we should absorb to meet modern China’s needs, but not everything. The purpose of this culture construction was “to make China and Chinese, once decayed in culture due to lack of characteristics, not only rival any other country in culture but also making rare contributions to the rest of the world”. To sum up, China must foster in this regard both a sense of self-reliance and a global perspective, that is, neither being closed nor imitating blindly. The appropriate attitude to take was not to stick to the old practices or imitate blindly, but to take a critical attitude and apply scientific methods so as to review the past, grasp the present and create the future. The professors made elaborations on this. Not to stick to the old practices means to discard the decayed part of the ancient culture and preserve the refined part of it, so as to pave possible new paths. Not to imitate blindly means to learn from the merits and accept good advice from the West. To review the past, grasp the present and create the future means to correct past mistakes, meet current needs and specify the measures to be taken in the future, that is, to make China generate light and heat and restore its past glamour. In a word, they aimed at cultural renaissance and national rejuvenation.

The declaration immediately stirred up critical arguments among the public since its publication. On May 10, that is, four months after its publication, the ten professors released Our Comprehensive Reply, reiterating their arguments and further elaborating on some of the questions concerned. These questions are: What is the base of China? What is not to stick to the old practices? What is not to imitate blindly? What is the difference between the base of China and “Chinese learning as the mainstay, while Western learning as the application”? What is the need of China at this time and at this place? What is our attitude toward anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism? They elaborated especially on the fifth question as saying that “the need of China is to enrich people’s lives, develop the national economy and strive for national survival”. To sum up, “China-based culture construction is a manifestation of national confidence, a positive creation in the process of which anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism is simply an inevitable commission”.239

Hu Shih, an active westernization advocate, issued A Tentative Evaluation on so-called “China-based Culture Construction” criticizing intensely the professors’ arguments and their approach. In Hu’s view, “China-based culture construction was simply an up-dated replication of “Chinese learning as the mainstay, while Western learning as the application”, in that so-called “China-based” was merely “Chinese learning as the mainstay” and “to adopt a critical attitude and absorb what should be absorbed” was merely “western learning as the applications”. The declaration “was merely the most attractive move of the reactionary forces today”. 240

Chen Xujing, another active, yet more forceful westernization advocate, regarded the declaration as a declaration of restoring and sticking to the old practices, a declaration still within the framework of “Chinese learning as the mainstay, while Western learning as the applications”.241 As for Our Comprehensive Reply, on one
hand, Chen thought of it as an inclination toward the restoration of old practices, still constrained within the framework of the middle path. It reflected a love for things obsolete and an expectation of retrogression. On the other hand, the professors had stepped more or less onto the path of westernization.

Yan Jicheng, in the publication of *A Reply to Our Comprehensive Reply: Suggestions to the Drafters of China-based Culture Construction Declaration*, remarked that the professors’ fundamental position was close to so-called wholesale westernization, reiterating that what could stand for national confidence today… was only so-called “wholesale westernization”.

Many people participated in the debate and published such a good number of papers that the single volume of *A Collection of Discussions on Chinese Culture Construction* compiled by Ma Fangruo included as many as 160 papers. These papers are ignored here because of the limited space and different theme of this book. What is worth mentioning is that whatever they believed, they both shared some common points on the way of thinking and on ultimate value. First, they both strived to find a solution to the issue of China’s modernity through ideology and culture. Second, they both targeted rejuvenating China and Chinese civilization. Of course, their differences are substantial, reflecting a gap in their choices of the approach and mode of how China is to be modernized.

Through the debate, the westernization school publicized their belief and spread their influence, the belief that culture construction should concern itself with world culture and break through the national barrier. The China-based school, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of the national character of culture, reiterating that culture construction should adapt itself to the practical needs of this state and nation, and should in no way copy the West, thus holding a national attitude and preserving the value of national culture. In fact, in spite of their fierce debate and obvious differences in approach and mode, the awareness of a problem beneath these debates is intense and unified: How to seek an approach, mode and target in culture construction, modernize culture and motivate social modernization through culture, and subsequently direct China’s modernization drive.

To be honest, regardless of its historical context at the time, and from the perspective of national character and cultural successiveness, the declaration showed a collective awakening of subject awareness in culture construction, the first ever of its kind in China since the Opium War. It also reflected a breakthrough in the concept of “Chinese learning as the mainstay, while Western learning as the application”, and also a realization of the problem of national character against the global perspective in culture construction.

The awakening of subject awareness and the self-awareness of national character had a unique value in the history of modern Chinese ideology and culture. Facing today’s globalization, we can learn from the China-based school to adapt ourselves to the current trend of world civilization, and in the meantime, retain autonomy and independence in culture construction. We should also ponder over the viewpoints of westernization school for their criticism of deficiencies in national culture,
their transcendence of its closeness, especially their exposition and affirmation of the merits in Western culture.

In fact, both sides paid close attention to the national condition, and only differed in their tendencies, in that the China-based stressed cultural successiveness and expected innovation by preserving the accomplishments of the old system while the westernization school stressed cultural inertia and expected to preserve the old system through reform. Relatively speaking, what the China-based stressed was to keep the subjectivity of national culture in cultural vicissitudes while what the westernization school emphasized was its innovation. The two formed a unique tension by mutual criticism and mutual interpretation. Notwithstanding, the China-based seemed more reasonable if we take into consideration the cultural tradition, national condition and the actual cultural development later on; they transcended the weakness of: “Chinese learning as the mainstay, while Western learning as the application” and averted the loss of subjectivity caused by the westernization school. This is quite understandable since the mainstream in the eyes of the school of “Chinese learning as the mainstay, while Western learning as the application” was feudal society and culture, but the China-based school considered it as their “inevitable mission” to fight against imperialism and feudalism. Of course, it is equally unquestionable that the China-based did not fully realize the merits of Western learning.

In 1958, 33 years after the publication of the professors’ declaration, four professors, namely, Mou Zongsan, Xu Fuguan, Zhang Junmai and Tang Junyi, published jointly the Declaration to the World People for Chinese Culture: Our Common Understanding on Chinese Academia and the Future of Chinese Culture and World Culture.245

The declaration was an attempt to correct some prejudices of Western sinologists and moreover some mistaken ideas toward Chinese culture in China. In his letter to Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan on June 28, 1957, Tang Junyi said, “You asked me to draft a culture declaration, and I wrote a draft of over 40,000 words. But I think it too long as a declaration. What I intend to do is correct some Western misunderstandings on Chinese culture and politics.”246 In another letter to Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan on November 28 of the same year, Tang Junyi said: “The draft was intended to teach a lesson to the sinologists in the West and show them our attitudes though it cannot be translated into English right now. In the meantime, the draft can also correct the attitudes of some Chinese in an indirect fashion.”247

The four professors248 discussed and published the draft in the latter half of the 1950s when China was weak and Chinese culture was then subject to misunderstanding. In such a situation, the four professors, holding fast to the spiritual value of Chinese culture, expounded national culture, exposed positively the bias in the westerners’ research of Chinese culture and corrected some inappropriate attitudes toward Chinese culture and Western culture. Their actions have an undoubted cultural value of significance, which will be treated in detail later.

What forms a nice contrast with the two declarations above is the 2004 Top-level Culture Forum, a forum held from September 3rd to 5th 2004 in Beijing, sponsored
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by the Chinese Culture Promotion Association. The forum was held more than twenty years after mainland China adopted the policy of reform and opening up, just at the time of China’s peaceful rise. At the end of the forum, the 2004 Culture Declaration was publicized, with Xinhua News Agency printing full coverage, and almost all the important media on the mainland reporting the event.

The forum was initiated by Xu Jialu, Ji Xianlin, Ren Jiyu, Chen Ning Yang and Wang Meng, and the declaration was co-signed by 70 scholars present at the forum. The basic issue behind the declaration was globalization, the current worldwide trend which, according to the declaration: “has stimulated sharing of human civilization among different states, nations and regions, especially the scientific achievements and enterprise management experience, yet in the meantime, has also highlighted disparities, disagreements and conflicts between these states, nations and regions”. Facing this situation, the signatories of the declaration took the opportunity to make their voices heard to Chinese compatriots at home and abroad and to the world at large.

Briefly speaking, the signatories held the following positions.

First, they supported culture diversity. In their opinion, cultural diversity is the basic form of human cultural existence. They expected that the primitive and relatively independent culture shall be shown greater concern and more determined acceptance. Dialogues shall be held between different civilizations in order to reduce bias and hostility, to eliminate estrangement and misunderstanding. They opposed narrow nationalism in rejection of heterogeneous civilization, and opposed the attempt to evaluate different civilizations simply by their strength and weakness even more, or to regard the relation between different civilizations as an insoluble conflict. Something which would definitely lead us to disastrous political wrangling and even to war.

Second, they support cultural pluralism. They hold that every country has the right to cultural creation, cultural development and cultural choice. Like biological diversity that is indispensable to species equilibrium, cultural diversity is equally indispensable to the global cultural ecology. Every country or nation has the right and obligation to preserve and develop its own traditional culture, to choose to accept or not wholly accept or completely reject some alien cultural elements, and to express its views on the cultural issues the world is facing today. All the countries, regardless of geographies, histories and national strengths, enjoy equal rights in cultural exchanges. Cultural chauvinism and cultural bias are not acceptable to them.

Third, Chinese culture is a spiritual haven, emotional bond and personal identification for Chinese both at home and abroad. It boasts of self-reliance, spirit of tolerance, and sensible wisdom.

Fourth, Chinese culture has a unique value of its own in today's world. With eastern character and peaceful humanism emphasizing personality, morality, altruism, and harmony, Chinese culture could render valuable insights to our thinking and fight against personal interest first, materialism, malicious competition,
predatory exploitation and other issues of great concern, and in our pursuits of human peace and happiness.

Fifth, Chinese culture should absorb the merits of other cultures. To develop Chinese culture, Chinese people should, while reflecting on traditional Chinese culture, keep pace with the world, learn and absorb the merits of other cultures in the world such as the values of freedom, democracy, impartiality, human rights, the rule of law, racial equality, sovereignty of the state and so on.

Sixth, they call for all the governments, including the Chinese government, to implement effective cultural policies to safeguard the diversity of civilizations, understand and respect heterogeneous civilization, preserve the cultural traditions of every country or nation, help form fair expression and dissemination of diversified cultures, implement citizenship education, and encourage cultural exchanges between different countries, nations and regions.

The declaration has prompted a strong reaction both at home and abroad, especially on the mainland. Many people praised and agreed with it, others questioned and disagreed with it.

It is worth noticing that China’s status and influence in the world at the time of its publication was quite different from the 1930s and 1950s. The world has changed drastically. To be faced with globalization and China’s peaceful rise, Chinese people, loving Chinese culture both at home and abroad, think on how to settle the spiritual life of the Chinese nation, develop Chinese culture so as to promote a healthy advancement of human civilization in the context of economic globalization, political multi-polarization and cultural pluralism. Although the points of view reflected in the declaration are somehow not so integrated due to multifarious signatories, over generalized content, and lack of theoretical analysis, the declaration has demonstrated after all a cultural awareness among Chinese intellectuals in the new century, awareness of cultural values in China’s peaceful rise, and a demand for Chinese culture in the context of the new world civilization.

To sum up, in spite of different times, different authors and different goals, the three declarations, if considered in the context of China’s current cultural development and globalization, do share a unified theme: to promote Chinese cultural modernization, and then promote China’s modernization drive, to stick to the subjectivity of national culture, elevate the Chinese national spirit, and finally rejuvenate Chinese civilization.

II. The value of the modern neo-Confucian “Cultural Declaration”

The Neo-Confucian Culture Declaration aroused great concern among Chinese scholars on the mainland, Hong Kong, Taiwan and abroad, caused unprecedented response and has since been paid much attention in Chinese academia. Comparatively speaking, the Neo-Confucian declaration, with its good length, deep analysis, and
penetrating viewpoints, owns a great intellectual value, and has a great significance for Chinese cultural development, best showing the initiatives of Chinese intellectuals who strive to push China's modernization drive and support the subjectivity of national culture. So we have to take a closer look at their views in the following section.

The declaration has aroused great concern and prompted further thinking for a long time both at home and abroad, and more and more people on the mainland have shown good interest in it especially after the mainland adopted the policy of reform and opening-up and reevaluated the importance of traditional Chinese culture. This is closely related with what it fundamentally holds.

The declaration contains 12 parts which are listed as follows:

1. Justification for the declaration
2. Three motives, paths and their shortcomings in the study of Chinese culture by world people
3. Affirmation of the spiritual life of Chinese history and Chinese culture
4. The position of Chinese ideology in Chinese culture and its difference to Western culture
5. The ethics and morality, and religious spirit in Chinese culture
6. The importance of Chinese mind-nature philosophy (心性之学)
7. What has caused China to have such a long history?
8. The development of Chinese culture and science
9. The development of Chinese culture and founding of the country based on democracy
10. Our understanding of modern Chinese political history
11. Our expectation of the West and what the West should learn from the Eastern wisdom
12. Our expectation of world academia

The declaration is over 40,000 words and expounds fully on the above content.

To be faced with the conflicts at home and abroad, the Neo-Confucianists, as the guardians of Chinese culture, are supposed to expound convincingly the value of Chinese culture in the first place, preserving and promoting the spiritual life of Chinese culture. It is clearly shown in the declaration that Chinese culture, not others, is the spiritual haven for Chinese. “The true wisdom comes from calamities and hardships”. “Chinese culture has due importance in the world”. The spiritual sustenance of the Chinese, accounting for almost a quarter of the world’s population then, concerns not only Chinese themselves but also the common conscience of the human being as a whole. It should be acknowledged that Chinese culture is full of vitality since Chinese history is one made by Chinese blood and lives reflecting an objective spiritual life. What lies in the centre of it is Chinese philosophy.

Oneness is the characteristics of Chinese culture. That is, it is in principle a consistent system. In politics, for instance, unity was the normal state though there were unities and break-ups from time to time in Chinese history. Chinese moral
philosophy, aiming at forming a true personality, shows itself in doing whatever is righteous regardless of advantage and disadvantage, fortune and misfortune, gain and loss, life and death. What lies in the centre of Chinese philosophy is the Chinese mind-nature philosophy which justifies the theory of man and nature as agreeable with morality. In *The Doctrine of the Mean*, it says: “The Taos run in nature without conflict,” which constitutes the broad-minded character in Chinese culture and thus accounts for its long existence. In Chinese culture, there is the spirit of “the real is at present”, the pursuit of “put all aside”, the wisdom of “flexibility and sophistication” and sentiments of “kindness and compassion”, all of which comprise its lasting wisdom. Moreover, what is also unique is the idea that all under Heaven is of one family. All these not only constitute a spiritual haven for the Chinese, but also provide good points for the West to learn from. Without doubt, the Neo-Confucianists, in their efforts to attach great importance to a Chinese spiritual haven, especially their expounding on its content, express deep cultural wisdom and show their true concern and practical constitution towards the spiritual life of the Chinese.

In their affirmation of the spiritual value of Chinese culture, the Neo-Confucians acknowledge frankly the merits of Western learning and advocate that Chinese should learn from the West conscientiously. In their opinion, science and democracy are the merits of the West. This is what Chinese lack, and hence what Chinese should learn. In the eighth and ninth sections of the declaration, they analyze the defects in Chinese culture as saying: “We acknowledge that we lacked both a modern democratic system and a modern science of the West, and various practical technologies, which have caused a failure in China becoming truly modernized and industrialized”. In a word, the failure of China to be truly modernized and industrialized is caused by the lack of democracy and science, and democracy and science are prerequisite. Frankly speaking, the authors of the declaration show honesty and reason in this.

In the meantime, they also defend Chinese culture in its failure to have democracy and science in the following remarks. Chinese culture has the seed of democracy which requires Chinese politics to show a tendency toward a democratic system. Nor is Chinese culture in opposition to science or in contempt for technology. The Chinese concepts of “the world is for all” and “all the people are equal in personality” are the origins of democracy, or at least are the seed of democracy. These remarks are negotiable, but their plain acknowledgement of a lack of democracy and science in Chinese culture juxtaposes the merits of Western culture and hence foresees the orientation of a future development of Chinese culture that shall emphasizes the value of democracy and science, and provides heterogeneous resources in the reconstruction of Chinese cultural values. All these demonstrate that the declaration has an open-minded and broad-minded foresight and a conscientious attitude to show respect to and learn from Western civilization on the basis of preserving the root of Chinese culture.

Another unique value of the declaration lies in its advocacy of the idea that Chinese culture and Western culture should learn from each other. China was a
weak country in the world in the 1950s when, culturally speaking, it worshiped the West in Hong Kong and Taiwan and hated the West in the Chinese mainland. Under the specific conditions at the time this attitude reflected a broad-minded global consciousness, and moreover, a national position to elevate the spiritual value of Chinese culture. All these are truly valuable.

Throughout the declaration it is permeated with a noticeable sense highlighting Chinese national character. China was afflicted severely in modern history and was compelled to learn from the West in its stumbling modernization drive, which made a lot of people become skeptical of the value of Chinese culture and, moreover, forget or even eliminate the characteristics of Chinese culture. Expounding the peculiarity of Chinese culture, then, the declaration is always in a position to elevate national culture spirit, reiterate the historical cause for the long existence of Chinese culture, and strengthen the cultural root of the Chinese nation. Not only did this make sense at the time of its publication but also it is universally plausible and has an eternal value of its own in today's globalized world.

In its advocacy of showing affection and respect for national culture, the declaration gave a strong blow to the mentality of worshiping the West. In addition, it also criticized sharply and corrected reasonably the nihilistic idea to refuse completely Chinese traditional culture. Cultural awareness was reflected in the declaration by its repeated demand to make a clear understanding of and a reasonable evaluation of the past, the present and future of Chinese national culture. The development of cultural awareness became a prerequisite for cultural advancement.

In short, the exposition of “Chinese culture and the world” given by the four professors in line with the above thinking has a unique value of its own which can be specified as follows:

1. It expounds rationally the value of and fosters the spiritual life of Chinese culture.
2. It acknowledges frankly the merits of Western culture and specifies what we should learn from the West.
3. It advocates the position and methodology whereby Chinese culture and Western culture learn from each other.
4. It attaches great importance to the national character of culture and strengthens the root consciousness of Chinese culture.
5. It shows to the whole world the affection and respect that should be paid by the Chinese to their national culture.
6. It manifests a strong sense of cultural awareness.

These are worth our close attention and serious consideration in today's globalized world when we develop Chinese culture and make it our spiritual haven.
The publication of the three declarations has obviously manifested the developing trajectory of Chinese culture since the beginning of the 20th century and reflected the cultural initiatives of Chinese intelligentsia in their push toward China’s modernization.

Comparatively speaking, the three declarations are all concerned with the same issues.

First, they show their concerns over and speculate on the relationship between Chinese culture and Western culture on the basis of the Chinese nation.

The China-based Culture Construction Declaration by the ten professors put a China-based position as their starting point, obviously corresponding to Western culture. And this China-based position reiterated the peculiarity of Chinese culture, regarding national culture as the base of culture construction along with China’s needs “at this time and at this place”.

The Declaration to the World People for Chinese Culture by the four professors intended to correct some prejudices and misunderstandings of Western sinologists over Chinese history and scholarship and some mistaken ideas by some Chinese toward Chinese culture, targeted principally at westerners and Western culture. Compared with the China-based school, the Neo-Confucianists placed more emphasis on equal dialogue and exchange between China and the West, placing Chinese cultural construction in the context of world cultural development. Therefore, they were more broad-minded and far-sighted. Differing from the China-based school that advocated resistance against Western culture, the modern Neo-Confucianists adopted a conscientious attitude to learn from advanced culture in the West and showed a deep understanding and acceptance of advanced concepts such as democracy and science.

The 2004 Culture Declaration by 70 scholars, in the context of globalization, began face to face with the West, putting the relationship between Chinese culture and Western culture on an equal footing and emphasizing the value of cultural pluralism. The declaration advocated that “dialogues shall be held between different civilizations in order to reduce bias and hostility, to eliminate estrangement and misunderstanding”. They held that there was no superiority or inferiority between world civilizations and opposed narrow-minded nationalism and cultural chauvinism. The declaration also showed better the willingness of well-educated Chinese to safeguard the role of Chinese culture in the context of globalization due to the fact that it was signed by domestic Chinese and Chinese communities abroad working in different fields.

Second, they were all concerned with the issue of national confidence.

What the China-based school witnessed was a decrease of and even lack of national confidence, which made them advocate China-based cultural construction so as to avoid westernization and foster self-confidence, and to find China and Chinese as already culturally lost. So what they advocate is actually, “to rebuild and promote Chinese culture” from the perspective of anti-westernization. On the basis
of exposition on the peculiar value of Chinese culture, the Neo-Confucianists reiterated the value of Chinese culture to the nation as well as to world culture, and hence boosted national confidence at the time when Chinese culture began to “wither”.

By recognizing and accepting the cream of Western culture they strengthened the body of national culture and thus promoted Chinese confidence and strength in national culture. This is a showcase of national confidence reflected through “tolerant and blending attitudes” toward Western culture. By “reiterating eastern character and peaceful humanism in favor of personality, morality, altruism, and harmony,” The 2004 Culture Declaration could render us valuable insights in our thinking and fight against personal interest first, materialism, malicious competition, predatory exploitation and other issues of great concern, thus showing its confidence in the value of Chinese national culture. This is a showcase of promoting national culture by “expounding Chinese culture to instill Western culture”.

Third, they were all concerned with the issue of national character in culture.

The three declarations expounded from different sides the national character of Chinese culture, elaborated on its unique contributions to the Chinese nation as well as to human society, thus bearing great significance in the fight against and elimination of cultural hegemony and chauvinism, and in advocating keeping national character in cultural construction.

Fourth, they were all concerned with the issue of learning from and instilling Western learning.

The China-based declaration proclaimed with clarity that “it is necessary and imperative to learn from the European and American cultures”. The Neo-Confucianists explained in detail in the declaration why and how we should learn from Western culture and stated explicitly the importance of democracy and science to the Chinese modernization drive and how to accept them. The 2004 Culture Declaration expressed its will to accept the values of freedom, democracy, impartiality, human rights, the rule of law, racial equality, and state sovereignty, showing its recognition of the components of universal value in Western culture.

Fifth, they were all concerned with the issue of national rejuvenation.

The China-based school targeted their goal at “constructing China in the future”, “reviewing China’s past, seizing China’s present, and creating China’s future” so that “China could restore its prominence in the field of culture, regain its past position, and become the strongest force in promoting a harmonious world”. The Neo-Confucianists targeted their goal at a revival of Chinese culture, so they put their efforts to do some scholastic accumulations for such a revival. The 2004 Culture Declaration targeted their goal at promoting, through innovation and practice, realization of cultural value and advancement in civilization, and wanted to spare no effort to develop Chinese culture and, together with all the people in the world, make it conducive to human civilization and social development.

Sixth, they were all concerned with the issue of constructing a spiritual haven for the Chinese.
One of the direct motivations of the China-based school was their advocacy of China-based culture construction because they thought that China and Chinese had vanished in the fields of culture and ideology. What they did want was actually to find and construct a spiritual haven for the Chinese. The Neo-Confucianism declaration elaborated on the mind-nature philosophy, revealed the way to settle oneself down, thus providing valuable resources for constructing a spiritual haven for the Chinese. And in The 2004 Culture Declaration it was clearly stated that Chinese culture “is still a spiritual haven, emotional bond and personal identification for both domestic and overseas Chinese”.

All the above reflect the link between the three declarations and the painstaking efforts paid by different generations of intelligentsia to modernize the country.

In spite of this, the three declarations have their disparities.

First, they had differences in background.

When the first declaration was published, Chinese culture was faced with the practical issue of westernization whose advocates were contesting for a say in cultural construction while the whole nation undertook the great task of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism. When the second declaration was published, Chinese culture was faced not only with great pressure from a dominating Western culture, but also destructions from the stereotyped leftist forces of the Chinese mainland. So the authors of the declaration were intensively spurred by both a “withering” attitude and an expectation of “self-cultivation”. At the publication of the third declaration, however, China was undergoing a peaceful rise in an era of globalization, with its comprehensive national strength growing all the time, and its similarly growing position in the world community.

Second, they had differences in the composition of participants.

On the part of the first declaration and the second declaration, the participants were professors adept at cultural studies, while the participants of the third declaration included many experts from diverse fields such as education, science and technology, literature, history, philosophy, linguistics, music, art, opera, drama, broadcasting, film, television, and calligraphy. Hence they could not reach a consensus in depth since they were professors, officials, painters, composers, actors, writers, and so on working in different fields.

Third, they had different cultural perspectives.

Behind the first declaration was an official background and its corresponding official mode of discourse. As for the third declaration an official background was faintly at the back of the declaration was influenced by the mode of official discourse, with red tape evident here and there. In the case of the second declaration, however, the Neo-Confucianists adopted a grassroots position or scholastic position and had no sign of ornaments or extravagance. What they did have was plain explanations of their viewpoints and their conscious support for the spiritual value of Chinese national culture.
IV. The enlightenment of the three “Cultural Declarations” for developmental directions of Chinese culture

Generally speaking, the three declarations are different in cultural value, but reflect Chinese intelligentsia in their efforts for China’s modernization drive and elevation of the Chinese national spirit.

There have been many arguments concerning the future development of Chinese culture over a century. Closer study of the three declarations in the context of China’s modernization drive over the century can lead us to some valuable inspirations.

First, modernization is not westernization. This plain truth has been proven by the process of one hundred years of modernization, especially by the Chinese modernizing practices across the Taiwan Strait. Reflections on the Development of Modernization Thoughts over One Hundred Years by Luo Rongqu, a professor at Peking University, have proved the truth with sound argument. In a similar fashion, Yeo-Chi King, a professor with The Chinese University of Hong Kong, explains reasonably this truth in his paper “The Orientations of China’s Modernization” by using Taiwan’s modernization drive as an example. What we want to emphasize here is that the developing orientations and the principles contained in the three declarations are the reflections of the basic belief that China’s modernization cannot follow only the West.

Second, modernization is not materialism. Of course, modernization aims at a rapid increase in material wealth with industrialization at its centre. However, modernization does not mean industrialization only, nor make the increase material wealth the sole purpose. What it does mean is humanization, man’s comprehensive modernization as well as comprehensive social modernization. Besides material and economic pursuits, therefore, there must be spiritual and cultural pursuits along with the pursuit of efficient systems. It is the integration of these pursuits that comprises comprehensive modernization in its true sense.

The basic values disseminated by the three declarations are the basic values of Chinese culture which provide a spiritual and psychological haven for the Chinese people, and which render them criteria for evaluating human value.

Third, China’s modernization should elevate itself in the Chinese national spirit insisting on subjectivity in cultural construction. One of the important characteristics common to the three declarations is their firm belief in the spiritual value of Chinese national culture and the belief that the Chinese nation can emancipate itself. Modernization cannot do without spiritual sustenance. Hence the Chinese national spirit, elevation of Chinese cultural values and subjectivity in cultural construction are real guarantees for China’s modernization drive.

Fourth, modernization concerns itself with national character, that is, Chinese characteristics. The issue of Chinese characteristics has not come up in the last 30 years or so. In fact, it was a hotly debated topic during the 1930s and 1940s concerning China’s modernization and cultural development. Yeo-Chi King, in his signed article “The Orientations of China’s Modernization”, made comments on
the experience and errors of Taiwan’s modernization drive: “China’s modern society in the future must be at once modern (which is general) and Chinese (which is particular). What we should seek for can be inspired and obtained on the one hand from traditional heritage, and on the other from experience of those advanced modern societies.”258 “The conclusion that the content of Chinese society in the future after modernization must be ‘modern’ as well as ‘Chinese’ has been reached from substantial effects of social vicissitudes (because cultural heritage cannot die out completely) and also from the purpose we expect (because we do not want to lose completely Chinese cultural heritage)”.259 In the construction of modern culture: “What is most important is how to display Chinese character in culture”.260 It should be acknowledged that these comments are profound, practical and thought-provoking if we observe scientifically and rationally the facts of different modernization practices across the Taiwan Straits. Looking back at the positions of the three declarations and their affirmations of the characteristics of Chinese culture based upon the above comments, we cannot help but acknowledge that China’s modernization must be modern, not classical, and be Chinese, not western.

In a word, the basic path of China’s social modernization as well as cultural modernization ought to be “modernization with Chinese characteristics”. This is an intrinsic pursuit behind the three declarations and an important inspiration they render to us. With the prerequisite of following the socialist core value system, and in our expectation to develop Chinese culture and construct a shared spiritual haven for the Chinese nation, we can benefit quite a lot in our culture construction with Chinese characteristics if we could review seriously and sum up rationally what we could learn from the three declarations.
In modern times, cultural criticism and value reconstruction in China has encountered many difficulties and obstacles. After reform and opening up, the development of the commodity economy and the appearance of the relevant concepts make increasingly prominent the contradictions between tradition and the modern times as well as conflict between China and the West in cultural construction, attracting more attention to the future development of Chinese culture. Now, it has important theoretical value and realistic meaning for us to build a modern and brand-new cultural system. We should carefully summarize the lessons we have learned from cultural criticism and value reconstruction, objectively analyze different views on the future development of Chinese culture, clarify different cultural development approaches since modern times, and look forward to the future development of Chinese culture.

I. Cultural critique, values reconstruction and civilization renaissance

A way of thinking shapes and is shaped by a certain cultural atmosphere. Once a thinking stereotype is formed, it will affect how people think sub-consciously. In the particular political and cultural environment of modern China, dominated by dualistic cognitive mentality of breaking and establishing in cultural construction, and influenced by one-way thinking that demolishing and establishing cannot co-exist, the vocabulary such as criticism and cultural criticism is naturally given a purely negative meaning (always from political sense) which causes the misunderstanding and misuse of these terms in cultural studies. Consequently, we need to define these terms in order to eradicate discrepancies and to form consensus before advocating the excellent tradition of our national culture and deepening our cultural studies with accuracy.
Criticism, generally speaking, is judgment of the right and the wrong. In ancient China, it was used as a neutral term denoting the behavior of distinguishing right from wrong. For instance, Zhuzi’s *Language Category-Taiji, Heaven and Earth (part one)* claims that: “We cannot say there is someone in Heaven who criticizes the sin, neither can we believe there is no one who distinguishes right from wrong”. Niu Benji in the Jin dynasty said: “to comment the right and the wrong of our ancestors and the unsettled lawsuits” in *West Hall and Tower Inscription of Shaolin Temple*.

Similarly, criticism also means comment in Western philosophy. For the same reason, so-called cultural criticism is comment on culture, namely making judgments on cultural issues. The criticism or cultural criticism is itself objective thinking activity and is not pure negation, especially not purely political or ethical negation. Unfortunately, affected by decade-long politics-only thinking of taking class struggle as the central task, and politics as the overwhelming priority, the word “criticism” has a strong political valence, which is bound to connote strong negation. Criticism is negation, and usually means to pronounce “the death penalty” on those who are criticized (always the political death penalty!), which leads to conflict. This is a typical manifestation of politics-only thinking in the cultural field.

The cultural criticism we are talking about is rational examination of the national culture, objective sorting of national cultural heritage and the proactive creative activities of transforming national cultural heritage, but it is not a simply political negation.

Value reconstruction is inseparable and complementary to cultural criticism. Value reconstruction is to judge with modern cultural consciousness the value system of national culture based on reality and to absorb useful cultures of the world with an open heart. With criticism containing modern consciousness, national conditions and the conditions of the present time, value reconstruction is to create a modern and new cultural value system for the spirit of modern people to return to. Criticism is to create, while reconstruction is to revive.

In the course of establishing a new cultural system, cultural criticism and value reconstruction are indispensable and complementary. The former clears a path and offers learned lessons and necessary preparation for the latter. The latter is the logic of development and the inevitable destination of the former. Both cultural criticism and value reconstruction are inevitable processes and means to establishing a new culture and value system.

Now that cultural criticism and value reconstruction are to create new cultural system, the establishment of a new cultural system means the renaissance of national civilization, which must be guided by rational cultural criticism and undergirded by arduous value reconstruction. Thus, scientific cultural criticism and rational value reconstruction are bound to be the ideological premise and important symbol for the renaissance of national civilization. Consequently, I believe there has to be a long-term and arduous theoretical preparation, ideology clearing and gradual cultural accumulation before a national civilization is revived. In this sense, the renaissance of national civilization cannot be achieved overnight; rather, it will
be achieved through the effort of several generations. It is undoubtedly significant for new culture construction to seriously and carefully reflect on China’s cultural criticism and reconstruction since modern times.

II. The cultural criticism and value reconstruction in the course of modern history

Cultural development in modern China, despite rough roads, always moved on the road of modernization that bade farewell to classicism, strengthened modern consciousness and chased world trends. Liang Qichao incisively pointed out in *General Introduction to China Development in past Five Decades* that “Chinese were realizing their shortcomings in the past fifty years, which serves as the reasons for and the results of knowledge progress. In the first phase, people were aware of tool shortage. The awareness gradually started after Opium War… people realized that it is necessary to learn from others, thus organizations such as Fujian Shipbuilding Institute and Shanghai Manufacturing Bureau were established one by one… In the second phase, people realized the shortcomings of the system, so they campaigned in the society with ‘Constitutional Reform and Modernization’ as their flag. … In the third phase, people were aware of the culture shortage. The second phase underwent a long period of time, starting from the Sino-Japanese War (1894) and ending in 6th–7th year of Republic China (1917–1918)… During these two decades, most Chinese thought Chinese politics, laws and so on were far behind those of other countries, so they couldn’t wait to copy all the organizational forms of other countries, believing that everything can be solved by doing so. However, every hope failed nearly ten years after the revolutions, and gradually we feel we were defeated. It occurs to us that it is impossible to apply new systems by using old and outdated psychology because we think social culture is a whole. Now we gradually require realizations in all levels…. so, a new epoch has been divided in the recent two years.”

Looking back the history of Chinese cultural development, we should admit that the statement of Liang Qichao is precise and profound. Pang Pu, a Chinese scholar, claimed that Liang’s statement “helps us know the history of Chinese cultural development in modern times,” he furthered what Liang had said and thought the cultural representations of Chinese modern history can be generally divided into three phases: (1) The period from the Opium War, via the Westernization Movement (1861) to the Sino-Japanese War (1895) witnessing the renaissance of the conception that “knowledge should benefit to the development of the country” and the high voices of enriching the country and strengthening the army. Even we though we admitted our tools were far behind those of Western countries, we felt it unnecessary to follow others while abandoning ourselves; (2) The second phase began from defeat in the Sino-Japanese War (1894), via the Reform Movement of 1898 to the success of republic revolution in 1911. In this period, Chinese doubted all the laws
and regulations and exerted creative spirits, admitting Chinese civilization was inferior to Western civilizations in terms of system and daring to abolish the old and establish the new; (3) The third phrase was from the Revolution of 1911, via Restoration of the Imperial Regime (1914) to the May Fourth Movement of 1919. In this period, new thought competed with old, while the Eastern culture was compared with the Western culture, fundamentally reflecting the root of the culture. The three phases witnessed ancient Chinese culture, pressed by foreign cultures (including the invasion of Western cultures and the temptation of Japanese culture changes), gradually transformed, absorbed and went to modern culture in the process of its own development.262

Obviously, the statements of Liang Qichao and Pang Pu were not only simple accounts of history, rather, they had theoretical refinements with high ideas of cultural construction. In other words, they were “criticism” to the cultural development of modern China. It is the cultural awakening of Chinese intellectuals in the process of cultural modernization, and also the ideological driving force of Chinese cultural modernization. However, what is worth noting is that both are the logic of Chinese culture in modern times at the level of cultural structure. Their differences are due to the fact that they lived in different ages. Liang’s statement was unconscious (or self-constrained) in understanding and mastering the theory of cultural structure, while Pang’s was conscious. Today, when we practice a new type cultural criticism and value reconstruction from a higher level, we should pay more attention to the following questions and to the whole situation of cultural criticism and value reconstruction in modern times: which had general characteristics? Which is the ideological stereotype that should be overcome? Why did people concerned with the fate of Chinese culture feel sadness at the “culture breaking up” and “losing value”? Why were people lost in building and seeking reason in life?

As everyone knows, Chinese society had undergone dramatic changes since the Ming and Qing dynasties. Two thousand-year of feudal autocracy was disastrous. With the appearance of nascent capitalist production relations and attacks from Europe and America since the Opium War, the pains were felt of a new and modern culture coming into existence.

The Opium War cast a great shadow over China and Chinese culture. The advanced ships and gunfire were criticism not only of the seclusion policy of the Qing dynasty, but more of the feudal culture that was fading! They caused China to open up to foreign countries passively, and opened the “late-developing and exogenous” process of Chinese social modernization. The Taiping Revolution and Westernization Movement were not only weapon criticism to feudal culture, but more ideological criticism to the value system. They absorbed the positive elements of Western cultures, and reconstructed the value system of Chinese traditional culture.

The Hundred Days Revolution, the Revolution of 1911 and the May Fourth Movement rid China of negative Western cultural elements and absorbed and put into practice positive Western elements at a higher level and in a more spacious
cultural vision. They are rational criticism and value reconstruction from a higher level and a more conscious foundation.

Clearly, from the Opium War to the May Fourth Movement, the whole cultural criticism and value reconstruction demonstrated similar characteristics: reforming by using radical ways (including the Hundred Days Revolution known as “reformism”). Resolute attitudes, radical ways and eagerness to change were the common moods of all the progressives determined to break from feudalism. However, radicalism brought about only a gradual improvement because the old blocked the development of the new in the process of social transformation. Cultural progress is a road full of hardship. Due to the fact that new production relations had not yet come into being and there were no scientific to act as guides, radical cultural criticism was not thorough, and value reconstruction was weak, emphasizing the breaking up (political negation) but ignored establishment (reconstruction). As a result, people felt lost in relation to value, and put forward many theories on cultural dislocation.

Since the establishment of the the great renaissance of Chinese civilization has begun on a new foundation. With the participation of intellectuals, cultural criticism and value reconstruction has started a brand new process. However, criticism mainly fell to simple political negations and reconstruction was trapped in various ideological errors for thirty years before the reform and opening up period, because leaders made mistakes in guiding the process. Since the 1950s, successive political movements, “highlighting proletariat politics”, regarded Chinese traditional culture as a darkness, and simply classified ancient Chinese culture as “feudal culture” to be abolished. So-called “criticism” manifested division. Facts have proven that degrading national culture is to block the spiritual river of national culture and to desert valuable sources of life. The spirit has nowhere to go and behavior lacks culture. Similarly, the movements adopted a simple and naïve approach, degrading and objecting to all Western cultures. All the modern civilizations created since Bourgeois Revolution were limited by the mentality that: “Those who are not our kin are sure to be of a different heart”, and were scattered by class struggles. As a result, the channels to communicate with foreign countries were blocked, and cultural exchanges were cut off. In this way, Chinese localized cultures were a “feudal class”, while Western cultures were “bourgeois”. It had no foundations to talk about “the present” by abandoning “the past” and denying “the West”, so it had nothing to do but flail in self-made political struggle. Consequently, spiritual life could not improve and settle down, but was constantly weakened, and even weakened to lifelessness. What is worse, the value system of national culture and the new social ideology had not yet been established thus people’s behavior lacked the firm values. It made people blindly follow inappropriate political movements to deny and devalue themselves, which led to the loss of independent personality and the damping of national spirits.

Reform and opening up brought new life to Chinese culture. The comprehensive reforms in material, systems and ideology, and opening up carried out with high national confidence, together with rapid development of the commodity economy
endowed cultural criticism and value reconstruction with a new spirit of the age and new value. After the decade-long reform and opening up, some consensuses have reached on the developmental trends of Chinese culture and the positions and roles of China in the world: First, China should and must go to the world, while the world should and must know China. Second, Chinese culture should be upgraded and transformed on the basis of developing a commodity economy. Third, a rigid and operational democratic and legal system must be established in order to get out from the man-governed dilemma. Last, dialectic thinking should be practiced in objection to the one-sidedness of adopting all Western cultures and Chinese localized cultures. Only by doing so can we indeed move towards the world, towards the future and towards modernization. It is the universal conclusion we have drawn from poignant reflection on the process of Chinese cultural criticism and reconstruction in modern times.

III. The modern spiritual direction of reconstructing the values

World culture as a whole reflects the development process of the human spirit. The so-called world culture consists of different national cultures. Cultural scholars generally accepted that values are the core of culture. What distinguishes different types of national culture is that they possess different value systems. Consequently, so-called culture reconstruction is after all value reconstruction which is a complicated project. In China, modernization is far from completion because various reforms continue. The influences of tradition, the puzzles of reality and the mixture of the old and the new intensify the make the birth of a new culture, and value reconstruction difficult. However, we should still devote ourselves to this project with confidence. We need pay attention to the following aspects of “deep” culture.

First, reform and opening up should be insisted on. Problems in reality should be analyzed with a rational attitude and the motivations of modern people should be sought in order to manifest the national spirit and improve spiritual conditions. Reform and opening up as a direction is itself part of the national spirit and becomes the theme of the spirit of the age. It is a kind positive and encouraging spiritual force which cannot be reversed and no one can resist its advance or change its directions.

Second, national culture should be inherited critically and its excellent part should be transformed. The ideal pursuits for cultural China, loyalty of patriots, striving for self-improvement, generous attitudes towards others, etc., all these still have positive meaning. If we shape and transform them with the spirit of the age, they will become the components of new and glittering values.

Third, we should be good at absorbing new experiences and generalizing new theories based on the reality of Chinese modernization construction, so that we can theorize and incorporate new things into the new value system. It will enrich the
meaning of national culture, broaden the roads of cultural development, form cohesive forces of new national culture and strengthen vitality.

Finally, what is positive in Western cultures should be learned selectively so that they can be the ideological components and theoretical lessons for the new value system. Facts have proved that the so-called “western cultures” created since the Bourgeois Revolution in modern times are the logical development of human rational spirits and represent a certain phase of human civilization. Even today, Western cultures have abundant positive factors that inspire our thinking. If we are not far from the road of civilization development, we should admit that any useful cultures in the world including Western cultures should be absorbed if we want to construct a new Chinese culture. In this way, we can gain cultural nutrition, learn and use the strength of others and construct and develop Chinese culture in a better way.

What we discussed above is “deep” cultural seeking as to the problems in Chinese cultural developments from the perspective of defining the term and the perspective of cultural criticism and value reconstruction process. The purpose is to offer macro thinking rather than concrete answers to the future of Chinese culture. Now, we can sketch a rough outline.

Since modern times, many ideas and proposals have been put forward concerning the future of Chinese culture. New ideas also appeared in recent culture discussion. Generally speaking, there are the following proposals: Chinese culture as the fundamental structure and Western culture for practical use; transforming Western culture with ancient Chinese culture; westernization; Western culture as the fundamental structure and Chinese cultures for practical use; returning to the tradition; renaissance of Confucianism; philosophical enlightening; thorough reconstruction; and comprehensive innovation, to name but a few.

These proposals have different objectives in theoretical construction and value orientation. From the perspective of the spiritual directions of Chinese cultural modernization and the perspective of the relationship between the past and the modern as well as the relationship between the West and China, despite the great ideological differences among them, proposals such as Chinese culture as the fundamental structure and Western culture for practical use; transforming Western culture with ancient Chinese culture; returning to the tradition and renaissance of Confucianism, have the same base. Namely to keep the value system of traditional Chinese culture, and they belong to conservatism as regards its ideological essence. Claims such as westernization, philosophical enlightening and thorough reconstruction all appreciated Western values and broke from tradition despite their differences in theoretical objective and value orientation.

To some extent, the above two value orientations and ways of thinking are indeed the modern manifestation of the traditional dualistic cognitive mentality of breaking and establishing. If we use “the arrogant” and “the lofty”, two notions in Chinese traditional thinking, the former is “the lofty”, while the latter is “the arrogant”. In the historic and revolutionary process of promoting Chinese culture for modernization, “the lofty” belongs to “inadequacy”, namely inadequate
understanding of the development of Chinese culture in modern times and to transforming traditional culture into a new tradition by using modern consciousness. It only hoped for stability, and used cultural continuity to oppose revolution. “The arrogant” belongs to “going too far”, namely a lack of understanding towards the historical continuity of Chinese cultural development and cultural heritage. It only hoped to break up without constraint and to make progress through radical change. The former focused on the past and China, while the latter on the present and the West, so both of them should overcome ideological stereotypes. What is worth noting is that both have unexpected similarities objectively in spite of their opposed positions in value orientation and ways of thinking.

First, both were the spiritual products of careful and painful introspection after being beaten due to poverty and backwardness, and they were modern manifestations of a deep-rooted crisis consciousness. They were “sacred” concerns of intellectuals about the prospects of national culture, and they tortuously mirrored the situation that Chinese culture has both ancestors and successors (sometimes maybe a “distorted” reflection, but conforming to “false appearance is also the reflection of the essence”).

Second, both faced up to the results of cultural reflections on China’s relationship with the West, and on past and present conflicts. Objectively speaking, they showed that Chinese people faced up to attacks from Western cultures and the reality of China’s backwardness, weighed relationships, and tried to move away from the dilemma of Chinese culture to open up a new situation.

Third, both were about the choices of the Chinese cultural future. In other words, they were the plans to rescue Chinese traditional culture from crisis and to respond positively to the conflicts of the past and the present, the West and China.

However, they were not about the definite thinking on new and modern cultural systems. What needs emphasizing is the appearance of “comprehensive innovation” in recent discussions. Its advocates claim that we should object not only to the superiority of eastern culture but to westernization as well, and adopt only positive elements of both Chinese and Western cultures to create a new Chinese culture. They summarize this idea with sixteen Chinese characters (their English translations are as follows): making the past serve the present; making the West serve China; critically inheriting; and comprehensively innovating. No doubt, compared with the above two approaches, this approach is broader and fairer in theoretical thinking and value orientation, thus it is more acceptable and helpful.

However, when considered in detail, we will find that the approach is similar to the above two approaches. It has an obvious deficiency, namely regarding the choices of Chinese cultural development roads, or methodologies about how to solve the conflicts Chinese culture faced, to the construction of new and modern cultural system on an equal footing. To put it more clearly, it mistook means for objectives. Using the correct means and choosing the right path are an important premise for solving the Chinese cultural future, and a useful probe into the future. The choices of paths and means can partially solve the future of Chinese culture, but they cannot fundamentally solve the problem. What is more, paths and means
Cultural Criticism and the Value Reconstruction

are not the final objective from the perspective of theoretical thinking, and they
cannot replace value system construction.

Consequently, we should try alternative ways to explore the future of Chinese
culture. As we have discussed, its future firstly lies in correctly treating past-present
and West-China conflicts, and making the rational choice. This is an indispensable
step. What is more, after establishing the right ideological premise and value
choices, the components and patterns of a new cultural system with Chinese
characteristics need to be further discussed. We should try to make the construction
of the system a living reality rather than pay it lip service or leave it as a blueprint.
Only in this way can we fundamentally solve the future of Chinese culture or
achieve efficacy in addressing both the symptoms and root cause at the core of
cultural construction (in the building of a value system).

In order to address the future of Chinese culture construction and to construct
the new cultural system with Chinese characteristics, we should have a sober mind
about the current conditions of China and scientifically settle the conflicts among
the past, the present, the West and China. Regarding the relationship between the
past and the present, we should use the reality of Chinese cultural development to
construct a new value system. Under this premise, we create and transform past
cultures by merging the past and the present, absorbing the nutrients of national
culture and making the past serve the present.

On this issue, we should oppose not only the historic nihilism that isolated
history and denied the historical continuity of national cultural values, but also the
nostalgia that blindly missed the past and denied the existence of actual culture by
eulogizing ancient cultures. As regard to the relationship between the West and
Chinese cultures, we should object to self-enclosed attitudes that our country is
superior and that we are the strongest, and break up the simple ways of thinking on
which we blindly oppose foreign cultures and deny other excellent cultures in the
world.

What is more, we should object to wrong ideas that denied the spiritual value of
national culture and advocated westernization. In short, on the relationship between
the past and the present, we should base this on reality, rely on excellent traditions
and carry out the principle of making the past serve the present, critically inheriting
and creatively transforming, achieving synergy of the past and the present.

On the relationship between the West and China, we should base this on the
current conditions of China, insist on national characteristics, advocate national
styles and carry out the principle of making the West serve China and absorbing the
positive elements of others with the self as a center, with the West and China
complementing one another. Only in this way can we establish the new and modern
cultural system that critically inherit national history traditions, have open and
progressive spirits of the age, based on the situation of the country and absorb the
excellent achievements of world cultures.

Under the premise of insisting on the above-mentioned ideological directions, we
should explore and establish a new cultural system with Chinese characteristics.
From the perspective of cultural structure, the system is a stereo pattern with three
elements. The pattern refers to the construction of a socialist cultural system, and the three elements to three different aspects: politics, economy and culture.

Economy is the most important aspect, and it determines the quality and the developmental level of politics and culture; politics is the basic value direction, and it guides the developmental directions of economy and culture, playing the role of promoting or delaying their development; culture affects people from aspects such as ideal personality, value orientation, way of thinking, personality, aesthetics and spirit, and it accumulates to shape a certain national psychology and cultural type, affecting a nation’s development at a deep level. In the pattern of the socialist cultural value system, politics belongs to superstructure, playing a leading role; economy is the foundation, supporting the superstructure; culture is between two and has dual qualities and functions. With regard to politics, culture is in a subordinate position, playing the role of achieving political goals, while leading in unifying national forces and creating newer and greater production forces. The “three elements” of politics, economy and culture are mutually connected, affected and indispensable. As far as ideological connotation and spiritual direction are concerned, the three elements must be socialism-oriented in value direction, and they need to enrich and adjust themselves with the reform and opening up spirit of the age, full of vitality so as to achieve overall harmony and common development.

The three levels of cultural structure, material culture, system culture and ideological culture are different, with their own connotations. They are in different positions in certain culture types, and play the structure roles of surface, middle and deep levels respectively. However, they are connected and form a particular cultural pattern. Only when the three elements can develop together can we demonstrate the vitality of the cultural type and only then can it promote rapid cultural development.

Overall, whether observed from the cultural structure with three elements or from the three levels of culture, we should clearly note that the economy is always in a “foundation” position, and its quality and development determines the quality and development of politics and culture. As a result, we should vigourously develop a socialist commodity economy to promote the development of socialist politics and culture. The history of human civilization development has shown that the commodity economy is the enemy of feudal autocracy and dictatorial politics, and also the natural enemy of idyllic culture atmosphere in the middle ages.

Consequently, developing the socialist commodity economy is a fundamental way to face up to attacks from Europe and America, to break through old traditions and to solve the future of Chinese culture. Of course, as we have just mentioned, the commodity economy cannot develop without the right thought to guide it, or without a solid cultural foundation. Even if it does so, it cannot last long. Because of this, we must insist on correct guidance and develop socialist culture in a healthy way, making them complimentary and promoting common development.

After determining the ideological directions and cultural framework, we should also choose some basic ideological principles as the standards to establish a new
type of cultural system. Generally speaking, we should pay attention to developing the commodity economy to upgrade the cultural tradition; expand values to improve the quality of the Chinese people; equally emphasize cultural criticism and cultural reconstruction; and equally construct material civilization and spiritual civilization.

Besides insisting on the multi-dimensional notion of a pattern with three elements, we should base ourselves on the present and the tradition to achieve the fusion of the present and the past; absorb the excellence from others, making the West and China complementary, and recreate and transform ourselves so that we are energetic and might sail with the spirit of the age. In this way, we can get out of the dilemma and find a solid path for Chinese cultural development, addressing the future of Chinese culture in theory and in practice. By then, we will have accomplished the four indexes of a mature culture (the formation of a social system, value system, cultural patterns and great culture traditions), establishing the new socialist cultural system.
National Cultural Qualities and Rebuilding the Humanistic Spirit

A national cultural quality determines the process and quality of its modernization, while humanism is an important aspect of constructing national cultural quality. The constructions of the two are thus interrelated and worthy our efforts to explore them from theoretical and practical perspectives.

I. The quality of national culture is a diverse and open system

The cultural quality of a nation reflects its national spirit and comprehensive qualities such as ways of thinking, value orientations, ideal characters and aesthetic values.

In the concept of national culture, culture concerns people and it is the externalization and universalization of human rationality in process of knowing and transforming the objective and subjective world. From this sense, it includes and is reflected to a great extent in how much people know from books, namely how much a person reads. However, from the practical perspective, this is only one aspect, fundamentally speaking, and it is the essential aspect of the problem. So rationality we say here refers to human-specialized cognition and development abilities, namely it is cognition, mastery and practice of metaphysical ideas such as spirit, value, and faith. It is in this sense that we hold there is no logical necessity between the amount of “reading” and a person’s culture. On the contrary, a man can be considered as having “culture” in real life as long as he can contribute to society by accurately mastering knowledge, accurately reflecting the objective world and scientifically taking initiative. A person thus has culture if he persists and tries his best to correct spirit, values, faiths and pursuits; otherwise, he does not have culture, or is “counter-culture”.

In ancient China, farmers, artisans and citizens, accounting for the majority part of population, could not afford schooling, but they were main the body of social practice and the basic force for enhancing progress. As criticized by Luxun, the
official history did not record contents such as “mason biography” and “carpenter biography”, however, it was those countless farmers, artisans and merchants—the last three elements in the traditional “knight, farmers, artisans and merchants”—who created the ancient material and spiritual civilizations, built the Great Wall of ancient national culture and became the driving force promoting Chinese culture. This exactly proves how much a person reads has nothing to do with the existence and position of culture.

When we discuss cultural quality, we pay attention to the position and function of all people in national culture and emphasize the function of social practice, but it does not mean we deny the role of intellectuals in national cultural creation and development, or the role of indirect knowledge (book knowledge). On the contrary, special attention is put on the intellectuals, and we believe that “thinkers promote the advancement of history”, and the number and quality of intellectuals are important signs of a national culture. Meanwhile, intellectuals are important forces in improving national culture, and especially so in the process of building up socialism with Chinese characteristics. What we are strongly against is the partial understanding that people consider national culture as the number of books people read or degrees people hold. In recent years, some discussions concerning national culture are indeed book-oriented and degree-oriented, ignoring the role and functions of the majority of the Chinese people (especially those who lack book knowledge) in the overall structure of its national culture. So, we should elaborate and criticize this partial understanding.

From the theoretical point of view, national culture is not a single concept but a multi-level and open system which, in short, consists of knowledge, value and cognition sub-systems. The knowledge system covers natural knowledge, social knowledge and thinking knowledge; the value system includes the relationships between body and soul, between other people and oneself and between objects and psychology; and the cognition system consists of the relationships between object and subject, between ancient times and nowadays, between China and foreign countries.

Based on the adjustment and upgrading of culture, the social movement and social psychology, those sub-systems and their components promote the progress of society and the development of the national culture through their penetrations and interactions. As emphasized in the previous paragraphs, a national culture is an open system, so each sub-system has different components at different historical phrases, and the components’ content and nature of each sub-system particularly differ. For instance, in ancient China, natural knowledge was intuitive and confined to the general and non-scientific understanding such as “the sky was round and the earth was square”, or induction of Heaven and mankind, however, in modern times, it covers the unprecedented content such as ecological balance, space flight and planetary exploration and development. For the value system, in ancient times, it was an obedience-dominated heaven-human relationship as reflected in Zhuangzi’s quote “Do not extinguish Heaven by the human”, and the harmony between Heaven and man which considered moral sufficiency as a spiritual pursuit, but in modern
times, the value system has changed into the human-nature theory of coordinated
dynamic balance when people recognize the interdependence between human and
nature. In ancient times, China was an agricultural country, and the social political
structure was characterised by totalitarian politics with a patriarchal clan system
whose value orientation was to value justice above material gain. Nowadays, China
is on the way to becoming a well-off society, and its value orientation is to give equal
importance to justice and material gain; people prefer doers to sayers, aim to achieve
civilization, prosperity, democracy and industrialization, and pay attention to the
unity of motivations and results with rational allocation of resources as a prelude.
As an open and multi-level system, the sub-systems of the national culture change as
time goes by, however, they maintain a relatively stable overall pattern, which
explains why we can objectively know and improve our national culture.

II. The value orientations of the human spirit

Humanity is the key content of a national culture which, so to speak, is determined
by humanity. Humanity shapes and is shaped by the national culture.

In modern China, different people have different understandings of humanity
because of different understanding of the word “humanism”. As many people
know, humanism is a proper name, and it, originated in the period of the European
Renaissance, referring to the main ideological trends which represented bourgeoisie
culture. Unlike theology in the Middle Ages, it is a secular culture with human and
nature as subjects. This kind of humanism is against obscurantism, asceticism and
mysticism. Dong Leshan, a famous Chinese translator, wrote in his translator
preface to Humanist Tradition in the West by Alan Bullock, vice president of
Oxford University, “if humanism can be translated into weirenlan (concerning
people) as did the Chinese translations of materialism, idealism and rationalism, it
can also be translated into Renxue (Study on human) as did the Chinese translations
of science, philosophy, chemistry and literature”. It is for the purpose of consistency
that we still use “renwendun” as its Chinese translation. So we can conclude
that the nature of humanism is human study, which is consistent with our
understanding of humanism in the previous part.

It is true that there is a Chinese word meaning humanity but not a Chinese word
meaning humanism in Chinese traditional culture, and the two terms differ in
connotation. But the fact that there is no word meaning humanity in Chinese
vocabulary does not mean there is no humanism in China, the reasons of which are
obvious. If we investigate the actual situation of Chinese traditional culture and
judge from historical experiences of cultural criticizing and re-construction since
modern times, especially from those culture building practices after constructing the
we should admit that Chinese culture has a humanist tradition and is forming a new
humanism. In short, humanism is the affirmation of human value, the answers to
the question why human is human in theory and practice, discussions and upgrading
of human’s spiritual pursuits, and “Ultimate Care” and conscious devotion to the rise and fall of a nation’s culture.

Just like the national culture, humanity is by no means a simple and isolated concept, rather it is an aggregate. As for ancient Chinese cultural tradition, humanity includes the basic Chinese cultural spirit and values such as to love all the people and animals, to cultivate yourself to people at ease, to give priority to justice, to morally unite Heaven and human, to put people first, to be vigorous and promising and to respect harmony and the mean. In modern times, humanity covers and is reflected in the following fundamental values: patriotism, nationalism, scientific spirit and democratic spirit. Since establishing the PRC a modern humanity with Chinese characteristics is taking shape through decades of hard exploration, especially through the practice of China Opening-up. Components such as independence, self-reliance, hard struggle, collectivism and patriotism, which have Chinese characteristics and show Chinese humanist consciousness, are strengthening and becoming an important cohesive and motivating force in national unity and social progress. Personal relations-centered traditional Chinese interpersonal relationships re giving way to contractual but impersonal relationships; the power-dominated social operating system is giving way to a democratic and legal system where the power of a person is constrained; the individual self that was governed and disciplined in the past is giving way to an awakening subject consciousness characterized by self-government and self-discipline in combination with being governed and disciplined; the ways of thinking and value orientations that unilaterally advocate motivations but ignore or even despise effects are giving way to new ones which equal motivations with effects, refrain from empty talk and pay attention to benefits. In a word, contractual concepts, legal concepts, democratic concepts, subject consciousness, and benefit concepts are becoming the content of a new humanity in China.

What we need to point out is that new Confucianism in modern times has different interpretations about humanity. Mou Zongsan said that it means nothing but to improve cultural consciousness when talking about humanism. The basic humanity is first to be against materialization, second to be against rigidity, and third to develop value concepts. Anti-materialization is against materialization in materialism, anti-rigidity is against intellectualism which accepts experiences and facts as the only subjects, and developing value concepts is to construct three unities: morality, politics and knowledge, which is the realization of moral idealism and the completion of humanity.

Constructing the three unities relies on the constructing of “moral subjects” in the Mind-nature theory of Confucius. Chinese traditional culture, supported by the wisdom of Confucius, has been humanism all along. Western culture is theistic in its Christian tradition and rational and materialistic in its Greek tradition. Humanism, trapped in the two traditions, has always had a low position in Western culture. Tang Junyi holds that humanism in China is different from that in Western culture. Humanism in the West, regardless of schools, came into being to resist denial or invisible cultural bigotry, while China is different from this, and humanism
in China formed in the process of Chinese self-reflecting upon why they are human. Thus, humanism in China pays special attention to people and cultivating life, consciously removing residues from hearts and thus making them independent. Academic and cultural activities are to form an ethical relationship among people making people dependent on each other, thus, humanism in China is called ethical humanism. Based on this, new Confucianism thinks that humanism in Chinese culture has been waning and coming to an end since modern times, especially after the May Fourth Movement in China, so needs re-constructing. The urgent task of re-constructing is to get rid of chaos like in the Warring States Period since the May Fourth Movement, and to exclude foreign ideologies such as Marxism and other doctrines, and to exclude materialism. Obviously, new Confucianism pays attention to the construction of moral subjects re-constructing humanism in Chinese culture. Holding up morality, the new Confucianism emphasizes the development of subjects' capabilities and the idea of not being enslaved by the material, which is quite positive and needs our serious thinking in improving Chinese national culture and re-constructing humanity. We should use what is useful or healthy and discard what is not in the process. However, we do not agree with the “denying” in humanism advocated by new Confucianism, especially those reflecting politics and values, nor do we accept them as the material for re-constructing Chinese humanity. In addition, we should also be cautious about the cultural self-centrism advocated by new Confucianism that humanism in the West lacks humanity and that Chinese humanity is first, and about the theory of returning to mind-nature in Confucianism and opening modern science and democracy that is to deny Marxist ideology.

III. The relationship between the cultural qualities of the nation and the spirit of humanity

After elaborating the concepts of the two terms, we can discuss the relationship between a nation’s cultural quality and humanity, and then re-constructing the humanity of Chinese culture.

The two are interrelated. Cultural quality includes and is embodied by humanity. Cultural quality is determined by humanity, while humanity contains various qualities. It is impossible for a nation with a poor cultural quality to possess a lofty humanity, and a nation with a lofty humanity is bound to have an excellent cultural quality. But this does not mean that cultural quality is coterminous with humanity. The two differ greatly in the relationships between structure and function and social integration, and cannot be interchanged. As an open system, a nation’s cultural quality is not only a yardstick to measure the overall quality of a nation, but also a driving force for the nation to move ahead and important condition to form new forces. The knowledge system, value system and cognition systems play specific roles by coupling different systems, by adjustments of internal elements and contents, and especially by the promotion of social practice. Thus, it reveals a
nation’s spirit and rationality. But humanity is slightly different, it guides people's thinking ways, improves one's spiritual status and opens new spiritual orientations by the most concrete value actions and the deepest cultural consciousness. For individuals or a nation, cultural quality is to improve spirit by creating a certain cultural atmosphere in which souls are immersed, while humanity is to guide people's actions and move people forward by concrete value consciousness. In other words, cultural quality exerts more indirect and abstract functions on individuals or a nation, while humanity more direct and concrete functions. Therefore we should pay attention to of the construction of humanity in the process of improving national cultural.

National cultural quality and humanity is of crucial importance to Chinese modernization. Without good cultural quality and humanity, it is impossible to be modernized. Without the guidance of humanity, modernization in certain aspects (for instance the “four modernizations”) will be doomed and become instead something “anti-modernized”. In recent years, more and more people are aware that the key to modernization is people. There is no real and thorough modernization without people's modernization. One important condition for a person to be modernized is to advocate humanity. The fact that people's material life is highly developed but their values and ideals are declining clearly shows that reconstructing humanity now is urgent.

IV. How to rebuild the human spirit

When talking about humanity in a general sense, there will be few differences. But people's opinions on it vary from the practical and operational perspectives, and sometimes, there are even anti-humanity phenomena. In my opinion, the key problem is how to understand the re-construction of humanity, why we need re-construction and what kind of humanity we need to re-construct.

We think that humanity re-construction refers to re-constructing a system of humanity that conforms to the conditions of China and Chinese people with a purpose of promoting modernization and the growth of national spirit in the contemporary age, based on the current thought resources, realistic conditions and requirements of modernization with Chinese characteristics.

“Re-construction” does not mean returning to the ancient or breaking away from reality, rather, it means admitting the existence of useful thought resources in traditional Chinese culture, the new humanity which has been proved unique in the new age by the practices since the May Fourth Movement, and socialist humanity which has been formed through practical and theoretical explorations under the guidance of Marxism. If we do not think so, we will likely come to a distorted road on which we value the quintessence of national culture, cherish the ancient and deny reality, or that we isolate history to discuss Marxism and Leninism and deny the academic achievements since bringing order out of chaos.
Re-constructing humanity in Chinese culture has great theoretical and realistic meaning. Nowadays, socialism in China is undergoing transformations from the old to the new. In my opinion, the transformations do not only include those from a planned economy to market economy, but also cover three aspects. In the economic system, it is a transformation from planning to market-oriented economy; in the political system, it is the one from the highly-centralized and ideology-dominated system to a system with democratic decisions and scientific management principles, where politics, economy and culture develop separately; in the cultural system, it is the one from a subservience to politics and didactic tools to interpret policies to an ideological, educational and entertaining method to cultivate people's temperament and improve people's spiritual status. In a word, transformations in China are now thorough, multi-level and overall rather than confined to any one certain aspect. Although transformations in the three systems are different in time and urgency, they will finally be accomplished regardless of people's willingness.

We should have priorities in re-constructing Chinese humanity. First, the basic thought principles and objectives should be determined. We hold that the starting point of thought principles should be based on current social and cultural realities. The objectives are to create a sense of “ultimate care” and responsibility and a sense of mission in the whole society. If we separate from Chinese reality to talk about re-constructing Chinese humanity, we will deviate from the development of national spirit. If we separate from social practices, the construction of Chinese humanity will be imaginary and not real. If there is no ultimate care, there will be no historical responsibility or sense of mission. But what we emphasize is that the so-called “ultimate care” is not beyond reality as some scholars have held in recent years, specifically speaking, it is specific goals beyond current politics and socialism with Chinese characteristics, and it is a care to “cultural life”. This seemingly concrete and transcending “Ultimate Care” theory is actually a negation to the process of revealing ordinary life and devotion to socialization in the academic and theoretical field since China's reform and opening up, with: “Practice is the sole criterion of truth” as a turning point. However, I do not agree with the idea. “Ultimate Care” is metaphysical, but it has specific contents, namely persisting in socialist culture not to be tempted by a lust-filled society, using lofty morality and ideals to clean up extreme individualism, money worship and hedonism, and devoting one's limited life to the development of national culture and human innovation. The goal of re-constructing humanity is to re-construct the Chinese cultural system at the macro level and to make everyone settle down and get on their own pursuits as required by modernization at the micro level.

V. The main contents of the new humanistic spirit

In the previous part, we have repeatedly mentioned that we should base ourselves on the reality of China to rebuild a humanity of Chinese culture.
In China, many cultural elements now coexist. First, traditional Chinese culture, with its profound accumulation, is exerting influences on social life that cannot be ignored and which become a double-edge sword due to the duality of traditional Chinese culture. On one edge, the positive elements in traditional Chinese culture such as uprightness, diversity in unity and thinking of justice when seeing profits are playing a positive role. On the other, the negative factors such as being benevolent when becoming rich, forgetting injustice when seeing profits and paying attention to profits while ignoring benefits, are also profoundly affecting social life.

Second, the Western culture pouring into China also plays a role in shaping the people's values. On the one hand, the positive element in modern civilizations such as independence, equality, democracy and law, and the contractual spirit enlighten values. On the other syndromes like profits first, self-centeredness and political ignorance are eroding our national culture. Third, some values formed since The May Fourth Movement, especially after the construction of the PRC are deep-rooted in people's hearts and exert their influences on people. New ideas and concepts like revolutionism, Romanticism, heroism, collectivism, independence and self-reliance, and reform and opening up are the spiritual driving forces that push people forward, and the vivid reflections of Chinese national spirit. Meanwhile, bad habits such as sloth, conservativeness and phony politics have become the major obstacles to China's modernization. In conclusion, the mixture of the new and the old and the breaking up of the old by the new characterize a Chinese society in transition. The situation is similar in economic and political life.

In the decade-long opening-up, as people's living standards improve and the commodity economy makes inroads into a traditional value system (the classic tradition and “May Fourth” tradition) and especially due to the fact that spiritual civilization construction falls behind material civilization construction, social scientists must pay attention to the fact that the new value system has not yet been built, that people's souls have nowhere to go, that actions are abnormal, and that humanity in Chinese culture is waning in an unprecedented fashion.

People are ignorant to death, they seek nothing but profit, they extort by tricks, they trade power for money, they think money is everything, they claim knowledge is undervalued and that the spirit is useless, they seek instant benefit, they indulge in the now, they show off their wealth, and they spend money recklessly; all these spiritual epidemics pervade our society, becoming obstacles to improving national culture and taking humanity forward. In order to get rid of these obstacles, we should not only break up the old tradition, but also construct distinctive new elements. “Breaking up”, in combination with “constructing” should be the basic reasoning in culture construction and social transition.

Obviously, both improving the national cultural and re-constructing the humanity tradition are towards the modernization of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Constructing a modern, civilized, rich and democratic socialist country with Chinese characteristics, so to speak, is the political and value theme of our times. Today, when talking about re-constructing national humanity, we by no
means suggest returning to the past and “finding the lost world”, nor do we mean to construct a utopia dream.

Instead, we should use modern China as our base, absorb the excellent elements in traditional Chinese culture and foreign cultures, and then bravely transform them into the nourishments of a new humanity. More importantly, we should, based on the practices since constructing the PRC, and especially since China’s reform and opening up, extract and refine the new humanity that has been produced and needs further development, and make it an important constituent of national spirit in the new times and a spiritual driving force to push Chinese modernization forward.

In short, the humanity system we need to re-construct mainly covers: reform and opening up, facing the world, being down-to-earth and creative, seeking efficiency, science and democracy, the legal system and morality, freedom and equality, independence, fairness and injustice, competitiveness and coordination, harmony, paying equal attention to justice and benefit, being prepared for the unexpected, and “Ultimate Care”, to name but a few.

The concrete contents of all the above are familiar to the reader, so we do not discuss here. But for the theoretical framework of a new humanity, we need further theoretical argument and improvement through practice. We firmly believe the connotations and framework for a new humanity need improving and adjusting based on the development of practice because the practice of reform and opening up is continuously developed. If the conditions are mature, humanity will finally be constructed through the arduous effort of many social scientists. What I discuss in this book is just a probe, and a call to rebel against various anti-humanity phenomena. Your criticisms and suggests are sincerely welcome.
Economic globalization is a trend of modern world civilization which has attracted the attention of governments and academics in recent years. As regards the situation in China, we have more discussion on economic globalization and the market-oriented economy, international politics and China’s reform and opening up, but the discussions on the relations between economic globalization and national cultural development are far from sufficient, either in breadth and depth. In the trends of world multi-polarization and economic globalization, research on the relations between economic globalization and national culture not only conforms to the trends in developing human civilizations, but also maintains and develops the characteristics of national culture, which has an undeniable significance on constructing culture with Chinese characteristics.

I. Economic globalization cannot counteract cultural nationality

Generally speaking, economic globalization refers to industrial structure adjustments based on technology and knowledge, led by developed countries and mainly driven by multinational corporations, and its essence is the marketization of the global economy. Guided by digital technological revolution, economic globalization includes modernization of: production, sales, finance and technology, and it is mainly characterized by globalization of production and sales. Multinational corporations formed globalization of production and sales, and new international relationship systems and industry structures through international investment. The appearance of the “new economy” with the information industry as its axis is an important sign of globalization. The developed countries, particularly Western developed countries, are the driving forces and main beneficiaries of economic globalization, while developing countries face both opportunities, challenges and difficult decisions, the latter being greater than the former.
Economic globalization and “peace and development” are the concrete embodiment of great world themes, and they are irresistible trends. Two decades of world economic development show that economic globalization not only allows developed countries, especially the USA, to create rare economic prosperity with the support of highly developed information technology, but also lets developing countries benefit in this process. The tide of economic globalization is washing countries with different systems and in different regions into the same economic river, namely resources are allocated according to economic rules in the market via the channels of the knowledge economy and information industry, which makes the economy market-oriented. Social productive forces develop quickly. Regardless of people's will, economic globalization has closely connected and will continue to connect the economies of different countries, and the idea of the market-oriented economy is penetrating social life. Overall, economic development greatly promotes world the economy. We should follow these trends and push forward the historical process of “peace and development”.

What we need to notice is that the influences of economic globalization upon economic systems and the development paths of each country are limited. The systems and paths of economic development in developing countries cannot be carried by the tide of globalization and become identical to those in developed countries. Developed and developing countries vary in their understanding of and ways of participating in economic globalization, due to their different social systems, ideologies and historical and cultural traditions. Developing countries such as China and India are obviously different from developed countries in Europe and America and even Japan in the East. Even among the developed countries such as Japan, the USA, UK, France and Germany, there are sharp differences. There are also distinctive differences among developed countries such as China, Vietnam, Egypt and Pakistan. Thus, it is a misunderstanding and a subjunctive intention to consider economic globalization as a complete convergence of development patterns and economic and value orientations.

As regards the cultural aspect, economic globalization will finally affect communications among different regions and cultures, and the development of national cultures. The globalization of production, sales, finance and technology, and the science and technology revolutions with information as its axis, exert an inestimable influence on value systems, ways of thinking, ethical concepts, people’s characteristics, and aesthetic values of various cultures. This is because each national culture, actively or passively, recognizes the developmental trends of world civilizations, and experiences and is aware of the impacts of economic globalization upon its own national culture. People think about the ways of responding to historical trends, innovate and carry forward. In the process of participating in economic globalization, cultures of different nationalities can reach consensus on some issues through communication. Here are some examples: both economic and cultural constructions need to face the world and keep pace with the times, to open up to the outside and reform on the inside, rather than self-satisfy and self-admire and move against the historical tide of economic globalization.
In the past, developing countries were separated from the world economic system and development process, and proof is in its history. Two-decade reform and opening up in China has brought about unprecedented rapid social development; the “Reform and Opening up” policy in Vietnam has let its economy make a great progress; the domestic and diplomatic adjustments in North Korea these years also put vigour into the country. All these are the positive effects of economic globalization. The globalization of science and technology, driven by information, can greatly improve social productivity and push forward social progress and national cultural development. So, all the countries, especially developing countries should take science and technology seriously, and participate in the process so as to make them wealthy and strong. However, the consensus is to a large degree towards technical adjustments rather than reforms in value systems. In other words, the appearance of such a consensus does not mean a fundamental change of national culture.

Any culture in the world is a national culture. A national culture is a whole entity including knowledge, art, morality, laws, customs and even various habits. It is an accumulation of both the past national emotions and consciousness, and also an accumulation of a nation’s spirit and value orientation. A national culture reflects the ways of thinking, value orientation, ideal personality, ethic concepts, and people’s characters of its members, all of which belong to “deep structure”, and it also reflects a certain interpersonal relationship and value system.

This deep structure, in combination with interpersonal relationships and value systems, fully reflects the nationality of a culture. The nationality of a culture is what distinguishes a nation from other nations in terms of cultural characteristics. For instance, in Chinese culture people have different opinions on independence and self-reliance, the spirit that great virtues bring harmony, unity of nature and human, harmony and the golden mean, wholeness and coordination. There are obviously sharp differences between Chinese culture and Western cultures. Fundamentally speaking, cultural nationality, which is a centralized reflection of value system and cultural patterns, cannot vanish as long as the nation exists. Chinese culture, in the thousands of years’ its evolution, still exists in the world with distinctive features, although in the process, it was attacked by foreign cultures such as Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, especially violently hit by “western culture” in modern times (namely what people always figuratively called it as being blown by European wind and American rain.) Chinese culture has now been penetrated by quite a few foreign cultural elements, especially by Western culture, but any government and its people can by no means deny the existence of Chinese culture as a unique cultural type, and Chinese culture has become a national sign and cultural value which does not need argumentation to prove, but exists in the world. Similarly, US culture, which is named as a furnace of cultures, can still keep American cultural characteristics no matter how many immigrants pour into the US and no matter how eastern immigrants with an Asian value system keep and advocate their national cultures.

The reason is simple. As long as American nationality exists, the value system of American culture cannot fundamentally be changed. In Europe, Germany, the UK,
France and Italy are all members of EU and some even belong to Schengen countries, but their cultural value concepts are different, each having distinctive national characteristics. No one considers them homogeneous. So we can say that economic globalization cannot destroy the nationality of a culture, and sometimes even strengthens cultural nationality due to its negative impact. The financial crisis that started in Southeast Asia and spread to the world has made the Chinese government reflect on the impact of economic globalization upon its own finance, and has taken a series of measures to establish a financial system that not only conforms to economic globalization and Chinese conditions to prevent the financial risks, but which shows preparedness for the unexpected, consciousness of the Chinese current situation and of nationality with Chinese characteristics. In South Korea many citizens donated dollars and gold to their government with the purpose of saving the endangered economy. What happened in Thailand was similar. All these facts show that economic globalization cannot dissolve the nationality of a culture.

II. A rational view of nationalism

In the era of economic globalization, the nationality of a culture cannot vanish; rather nationalism will exist for a long time and will even be strengthened. People from different countries and social classes have different opinions on globalization. Generally speaking, nationalism refers to common national emotions and values of a nation formed for the sake of its own benefit, values, dignity and future. Cultural experts think that nationalism emphasizes the features of its own language, culture and race, seeks nationality and national dignity, advocates national culture and awareness, develops national economy, and maintains the political, economic and cultural profits of the nation. Nationalism as a theoretical system comes after the establishment of capitalism despite its appearance prior to capitalism. Nationalism exercises different influences at different historical periods and in different countries.

For the oppressed and minor nations, nationalism plays a positive role in their process of gaining independence, while it plays a negative role when oppressing countries, hegemony and power politics are prevailing. The Chinese nationalism shown in the anti-Japan war belongs to the former, while the nationalism of the German Nazis in the Second World War belongs to the latter. Narrow nationalism and national cultural chauvinism play a negative role in the development of human civilizations. In today's economic globalization, the cultural nationality, consciously or unconsciously, is shown through nationalism. Temporary voices such as “China can say no” several years ago are, on the theoretical essence, the cultural embodiment of narrow nationalism in economic globalization. Some people used circulation theory of “Fortune is fickle” to prove the claim that “21st century is for Chinese culture”, and some people considered “unity of Heaven and human” as a universal and eternal value to replace and dissolve Western values. The two are all the embodiment of narrow cultural
nationalism. Of course, the ideas that advocate integration of the global economy and culture, with economic globalization as the excuse, are seemingly high-sounding, but actually speaking, they are nothing but a different embodiment of narrow nationalism. In short, nationalism cannot be globalized in the course of economic globalization, nor can it be integrated. Nationalism still exists, and the question is how to reasonably recognize, lead and advocate it. We should avoid and overcome narrow and negative nationalism, but advocate healthy and positive nationalism. We should make nationalism have broad feelings, a strong heart and healthy spirit, which facilitates rather than hinders participation in economic globalization. In this way, we can transform globalization into the positive resources of national cultural development, promoting the vigorous development of national cultures.

What we must point out is that economic globalization does not equal economic integration. Economic globalization refers to a trend of economic development, and in the process, many countries may be consistent and convergent in the aspects such as production, sales, finance and science and technology, but the term is far from a synonym for integration—it can actually never be integrated as one. Economic integration means world economies holding together. At least it means world economies having identical operational patterns and value goals. In recent years, the idea that economic globalization is bound to dissolve the nationality of a culture, to a large degree, mistakes globalization for integration. Just think about: the UK is a member of EU but surprisingly did not join the euro system, while many people are against using Euros according to the results of a poll in Denmark.

In order to join the WTO, China, with great difficulty, has negotiated with some countries for a decade but with no result; In South Korea, people are proud to use their home-made electronics and cars. All these things are not even roughly coordinated, let alone integrated! Some people attempt to change globalization into integration via the use of economic globalization, further changing economic integration into cultural and political integration. For them, I think it is just wishful thinking.

In the era of economic globalization, a small country (one member of Eight-power Allied Force in 1900) required Chinese professors and officials who would attend an academic conference in this country to provide property certificates and bank deposit certificates in order to secure visas, even in the turn of century and in the era which is characterized by peace and development. What is the nature of it? Is it integration? Is it so called “human rights”? Is it an equal diplomacy? This is the typical hegemony and national chauvinism. So we can conclude that economic globalization is by no means “integration”, nor is it cultural and political “globalization” and “integration”, and that cultural nationality exists all long.

### III. Adhering to and enhancing the cultural nationality

Those who hold the idea that economic globalization will result in globalization and integration of culture believe that so-called traditional “nationalism” and “national
culture” will not exist due to cultural globalization. Based on what I talked about and discussed in the previous parts, I think the results of economic globalization is not to dissolve national culture and nationalism, but rather to pose new requirements on the construction of cultural nationalities. The economic globalization which represents the developmental trends of the economy and human civilizations, together with "peace and development" are the concrete embodiments of the main trends nowadays, which has profound characteristics from the times and from the world, and reveals the spiritual directions of cultural development. Under these macro trends, in the course of constructing national culture, we should face the world and the truth of economic globalization, and actively participate in the process. We should summarize the human wisdoms in economic globalization, study and absorb excellent foreign cultures including Western cultures, while advocating the excellent traditions of our national culture, so as to make better use of them based on China’s reality, broaden the eyesight of our national culture, enrich the contents of the national culture, and improve the characteristics of national culture.

Only by integrating and absorbing values and ways of thinking that represent human development orientations and reflect the current zeitgeist can we strengthen and enrich national cultural characteristics and reach the unity of nationality, the characteristics of the times and the characteristics of the world. We should seriously study and try our best to absorb the excellence of various cultures ranging from ancient Greek and Roman culture to the humanist achievements of the medieval Renaissance in Europe to the bourgeois revolution, to modern Western cultures, and we should make them into reasonable resources for national cultural development.

We should see that some developed countries are erasing the cultural nationality of developing countries by taking advantage of economic globalization trends and their own economic strength, benefiting themselves in the process. For this, we should be sober and keep our economy and culture independent and advocate our cultural nationality. We should also be sober enough not to take our culture out of the mainstream of world civilization with the purpose of resisting globalization, rather we should consider participating in economic globalization as a good opportunity to enrich and develop our national culture.

Insisting on cultural nationality is totally different from narrow nationality and anti-foreignism. We admit that economic globalization is objective, inevitable and reasonable, and emphasize that the significance of participating in economic globalization includes logically the elements against narrow nationality which refuses to see the world, and anti-foreignism which claims that those who are not our kin are sure to be of a different heart.

Advocating and insisting on the cultural nationality is for China to go to the world, to learn from the strengths of other national cultures and to absorb and expand the characteristics of the times and the world through nationality. To some extent, the cultural characteristics of the times and the world have nowhere to go without cultural nationality. Similarly, cultural nationality has nowhere to take a root and flourish without the cultural characteristics of the times and the world.
China is rejuvenating its great civilization and constructing a new culture with Chinese characteristics. So-called “Chinese characteristics” is a cultural nationality from the fundamentals in cultural construction. The nationality is socialism in political value orientation, and is Chinese styles and manners in cultural value. In other words, the nationality importantly not only inherited historical traditions, but also is full of the socialist spirit of the times, and is based both on China and the world. The classic spirit of fairness, care for the country and its people, great virtues that promote growth, harmony in diversity, diligence and thrift, valuing justice and morality, respecting the older and the virtuous; traditional revolutionary spirit such as patriotism, collectivism, independence and self-reliance and working hard for the prosperity; and the modern cultural spirit such as self-reliance, competiveness, efficiency, legal system and innovations, within the framework of constructing the “common ideals” and “spiritual backups”, when integrated, can become distinctive culture signs that distinguish them from other cultures and embody the nationality of Chinese culture, becoming spiritual powers that push China forward.

Cultural nationality, supported by economic globalization, insists on constructing a Chinese spirit. Practical experience shows that Chinese modernization is human modernization as far as its spiritual essence is mentioned. In other words, it is the modernization of national quality which is inseparable from the modernization of Chinese culture. In our opinion, social modernization, cultural modernization, national quality modernization and human's modernization have common value orientations and signs; the construction of national spirit and its modernization.

A national spirit is the backbone of a nation. China can move ahead and gradually grow to be strong despite the hardships it underwent in the last thousand years’ development, and now become a strong force including mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao, the Taiwan districts and overseas Chinese. All these are inseparable from the existence of and advocacy for a Chinese national spirit. However, the construction of a Chinese national spirit, confined by many constraints, is not satisfying in either practice or theory, which needs the attention of the whole society. Raising Chinese national spirit and rejuvenating Chinese civilization should become the basic value for constructing modern Chinese culture. Care for the country and its people, self-improvement, vigor, harmony in diversity, high virtue promoting growth, valuing morality and justice, the Doctrine of the Mean, conservativeness and creativity: all of these embody the values of many generations and the excellent thought refined theoretically by people with lofty ideals, and they are the important resources for us to construct culture. Patriotism, nationalism, scientific spirit, democracy, contractual concepts, efficiency, competiveness, and cooperation are what has formed since modern times, especially since China's reform and opening up, and they are inseparable resources in constructing a new culture with Chinese characteristics.

Cultural development should be establishment-oriented. Since reform and opening up, new social factors and cultures are growing, and brand new ways of thinking, values, ideal personality, people's characteristics and aesthetic values are gradually forming, updating the existing national spirit and forming the new. On the other
hand, when faced with the social restlessness pervading society due to the negative shock of the market economy, with challenges from Western cultures (positive and negative), and with the negative attacks from traditional culture, some people have lost their values, and their souls have nowhere to go. Social disorder, cultural devaluation and the shrinking of national spirit have become the urgent problems we need to solve. We should advocate healthy criticism and active construction, raise and update the national spirit and create it anew. Only in this way can our national culture and nationality have somewhere to rely on be rendered mature and strong. In this way, we can calmly handle the many challenges posed by economic globalization and scientifically take advantage of the opportunities it brings.

In the era of economic globalization, we have to solve the inheritance and creativity of cultures in the theory and practice-combined level in order to scientifically construct Chinese culture. The subjects and the coverage of the inheritance and innovation are for both Chinese culture and world civilizations. The thoughts on cultural construction such as critical inheritance and comprehensive innovation belong to the categories of guidelines, policies and strategies rather than the contents of inheritance and innovation, and they are also not the new cultural system itself. How and what to inherit? How and what to innovate? These questions are the difficulties of constructing culture, which need to be discussed in depth.

In the era of economic globalization, cultural development needs to also address the relationship between nationality, world, and the spirit of the times. In my opinion, the nationality of a culture is neither good nor bad, and it has dual features. We need to dig out and innovate the cultural essence and its contents, reflecting the nation's characteristics to establish Chinese styles and manners. The time characteristics of a culture reflect rationality and its features in a certain period.

We should summarize nationality, world, and time characteristics and get rid of the unreasonable parts. The world characteristics of culture reflect similarities in human civilization development and embody the co-existence of diverse civilizations. We should admit that civilization development has similarities and universal laws. The universal laws which have a scientific base and are not exaggerated play an active role in getting rid of narrow nationalism and “left” ideological trends in cultural constructions.

In the era of economic globalization, Chinese cultural development needs to solve the relationship between Marxist ideology construction and settling down of people from different social classes, and the relationship between the cultural advances and mass and universal culture. The objectives of constructing cultures will fail if the goals are beyond people's understanding and levels of acceptance.

In the era of economic globalization, the starting point for Chinese national cultural development is to create a current modern China cultural system. In the process of constructing culture, we need to break up concepts such as politics only, ethics only, economy only, self-centeredness and self-use, provide repose for people from different social classes and regions, and offer a rigorous cultural system for the long-term stability and prosperity of China.
To conclude, I think economic globalization can affect the nationality of a culture, but it will not and cannot dissolve cultural nationality and its national spirit. Cultural nationality still exists, but with different manifestations and connotations. We should, in the process of constructing a new culture with Chinese characteristics, conform to the trends of economic globalization, insist on cultural nationality and on constructing the Chinese spirit, and advocate the Chinese spirit.
Cultural Globalization and Cultural Construction in Contemporary China

I. “Cultural globalization” is a factual judgment

Globalization has attracted more and more attentions these years, and what people talk about most is economic globalization. As a matter of fact, another important and even more complicated problem in globalization is culture. Economic globalization has no doubt profoundly affected Chinese cultural construction; however, the influence is through a series of mediums and is indirect. However, cultural globalization has a direct, profound but thorny influence upon cultural construction. It is therefore of theoretical and practical significance to investigate cultural globalization and cultural constructions in modern times.

People's understanding of economic globalization is consistent, but their opinions on cultural globalization vary widely, and some people even deny its existence. For me, so-called cultural globalization, fundamentally speaking, refers to a cultural integration process that different nations, pushed by economic globalization, learn from and affect each other, update and develop themselves via closely-linked and frequent communications among them, with information globalization as the carrier. At the same time, it is also a process where different nations gradually reach some consensus on common problems via good interactions. From this sense, cultural globalization is a process and a trend rather than a result or the fate of the weak nationalities.

Many signs point to cultural globalization as a historical phenomenon. Hollywood, McDonald, Disneyland, the Internet, the satellite telephone, the satellite TV, cable TV, and even the super-market and other retail outlets are all the qualitative manifestation of cultural globalization. Care for human rights, environmental protection and anti-terrorism are also the recent manifestations of cultural globalization. What needs our special attention is that games rules exercised by the World Trade Organization, and the “global ethics” advocated by Declaration
of The Parliament of the World's Religions embody deep values, promoting the process of cultural globalization. The Asian Financial Crisis of 1997 that also spread to the world is certainly another form of cultural globalization. We can even say that the 9-11 terrorist attack is one of the extreme manifestations of cultural globalization.

Cultural globalization is nothing but an observed phenomenon. The cultural globalization claimed by the Western scholars is the cultural homogenization and integration of different nations, which is of course imaginary. Some Chinese worry that the cultural globalization is cultural imperialism and colonization of Chinese culture. These are groundless fears. In fact, cultural globalization is a two-way process, in which different cultures collide with, learn from, absorb and participate with each other, consciously and unconsciously changing themselves and promoting the progress of human civilization. Indeed, because economic globalization is dominated by Western countries, Western dominated cultures are in the leading position in the process of cultural globalization. Western culture, with TV and the Internet as a medium, is pervading the world, violently attacking the cultures of other countries. The “Titanic” of Hollywood rides the wind of economic globalization to travel the world, embodying the violent attacking forces of cultural globalization; the uncle of McDonalds brings us America-style bread with a smile, and KFC and pizzas are pouring into China, which make Chinese not only taste the food in the common sense, but also experience a Western living style; foreign beverages such as Coca Cola and Pepsi bring more than material goods, rather they imply Western cultural and aesthetic values.

Although some patriots made some Cola with local brands, they eventually fail, which makes Americans “very happy” (the Chinese translation of Coca Cola when spoken aloud). In the trends of cultural globalization, we are obviously weak. However, on the other hand, it is by no means a one-way inculcation from the strong culture to the weak culture, and Western culture is also attacked by Chinese culture. The battle between KFC and Shanghai Ronghua Chicken in the 1990s, despite the latter's failure, is not only beneficial to the transformation of Chinese people's spirit and self-esteem, but also good for foreigners to know the self-reliance of Chinese. Now the uncle of McDonalds does as the Romans do, starting to sell rice—rice served with meat and vegetables. What I need to emphasize is that the incident is not caused by strong Chinese cultural assimilation as some patriots claim. On the contrary, the incident shows some characteristics of American culture such as seeking truth, flexibility and capriciousness, rather than the strength of Chinese culture. In the trends of cultural globalization, contacts among different nations and countries are of significance to communicate with and understand each other. In Presidents Clinton and Bush's visits to China and in President Jiang Zemin and Zhu Rongji's visits to the US, all of them took advantage of satellite TV and Internet to fully elaborate their values, letting people around the world know the differences and similarities of different cultures, and thus building a bridge of communication. These are the positive effects of cultural globalization.
II. Cultural globalization is subordinate to cultural diversity

Cultural globalization is dominated by Western countries (cultures), but the trends are always toward cultural diversity. Human civilization, as an organic whole, consists of different types of national cultures. If cultural globalization reflects some commonality and tries to form a consensus among different cultures (for instance anti-terrorism, respect for human rights, valuing ecology and ethics), cultural diversity maintains tension, embodying the developmental laws of human civilization.

In the course of national cultural development, there is one universal aspect, but this is the time and nationality characteristic, especially nationality that promotes self-improvement of national culture. Otherwise, it is not possible to talk about eastern and Western cultures in a general sense, nor is it possible to talk about Chinese, Japanese, Indian, French, Germanic and American cultures in a concrete sense. In other words, cultures of different regions, nations and countries will lose their specialties and have nothing on which to rely. Even in these times of economic and cultural globalization, the nationality of a culture still exists, and becomes more prominent under certain conditions.

The responses and actions of the Chinese government and people after the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia was bombed in 1999, and that of American government and people after the 9-11 terrorist attack in 2001, in large degree show cultural nationality. The difficult Palestinian-Israeli relations and the different attitudes of the UK and France towards the Euro and international situations within the EU are not caused by economic and political profit alone, but by subtle cultural differences. The Chinese government and people all agreed to join the WTO, work together to bid for the Olympics and actively participated in the process of economic globalization, and also join in the process of cultural globalization, consciously and unconsciously, but the Chinese government always holds the flag of “Chinese characteristics”. Chinese intellectuals have minds sober to the nationality of Chinese culture upon which they insist and Chinese people always have the feeling of “being Chinese”. All of them show the nationality of Chinese culture. Besides, there is consciousness of roots in France, Germany, Japan, USA, Israel and the Islamic countries in the Middle East. The consciousness is manifested tenaciously in international communications via trends of economic and cultural globalization. These show the lively existence of cultural diversity. Therefore, cultural globalization cannot dissolve cultural nationality and diversity. On the contrary, it is where the cultural diversity and cultural globalization values lie.

Cultural construction in modern times faces complicated ecological environments. From the historical tradition, Chinese culture includes both excellent and outdated traditions. The excellent traditions include but are not confined to self-improvement, great virtues promoting growth, righteous morals, utilization health and welfare harmony, the idea of not doing to others as you would not be done by, establishing the self, others and things, correcting yourself, others and things, the idea that people are my brothers and all things are of the same kind, inclusiveness, harmony in diversity, and so on. These traditions are endowed with the new spirit of our time
through scientific interpretations and creative transformations, and they have become useful and historical resources in modern Chinese cultural development.

In modern times, anti-invasion, self-renewal, national independence, reformation movements, learning from the advanced cultures of the West, science, democracy, freedom, self-reliance and self-improvement leave us precious cultural resources. Since China’s reforming and Opening up, China, through economic, educational and political reform, has gradually established the framework of a socialist market economy and the basic outlines and policies of a socialist culture, and shaped the new national spirit. Cultural values with Chinese characteristics such as competitiveness, efficiency, contractual relationships, equality, democracy and laws are gradually forming, and they become the spiritual forces improving people's quality and creating social progress.

Through communications with the foreign countries, the excellent elements of foreign cultures, especially those of the Western culture are re-recognized and used properly. We have adopted a law-governed spirit, down-to-earth style, scientific spirit, and the value of equaling science and humanity from Western culture, and incorporated them into social life, beneficial to Chinese cultural construction. The disadvantage is that bad traditions in traditional Chinese culture are still influencing many aspects of our social life, such as making arbitrary decisions, following whatever the leader says, retaining what is old and outworn, being self-centered, being self-conceited, ignoring efficiency, promoting friends and relatives, and so on. What has always been seriously criticized by the intellectuals as a mediocre idea is still exerting influence, such as internal fighting, anti-compitiveness and anti-excellence. Phony politics, which have been pervasive since the last half-century and are used as a tool to earn profit, are difficult to eradicate. The profit first, extreme individualism and hedonism, which are caused by the negative influence of the market economy, are also eating away at the atmosphere of our society. As regards the rotten aspect of Western culture, its influence is self-evident. All of these bring severe challenges to our cultural constructions.

In the severe cultural ecological environment and the trends of cultural globalization, we should keep a sober mind and adopt reasonable routes in constructing Chinese culture. Based on the “three represents”, the combination of the rule of law and rule of morality is no doubt the basic strategy to solve Chinese cultural construction. Based on this, we should conform to the trends of cultural globalization, participate in the process, secure the power of speech, and borrow from successful experiences of cultural construction in the developed countries. What we need to recognize is that cultural globalization is different from global culture.

Some people in the West want to take advantage of globalization to change the world, which we should treat with caution. For some people in the West, in their discourse system and thinking framework, economic globalization will finally become economic integration, which will inevitably evolve into cultural globalization and then into cultural integration. Cultural integration will further develop into political globalization and integration. And finally Western values will dominate the
world. All these are just wishful thinking, and can by no means become reality. However, we should note that some Chinese want to control the world through Chinese culture, especially by traditional Chinese culture, as China’s comprehensive national strength grows and China’s position in the world improves. This is also wishful thinking. In the trends of cultural globalization, it is no doubt progressive to insist on patriotism, national stances and the country’s interests first, however, we will deviate from the trend and finally fail if we use narrow nationalism to guide the current cultural construction.

The UN World Commission on Culture and Development said in one report: “Development will be cultural in the 21st century or it will not be at all”. We can see how important cultural construction is in the new century. Now, we are undertaking the hard work of constructing the modern Chinese culture. We should and are able to participate in the process of cultural globalization with an open and healthy attitude. We should not only strengthen the world characteristics of cultural construction, but also insist on the diversity of cultural development. By doing so, we are for nothing but “the diversity of world cultural development”267.
Part II Philosophy
In the era of globalization, how do we treat the tradition of national culture? How can we transform the cultural traditions of Confucianism in a creative way? These are big problems with theoretical value and practical significance.

I. The specific meaning of the traditional Confucian culture and its spiritual values

What is tradition? Different people in different eras have very different views about it. Friedrich Engels, in *Socialism: Utopianism and Scientific*, put forward the idea that “tradition is a great resistance and the inertia forces of history, but because it is sure to be destroyed due to its negativity.”268 He also said in *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, “tradition is a great conservative force in all the fields of ideology”.269 Obviously, Friedrich Engels herein did not define the word “tradition”, but revealed its social and epochal function. Be that as it may, we are enlightened by this all the same: “tradition” is a negative force which must be destroyed in the era of social transformation while “tradition” becomes the great force to “conserve” the current social order.

Edward Shils, a famous contemporary American sociologist, thinks that tradition is the way of doing things handed down from generation to generation which is formed in various human activity areas, and it is a cultural power to regulate social behavior and impel morality. Besides, it is the accumulation of creative imagination in the history of human beings, including material products, ideas, conventions and institutions. At the same time, it is the cultural heritage of society, a notional symbol composed of a variety of systems, beliefs, values and behaviors, etc., which were created by humans in the past. It maintains some kind of continuity and identity between generations and between different historical stages which make up a society to create the code of their own culture and bring order and meaning to human life.270 Shils seems to have taken notice of the inheritance and stability of
cultural-psychological structure and behaviors, and he affirms the role that tradition plays in the stability of the social order from the perspective of value orientation.

Scholars who do research on culturology believe that tradition contains ideas, morals, customs, art and system and so on, which are handed down in history. It is a steady social factor accumulated from the practice of one nation's history, which embodies every part of social life such as form of labor, lifestyle, mode of thinking and way of acting and so on. This involves a rather wide field including politics, economy, ideology, etc., which can be passed over generations through the structure of social psychology and other physical media. Tradition is also a kind special social culture information system. It has been accumulated, enhanced and spread through the practice of human social relations in different times and through different classes.

A rather formal academic definition of “tradition” is that “tradition is a kind social habitual force coming down in history, which consists of system, ideology, culture, morality and so on in every field... It invisibly regulates people's public behavior. Tradition is an embodiment of succession of historical development.”

In my opinion, “tradition” possesses at least the following features: (1) Historicity. Tradition is formed from history with a long-term accumulation of culture; (2) Inheritance. Tradition does not suddenly appear or disappear, but takes a shape successively with coherency; (3) Stability. As an embodiment of deep cultural structure, spiritual culture of a nation, tradition cannot be changed easily once it comes into being; (4) Dynamicity. Tradition is by no means unalterable, it develops historically and reflects at different eras the spirit of different regions; (5) Spirituality. Tradition can be materialized. However, things which can be materialized are not always tradition. Tradition, by way of representing of national spirit, belongs to the category of “metaphysics”, the field of ideology; (6) Potentiality. Tradition often renders a specific social psychology as an ideological form. It appears as unconscious behavior and thinking mode; (7) Reality. Tradition stems from the past reality, but it does not stay in the past. It objectively influences people's social psychology and value orientation in the present.

In my view, what is called tradition is in fact social psychology and manners from underlying culture. It forms successively with stable structure and thoughtful elements. It still potentially exerts an influence on people's specific thinking mode, value, morality and custom and so on.

After defining the cultural connotation of “tradition”, we will further explore the inner stipulation of cultural traditions and the cultural traditions of Confucianism. It is necessary to distinguish cultural tradition from traditional culture if this problem is to be discussed scientifically. The so-called cultural tradition is about ideology and behavior approved by most people of the whole nation, which, under its influence produced by the value of one specific culture, comes gradually into being after a long-term of historic accumulation. Broadly speaking, the so-called traditional culture refers to everything formed in history, including material, institutions and ideology, etc. On a narrow scale, traditional culture stands for the summation of such spiritual achievements as value, thinking modes, ethical
Confucian Cultural Tradition and National Cohesion

regulations, ideal personality, and aesthetic taste. Traditional culture contains cultural traditions, a full reflection of the former but not equal to it. Traditional culture will help us recognize and analyze the historical development and general characteristics of the national spirit from a macro perspective. Meanwhile, cultural tradition contributes to understanding and promoting culture's national and ideological inheritance in the line of our concrete ideas and behavior. It also helps us tell good from evil and carry the national cultural traditions of Confucianism forward. The present study shows that “tradition” belongs to the field of ideological form. Naturally, we will discuss the cultural traditions of Confucianism from a narrow sense of culture or ideological culture. So, I hold that the cultural tradition of Confucianism is the ideological tradition created by Confucians based on the value of Confucianism, which takes benevolence as the core, aiming at cultivation and regulating the family, country and the world. It is a tradition merging politics and ethics together.

Listed below are the characteristics of the cultural traditions of Confucianism:

First, it is the core value of Chinese traditional culture reflecting the spirit of Chinese culture.

Second, it has the function of cultural national identity. Since the Qin and Han dynasties, the cultural tradition of Confucianism became one ideological bond integrating the whole nation's mentality and value, and the main mental strength of China's cohesive force.

Third, it has historic inheritance and stability. From the angle of cultural structure, it belongs to the deep structure of culture. It cannot change once it comes into being, so it owns a relative stability.

Fourth, it is the endless spirit of Chinese culture with a strong vitality even today. It can be the real power to draw together the national spirit after creative transformation. At the same time, it can be a new cultural tradition of Confucianism from the perspective of far-sighted historical development.

The main content and its contemporary achievements are:

First, the spirit of self-improvement. Commentaries on Yi (Yi Zhuan) says “as Heaven's movement is ever vigourous so must a gentleman ceaselessly strive along”. So to speak, this is the concentrated generalization and vivid descriptions of Chinese spirit, energetic, promising and ceaseless striving. This spirit of vigour and self-improvement always drives upright people to develop continually and insist on fighting against evil force from inside and invasion and oppression from outside.

Second, an open mind with the idea of harmony and unity. It needs to hold the idea of unity of opposites and harmony in diversity and objects to the idea favoring common ground partially or struggling with each other. It insists on unity but objects to separation. This is another kind of our nation's cultural traditions of Confucianism. Putting the harmony of family and neighbors and unity of the nation in the first place is an everlasting and natural ideological tradition of our nation. It is our nation's consistent political value. This ideological tradition and political value are beneficial for the formation of national cultural-psychology about the unity of China and our nation, which once played a very helpful part in long-term
stability and development. Nowadays, it contributes to the communication and cultural identity between both sides of the Taiwan Strait on the part of cultural psychology, although both sides are from a different political environment.

Third, the noble affection of advocating morality and righteousness. Advocating the cultivation of morality and justice is another excellent Chinese tradition. The book Zuo Commentary (Zuo Zhuan) recommends that “there are the rectification of (the people’s) virtue, (the tools and other things) that supply the conveniences of life, and securing abundant means of sustenance”. It points out that these are three basic principles humans must obey. So called “the rectification of (the people’s) virtue” is to regulate one’s own virtue, which is the first among these three principles. Whether you are the princes, dukes and ministers or common people, you must take the rectification of your virtue as the foundation. The rectification of virtue is actually self-cultivation. The Book of Rites (Li Ji) asserts that “from the son of Heaven down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the root of everything”. Confucius declared that “the commander of the forces of a large state may be carried off, but the will of even a common man cannot be taken from him”. He praised people with lofty ideals who “refuse to surrender their wills, or to submit to any taint in their persons”. He insisted on the outlook on suitability and advantage, “riches and honors acquired by unrighteousness, are to me as a floating cloud”. Mencius emphasised noble integrity, “One should never be corrupted by wealth, changed by poverty and bent by force”. Wen Tianxiang was not afraid of death, he “wanted his loyalty to leave a page in the annals”. Lin Zexu contended that “for the purpose of the national benefits, everyone is obligated to sacrifice himself rather than escape from the misfortune for his own benefits”.

All these are the historic embodiment of the Chinese cultural tradition advocating morality and righteousness. Indeed, these cultural traditions have their own limitations. However, as the main constituent of national culture and deep structure of social psychology and value, they doubtlessly play an active part in helping people get over the fetter of loaves and fishes and chase after the improvement of spiritual life. In the era of the commodity economy which thrives more and more, the cultural tradition of advocating morality and righteousness still makes great contributions to resisting the materialistic idea and helping us purify our ethics and social morality. Though moral restraint is not universal, we have to attach great importance to the regulation and guidance that morality plays on people’s psychological behavior.

Fourth, positive value orientation. One of the national cultural traditions of Confucianism is the concept of unity between Heaven, Earth and man. It emphasizes harmony between the three and takes their unity as a principle. Meanwhile, it integrates individual interests, family interests and national interests together. We can call this as a kind of common psychology. The Confucian theory of cultivation and regulating the family, country and the world. The Taoist, “man takes his law from the earth, the earth takes its law from Heaven, Heaven takes its law from Tao (the Way), the law of the Tao is its being what it is”. The Mohist view on which the world is in identification with the superior and orientates at a positive value. These
Theories orient their value at an overall higher interest but not at partial and individual interest. It makes up the Chinese nation’s unique character, sacrificing individual or partial interest to guard others or the overall interest. Thus it created an idea which is to place the nation’s interest as the number-one priority.

Being the specific embodiment of the Chinese cultural spirit and a kind enormous spiritual power, the cultural tradition of Confucianism has its own special spiritual value. Simply put, it has at least three functions:

In the first place, it motivates people to develop ceaselessly; it can help people cultivate a cultural psychology of strong self-confidence, self-respect and pride. It encourages people to make more progress when chasing a cause, to unceasingly struggle to turn failure into success and make new achievements with all effort, and to have an optimistic attitude while in trouble.

In the next place, it guides people’s values. Being the core of the national spirit, the cultural tradition of Confucianism, whatever it is in the aspects of theory and behavior or in the aspects of social psychology or subconsciousness, plays an irreplaceable role guiding the entire nation’s value orientation.

Moreover, it can unite various people. The cultural tradition of Confucianism has a good influence over people’s ideology.

In the end, it plays a role in cultural identity. The cultural tradition of Confucianism is an embodiment of the active power of national culture and rational refinement of the whole people’s character. It has regional and racial universality, which reflects a common enthusiastic national psychology, so it actively and objectively improves the national cultural identity.

II. The cultural connotation of Chinese national cohesion and modern values

Chinese national cohesion is an ideological factor pertaining to deep cultural structure, which is closely related to the cultural tradition of Confucianism. In terms of its connotation, the so-called national cohesion refers to the power of ideological cooperation of one specific nation. It is a kind of power that the national culture attracts its people. In particular, it is a spiritual power which keeps one nation cohesive and stable from distractions and chaos in the aspects of social order and ideological culture. At the same time, it is an ideology which integrates the nation’s people, power and races and an intensive embodiment of one nation’s ideological cultural value. It is mainly the thinking mode, value orientation and spiritual state of one nation. It is relatively stable as an ideology while it develops dynamically as one nation’s cultural tradition.

Throughout the long history of Chinese cultural development, Chinese national cohesion performed differently in cultural styles during different historical periods. As far as the successive coherency and uniformity of cultural identity are concerned, the following aspects are vital components.
(1) Ideals and pursuits of cultural China

From Pre-Qin to the Han and Tang and even to the Song and Ming dynasties, ideologists usually regarded China as a political concept, a cultural concept, but not a geographical concept. The successive and universal idea that China is a “state of ceremonies” is its concrete presentation. In the Pre-Qin period, ideologists and politicians thought highly of the pursuit of ideal morality and emphasized the value of the cultural spirit. Traditional Confucianism, the discussion between Yi (uncivilized places, the so-called barbarian tribes in the east and north of ancient China) and Xia (ancient China) is one part of this. According to Confucians, ultimate differences between behavioral civilization and the barbaric exist between Huaxia (an ancient name for China) and Yi-Di tribes. (Yi and Di were two ancient tribes, the former was in the East of China while the later was in North, and these two tribes were usually regarded as barbarian that could not be accepted by Huaxia in ancient times.)

Therefore, it is necessary to strictly distinguish Huaxia from Yi-Di tribes based on the progress of civilization. The legendary revision of The Spring and Autumn Annals by Confucius and Yixia’s policy of defense took manners and morality as guiding principles. If governors’ behavior went beyond the principles of manners and morality, they would be regarded as Yi-Di while they would become a part of China if they did the contrary. Mencius firmly held that advanced culture can improve outdated culture while the latter can never influence the former. The saying, “I have heard of men using the doctrines of our great land to change barbarians, but I have never yet heard of any being changed by barbarians” is an embodiment of this belief.

The scholars of the Gong-Yang School who studied and adopted The Spring and Autumn Annals definitely considered that the difference between Yi-Di and China did not lie in difference of races or regions, but in whether culture and morality existed or not. “The Twelfth Year of Xuan Gong” of The Spring and Autumn Annals recorded the war between Jin and Chu, Jin suffered a crushing defeat. The Spring and Autumn Annals praised Chu for it was part of Yi-Di but met the principles while blamed Jin for it was part of Huaxia but it did not obey the principles. Dong Zhongshu, a great master of the Gong-Yang School, held that all this above happened because The Spring and Autumn Annals did not have a common standard to take. Although it originally pertained to Huaxia, Jin was put into Yi-Di since it did not obey the principles. At the same time, Chu was put into Xia since it obeyed the principles. Actually, there was no impassable gulf between Yi and Xia (ancient China). Through promotion of Confucianism in the Pre-Qin, focusing on benevolence and righteousness, it carries the cultural standard and significance of the discussion between Yi and Xia forward and links the cultural psychology between them. The idea of interconversion between Yi and Xia is a significant part of the ancient Chinese rational spirit and one of the most important contents that the Chinese ideal pursues. For Yixia’s policy of defense, it was used as a tool to resist foreign culture after the Tang dynasty, so people who lived before the Tang dynasty
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should not be blamed for what was said by the people who lived afterwards. Furthermore, enlightened ideologists distinguished Yi from Xia at the level of cultural rationality. The ideologists who opened their eyes to observe the world in modern China, who claimed to assimilate and develop the advantage of other cultures, indeed admitted that foreigners’ material civilization were superior to China. Tan Sitong contended that “Chinese morality and custom, politic and law in modern time were all incomparable to Yi-Di’s, did Xia (ancient China) have any slightest style and characteristic like this?275 It is obvious that the standard to tell Yi from Xia is the progress of civilization.

The ideal pursuit of cultural China also prominently takes individual cultivation of morality and culture into account. Chinese traditional culture always pays great attention to moral reason and the distinction between human and animals, loyalty and gains. As the mainstream of traditional refined culture, schools of Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism and Legalism all attempted to leave no stone unturned in pursuing the promotion of the moral realm and rejecting falling into endless material desire, though they possessed various different values.

Confucius holds the view that he will show himself when right principles of government prevail in the kingdom; he will keep concealed when they are prostrated. People rather give one’s life in order to achieve goodness than keep alive without serious ambition; “riches and honors acquired by unrighteousness are to me as a floating cloud”;276 “the object of the superior man is truth but not food”;277 These are all ideas of Confucianism. The superior man is anxious lest he should not get truth; he is not anxious lest poverty should come upon him. Mencius advocated sparing no effort to practice the strong moral force of the greatest and most unbending and to be a real man who “should never be corrupted by wealth, changed by poverty or bent by force”.278 Dong Zhongshu objected to “catering oneself for somebody else”, “swimming with the tide or pretending to be honest to gain various interests”. He insisted on “regulating one’s soul to goodness”.279

Taoism strove to preserve the unsophisticated nature of the human and resisted selling one’s soul for self-advancement. They would rather have a pure heart and few desires than cater to despicable rulers.

Mohism held the view that people should aim at righteousness and benefit simultaneously, but the former is more important than the later. They thought that the basic principle was to love everyone all over the world.

Legalists were typical utilitarians, who aimed at loyalty to the sovereign and the nation and the unification of China. This goes beyond narrow individualism. Restraining oneself and working for the nation loyally is indeed a cultivation of morality and an ideal pursuit of culture.

It is obvious that to be a moral and civilized man disregarding material desire and animal instinct is an internal logical requirement and inevitable outcome of Chinese culture. Of course, traditional cultivation of morality has its own specific content at that time. We should develop the useful and discard the useless based on the characters of culture of our time. In the meantime, we ought to evaluate it objectively and assimilate it critically at a theoretical level.
(2) The concept of “Great Unification” becomes more resolute with the passing of time

Since the Western Zhou dynasty (c. 11th century-771 B.C.), the concept of great unity rooted in the heart of Chinese people and became the standard of behavior followed by each Chinese individual. All schools of theories, as the main stream of Chinese traditional refined culture, were supplementary to each other in the unification of the country and national integration although they were different about their political and cultural views. “Spring and Autumn-Unity”. This was an axiom known to everyone in feudal society. Conception of harmony between man and nature in traditional culture actually was a reflection on political views. Such sayings as “all under Heaven are of one family”, “people are my brothers and all things are my kind”, “the people are my brothers and I share the life of all creatures” and “all the people of the world are brothers”, etc. were the primary spiritual force to integrate society. Taking pleasure in the unity of the nation and feeling sorrowful for the secession of the nation is a political value orientation of Chinese nation, and that is the way it should be. The concept of great unification, especially through the theoretical justification of the Confucian and Legalist schools, national amalgamation and mutual development brought by unity of nation during Qin and Han dynasties, gradually transformed into social psychology of deep national cultural structure and formed a political thought mode of our nation, which promoted the entire nation and culture.

(3) The broad mind with a global vision of the world

Chinese culture all along persists “all come to the same (successful) issue, though by different paths” and “there is one result, though there might be a hundred anxious schemes”. In terms of cultural values, Chinese traditional culture promotes the reciprocal permeation of ideology and culture of different factions, different types and different nations under the norms of the dominant idea which is diverse and unified. Through the harmonious complementarity of Confucianism and Taoism, the combination of Confucianism and Legalism, the fusion of Confucianism and Buddhism, the interaction between Buddhism and Taoism, Confucianism with yin-yang and five elements, the combination of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, even the assimilation of such foreign religions as Christianity and Islam, etc. In spite of the difficult and painful experience, Chinese culture, has gradually become unified and has acquired its own character through the collision between regional culture and national culture in different value systems.

In terms of national values, Chinese culture has a reputation for etiquette, morality and equality. In the Han dynasty, Sima Xiangru, by the voice of Emperor Wu, “communicated with foreign tribes on the Southwest of China” and offered amnesty and enlistment to these foreign minorities. He adopted the inclusive and
integrative policy of “absorbing anything and everything” and “both near and distant treated alike” as a guideline, and said this was one of Emperor Wu's causes which "could create a great and lasting achievement to be a model for following generations".\textsuperscript{281} The very ideas of “to absorb anything and everything” and “treating both near and distant treated alike” integrated various nations (such as Dong-yi, Nan-man, Xi-rong and Bei-di, which were foreign tribes at the East, South, West and North of ancient China) to be unified nation, the Han.

In managing state affairs, an open mind to absorb anything and everything embodied the idea of “treating all with mercy”.\textsuperscript{282} The famous idiom of “both sides must present their opinions (one is able to learn from different suggestions), is a typical refinement of such an ideology.

(4) Profound patriotism

Chinese culture has a time-cherished tradition of patriotism. It is the passion for patriotism that made us unite as one to fight against foreign enemies when our nation encountered invasion, and unyielding, struggled for the final victory. Similarly, it made various interest groups, based on territorial integrity, give up past grudges and adhere to the national interest and finally unite as one with a common awareness. Patriotism is a kind of mentality soaked into the pores of every upright Chinese. Because of this, the Chinese nation, as a cultural entity, can continue for a long time and grow independently among the national cultures all over the world.

The contents above blended and complemented one another and integrated organically into cultural patterns, which thus constituted the main body of our national cohesive and centripetal force. It is the long-term, stable and sustainable development of cohesion and centripetal force that promoted the unity of the multinational country and the development of national culture, and made the Chinese nation play a leading role for a long time in world history.

What is particularly important, from the deep structure of Chinese culture, is that the formation and development of national cohesion and centripetal force enhanced the cultural consensus of Chinese people and greatly integrated the common value orientation, ideal personality, mode of thinking, social psychology and spiritual state, etc. It strengthened the root of Chinese consciousness, raised self-esteem and a sense of the pride and has objectively played a historical role to promote national development.

National cohesion, as an important element in Chinese culture and the indispensable spiritual bond of people's and national unity, still has very profound effect, great realistic significance and value for cultural construction.

First of all, national cohesion can adjust people's psychology and behavior, which will establish a strong mind-set to unify Chinese culture and reinforce the national state. Because we have the common value pursuit of cultural China, the concept of national unity of China and the open mind compatible with the world, we can
exchange ideas and feelings freely, help and replenish mutually and benefit each other within the thinking framework with the very inner life and spiritual value of Chinese culture. And then, we can take concerted action in the construction of a modern cultural power.

Second, national cohesion can enhance the shared idea about thought character and value norms of Chinese people at home and abroad and strengthen the spiritual collaboration of Chinese national culture. The value orientation of collectivism and the noble patriotism are still the spiritual wealth we should excavate, inherit and transform creatively today. We put national interest first, fight against separatism, extreme individualism, xenocentric behavior and wholesale westernization, all of which ought to become a common faith of the entire Chinese nation and become the power make us stride forward.

Again, national cohesion can promote mutual exchanges on both sides of the Taiwan Strait and speed up the pace of reunification of the motherland from the aspects of psychological emotion and the identity of Chinese cultural values. The unification of China, a cultural tradition of Confucianism, confirms the spiritual life and the internal value of Chinese culture, inherits the excellent tradition of national culture and elucidates the broad-minded concept of “all under Heaven are of one family” and “unity without conformity”, which will be translated into an important spiritual bond to communicate across both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

Finally, national cohesion can enhance the self-esteem and confidence of all Chinese people and provide ideological guarantees for building a new cultural system of modern China. As far as the civilization of the world is concerned, both Chinese culture and Western culture have equally made an everlasting and indelible contribution to the progress of human society. The special spiritual value and humanistic connotation of Chinese culture has a special appeal to all Chinese people. “Chinese wisdom”, harmony between man and nature, benevolent spirit, cultivation and regulating the family country and the world, all these not only have reference value for our modern cultural construction today, but also a positive reference value and enlightenment significance for cultural reconstruction even in the so-called post-modern developed countries. Therefore, cherishing our traditional culture and the development of the cultural tradition of Confucianism is obviously a historical extension and a practical representation of national cohesion, which will enhance our nation’s pride and self-confidence, making the whole nation participate in the construction of Chinese contemporary culture.

III. The relationship between tradition of Confucian culture and Chinese national cohesion

Discussing and determining the relationship between the cultural tradition of Confucianism and Chinese national cohesion means exploring the relationship between traditional culture and modern culture from the conjunction of theory and
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reality. These are important strategies that must be employed to build a new modern cultural system which must not only critically inherit the historical tradition, but also be full of the spirit of times.

In a nutshell, the relationship between Confucianism and national cohesion mainly exhibits the following important characteristics:

First, Confucianism is a necessary foundation and ideological kernel for national cohesion to form and function. National cohesion is the inherent requirement and inevitable trend of the structure and function of Confucianism as a cultural tradition. As an integrating force, the appeal of national culture to all members and a mental bond for uniting peoples and races, national cohesion logically calls for an excellent cultural tradition in a non-conventional sense. Only a truly excellent cultural tradition can produce cohesive effects, attract and inspire people with a positive and healthy national spirit, thus taking in the essence of national culture and leading forward on the right track. Thereby allowing active participation in the real construction of culture, in order to move towards the world and the future. Without Confucianism the positive cohesive force cannot be formed or come into play, or turning this around, disorder may arise. Consequently, secession and turmoil will take place and affect overall national progress. Without the cultural tradition of Confucianism, there would be no real national cohesion. As a kind of spiritual strength, national cohesion is rich in content, but its kernel is inevitably characterized by the cultural tradition of Confucianism. At the same time, the overall structure and function of Confucianism are bound to intrinsically demand and ultimately embody the formation of national cohesion in the role it plays.

Second, the cultural tradition of Confucianism has the spiritual power to enhance and promote national cohesion, to constantly update its spiritual force, which is an important spiritual bond maintaining national cohesion. According to its theoretical form, national cohesion is in itself a great cultural tradition. National cohesive force is a relatively stable category system as an ideology while it develops dynamically as the cultural tradition of a nation. Therefore, there are different kinds of national cohesion at different times, and the thought of people will change with the passing of time and endow national cohesion with a new spirit. However, in order to do so, we should use the cultural tradition of Confucianism to enrich its valence and enhance its power to meet the new requirements of the times.

There is no incentive effect of the cultural tradition of Confucianism. There would be no spiritual bond to maintain national cohesion. Accordingly, the existence and development of national cohesion, particularly its social function, are the social basis and the conditions of cultural psychology to consolidate the cultural tradition of Confucianism. As habitual forces, national cohesion is often expressed as “cultural unconsciousness” which potentially affects people’s values and way of thinking, so as to make the function of the cultural tradition of Confucianism play and realize its value, readying people to accept its social conditions and cultural psychology.

Third, the cultural tradition of Confucianism and national cohesion condition each other, supplement each other and keep pace with each other. As the embodiment
of the positive aspects of the national spirit, the cultural tradition of Confucianism must encourage everyone to consciously identify themselves with healthy factors in the national culture and value system, which will objectively provide a theoretical condition and an ideological basis for the formation of national cohesion and the functioning of social culture. Besides, the formation of national cohesion and fulfilling the functions of social culture transforms the spiritual value of Confucianism into real power which becomes an ideological weapon encouraging people to move forward and promote social progress. Under certain conditions, there will be a reciprocal circulation formed between cultural tradition of Confucianism and national cohesion. The former can inspire the transformation of the latter while the latter can be compatible with, perform as, or even become the former. In terms of temporal sequence, these two have no distinction in the strictest sense. They tend to interact both as cause and effect, developing synchronously to form a virtuous cycle.

Fourth, the relationship between the cultural tradition of Confucianism and national cohesion is that of parts to a whole. The former belongs to a part while the latter belongs to a whole; the former leads the latter while the latter contains the former. Without doubt, the cultural tradition of Confucianism is the core of national cohesion, but the core is not equal to the entirety. National cohesion has its own rich connotation, and cultural tradition of Confucianism is just one part of it, even though very important. In other words, there is no doubt that national cohesion must take the cultural tradition of Confucianism as a value orientation, but it is misleading to say that Confucianism covers the whole range of national cohesion. A clear reorganization of this is helpful if we are to excavate the cultural connotation of national cohesion in order to expand its value.

In a word, the cultural tradition of Confucianism and national cohesion are closely linked, and neither of them is dispensable. Only coming to grips with the cultural tradition of Confucianism, can we grasp the spiritual direction of national cohesion. Therefore we must carefully sort out cultural tradition of Confucianism so as to transform it into a new type of positive spirit for the nation. Similarly, only by grasping at national cohesion can we understand the cultural tradition of Confucianism and create it anew. We must define the connotation and extension of national cohesion and then promote the formation of a new national cohesion and the realization of cultural value.
Confucian Culture and the Construction of a Contemporary Humanistic Spirit

Contemporary China is in a period of social transformation. During this period, a main cultural syndrome is the decline of values and ideals and a burgeoning of material desire. Put bluntly, the loss of humanistic spirit. To exterminate this severe and unprecedented spiritual disease, some of the spirits and substance of Confucian culture may after all be accepted as a traditional resource.

I. A rational pursuit of Confucian culture

Confucian culture, as an essential component of traditional Chinese culture, is part of heritage that cannot be ignored in the construction of a modern cultural system. Judging from the national character the culture, Confucian culture has some specific spiritual values.

The so-called national character of culture refers to the essential characteristics of ideology and culture which can reflect a spirit of thinking, values of national identity, ways of thinking, ideal personality, national character, moral principles and so on. It is also the national style of culture, theoretical representation and ethnic style. It has the following features. First, it reflects the fundamental features of national culture, and it is different from cultural psychology and cultural structures of other nations. Second, it can mirror national spirits of particular nations. Third, it bears the characteristics of transcendence, that is, its spirit and substance can transcend time and class, and exist with the rise and fall of the nation.

As a particular spiritual power, national culture implies a positive mentality towards the particular nation and thus there is growing possibility and inevitability. In the meantime, all national culture is the accumulation and evolution of the particular nation, therefore, it bears the features of generational continuity. More importantly, the creators of all culture in each age are invariably the masses. The deepest root of all types of cultural development is always the social practices of the
masses. Thus national culture has a distinct affinity to the people. This continuity of development and affinity to the people comprise a specific national character which may not be restricted by time or class and is moreover stable and universal. The connotation and features of cultural nationality determine that we must pay attention to continuity and inheritance of national cultural development. We can neither sever our ties with history nor improperly belittle ourselves. Instead, we should criticize and inherit, create and innovate, bring forth the new from the old. Meanwhile, we should consider the problems from a dialectical view, and transcend the culture views of Huaxia Centralism, so that we can absorb spiritual nutrition from different national cultures and enhance the cornerstone of our own national culture.

Based on this understanding, I think, even from the perspective of the construction of modern culture, some reasonable thoughts of Confucian culture are worth attaching importance to. In general, the rational pursuits of Confucian Culture constitute the values of making contributions, a mental outlook of improving virtues and gaining achievements, and a broad mind compatible with others.

A notable feature of Confucian culture is that man is of paramount value. Man can really achieve self-improvement only by making lifelong contributions to his country. The Commentary of Zuo, one of Confucian classics, says: “The most important thing is improving moral cultivation, followed by making contributions to the country, which is followed by writing and propounding ideas”. They are immortal pursuits. The Book of Changes advocates that “as Heaven maintains vigour through movement, a gentleman should constantly strive for self-perfection”. All of these aim to inspire people to do something and attain achievement. Although The Classic of Filial Piety propounds the idea of gaining reputation, and the contents of age and class must be completely rejected today, yet, its principal idea is exhorting people to have a kind of role awareness and act according to social ethics and political norms, so as to accomplish something and obtain great achievements.

The thought of The Classic of Filial Piety mainly preached that: “The Noble Person is Xiao in serving his parents, and so his loyalty can be transferred to his lord. He is respectful to elders in serving his big brothers, and so his compliance can be transferred to his superiors. He follows orders when at home, and so his governing ability can be transferred to his position as an official. Yes, that is why one's conduct succeeds inside the home and one's name comes to be established among posterity”. The thought, if seen from the epoch character and class nature of culture, aimed to maintain the reign of despotism. However, through its representation and from the accumulation of democratic cultural psychology, we can see that it contains the positive and enterprising spirit of making contributions and gaining achievements.

If we transform this value critically into something that conforms to the requirements for modernization and endow it with the spirit of reforming and opening up, it can facilitate social progress and cultural development.
Moreover, the life aspiration proposed by Sima Tan and Sima Qian in the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C–A.D 24) also exerted a profound influence on view of the life of the intellectuals in later generations, encouraging people to keep forging ahead ceaselessly, that is: “Exploring the nature of the universe, knowing changes of past and future, forming one school of learning”.

It is thus clear that the pursuit of making contributions and achieving success, as a fundamental character of Confucian culture, is not only an important force that urges people, especially intellectuals, to forge ahead, but also a significant humanistic tradition that motivates people at present to move forward continuously. It is an important spiritual resource.

What Confucian culture emphasizes is striving towards contributions and achieving success, meanwhile, it attaches particular importance to guidance and norms of moral ideals and stresses improvement of virtues and careers. Confucius taught his disciples to be “a scholar of noble character” instead of “a scholar of vile character”. Confucius also earnestly practiced the “doctrine” he advocated, and persevered in his independent personality. “When right principles of government prevail in the kingdom, he will show himself; when they are prostrated, he will keep concealed.”. “When the state is in a better political situation, one should feel ashamed for his comfort; when the state is in dark politics, one should feel strongly shamed even though he is wealthy”. “For me, getting wealth and rank by unjust means was nothing but floating clouds”. These are the best proof of his thought.

Dong Zhongshu, a great master of Confucianism in the Western Han dynasty, proposed a series of ideas to establish political education systems in order to safeguard the overall and long-term interests of rulers, showing strong tendencies of making contributions to the state. Meanwhile, he put forward a famous viewpoint about morality and interest, which was; “Do nothing for gaining personal interest, but for moral ideals”. It emphasized the value of moral ideals and laid stress on personal accomplishment and improvement of virtues and success.

In his “Unrecognized Talents”, he strongly advocated that “A man of noble character should obey strict moral principles”, “If you are engaged in writing scholarly works, do not follow others blindly or associate with evil elements; It is better to behave righteously and commit to excellence and truth rather than benefit a lot by behaving in an affected way”. These clearly proved that he persisted in independent personality, pursuing righteous morality instead of interests and improving moral ideals and gaining achievements.

In fact, what Confucians repeatedly advocated was mainly the idea that moral personality is the most valuable, which aimed to highlight the personality and cultural connotation and hold high the banner of Confucian humanistic ideals. It was not simply for denigrating the “interests” as some commentators have said. Obviously, this kind of pursuit in Confucian culture is of positive significance to improve people’s morality and disseminate traditional humanistic spirit. The broad mind of compatibility with others is one of the important and fundamental features of Confucian Culture. The Book of Changes claimed, “although the thoughts of the
hundred schools are different, the goals of them are the same”. The Doctrine of the Mean proposed that: “Everything can get free development without harming each other, the thoughts of hundred schools can carry on together without contradiction”. Actually, traditional Chinese culture dominated by Confucian culture emphasized all-inclusiveness in its historical development. It not only absorbed thoughts of various schools in local culture, such as Mohism, Taoism, Legalism, Yin and Yang and many other schools, but also took in Buddhism, Christianity Islam and other foreign religions. Chinese culture after the Han dynasty was Confucianism-dominated and multiple. Thought characterized by all-inclusiveness, coordination, harmony in diversity, and universal love had great influence on our national spirit and almost became a kind of “collective unconscious” in cultural aspects.

II. The practical needs of contemporary culture building

Reviewing the past helps to predict the future. The reason that we explore the rationality of Confucian culture is to hold a mirror up to the development of contemporary Chinese culture, not just for musing over things in the remote past. Since reform and opening up, owing to various subjective and objective restrictions, China has not been able to build a new cultural value system and people have not found a way to settle down and get on with their pursuits. Furthermore, trends such as extreme expansion of material desires caused by highly developed material civilization, national cultural nihilism caused by excessive negation of traditional culture, and ultra-individualism and hedonism arising from media propaganda, have led to a gradual degeneration of humanistic spirit, value, and beliefs. The metaphysical world has collapsed due to the pursuit of material pleasure. Loss of value, misconduct and emotional emptiness have become severe diseases in the period of social transition of contemporary China. Therefore, the reality of China’s cultural development is to rebuild the value system of national culture. To do this, we must first reestablish the humanistic spirit of Chinese culture.

To rebuild the value system and the humanistic spirit of Chinese culture, we must start from the reality of China. Because China’s social transition is an all-round transition, in terms of political institutions, it will be a transformation from the ruler’s politics characterized by the same ideology, a highly centralized power and superior will of those in authority, to politics based on legal systems characterized by decentralization of central and local governments, separation of responsibilities into different industries and fields, the scientification of decision-making, and democratization of management. From an economic perspective, we must transform from a traditional planned economy characterized by a natural and political economy to a market economy, with economic development as a main task, based on the establishment of modern, commerce, agriculture and services industries. As for cultural institutions, it will be a transformation from the weapons of political struggle and the tool of policies focused on cultivating people's
sentiments and improving people's comprehensive qualities. In short, the social transformation of contemporary China will be all-round, and multi-level. It will bid farewell to classicism and catch up with the modern trends of the world.

As we all know, starting from the Ming and Qing dynasties, the awareness of the commodity economy gradually grew and the trend of enlightenment thought sprang up; the value system of traditional China began to disintegrate day by day. Faced with all-round social transformation, it is urgent to rebuild the value system of Chinese culture. If we take a new look at the history course of modern Chinese cultural criticism, culture reconstruction, and cultural value systems, we can say that the whole of modern Chinese history is a gradual disintegration of traditional value systems, and it is also a history in which the Chinese people gradually reestablish the value system by facing the world and the future. After 1949, due to interference of the “left” trend of thought and mistaken decision-making, particularly the havoc of political thinking, China met various obstacles and great difficulties in the construction of cultural value systems. Even to this day, Chinese cultural value systems have not yet been established. Today, it is a task of top priority to build cultural value systems which not only meet modern requirements but also suit national conditions and win great popularity.

If seen from the perspective of development strategy, cultural development is a grand project. The ultimate goal of cultural development is to establish a cultural value system which can both inherit historical traditions critically and fully embody the spirit of the times, keeping a foothold on the basis of own country and facing the world. We should adhere to correct ideological principle in cultural development. Generally speaking, we should persist in facing the world, the future and modernization. Specifically, we should update cultural traditions on the basis of the developing commodity economy and improve the quality of the nation by expanding the value spheres, so that neither cultural criticism nor cultural reconstruction can be overemphasized at the expense of the other, and the construction of material progress and spiritual progress can be implemented without coming into conflict.

In short, we should proceed from the reality of contemporary Chinese cultural development, depend on traditions and integrate ancient and modern, focus on our own culture and absorb the essence of foreign countries, so as to establish a diversified and open cultural value system characterized by complementarity of tradition and modernity, compatibility of China and foreign countries, integration of elite and mass culture, and infiltration and development of scientific and humanistic culture. To achieve this goal, we should explore the traditional resources of national culture. Therefore, how to judge the role of Confucian culture in the modernization drive is not just a theoretical problem, but a very practical and real problem.

Social practice and theory research in recent years indicates that Confucian culture, as one of the important compositions of national culture, still has a profound influence on our real life. Therefore, we must take it seriously, subject it to scientific analysis, develop positive factors and discard negative factors, instead of ignoring it. It can be said that Confucian culture is a double-edged sword, it can
play both a positive role and a negative role in real life so it is crucial that we know how we deal with it. With regard to the negative aspect of Confucian culture, scholars have already made detailed analysis and disclosed much, the author of the essay has no need to expound more. According to the subject of this essay, it should be suggested here that Confucian culture is of great significance to the construction of cultural value systems for contemporary China and to the reestablishment of the spirit of humanism whether in theory or practice. Therefore, it is one of the realistic demands of contemporary cultural construction namely, absorbing and exploiting the reasonable elements of Confucian culture by using critical attitude and means.

III. The positive value of Confucian culture and the construction of contemporary humanistic spirit

In the era of reform and opening up, the political goal of China is to build a prosperous, civilized, democratic and modern country. To this end, we must uplift the spirit of humanism so as to enrich the connotation of new value system. Since China’s reform and opening up, with the development of the commodity economy and the renewal of people’s mental attitude, a distinctive humanistic spirit has gradually developed, which includes nationalism, patriotism, collectivism, independence, self-reliance, hard work and plain living, scientific outlook and democracy, the concept of the contract, legal knowledge, subject consciousness and so on. In light of this humanistic spirit, our society has developed in an unprecedented fashion, and people’s mental state has been similarly enhanced. This is only one side of the matter.

However, many severe facts prove that humanistic spirit of contemporary China also has gone downhill unprecedentedly. The spiritual plagues such as corruption and degeneration, breaking laws while in charge of their enforcement, forcible seizure and crafty acquisition, trade-off of money and power, eagerness for quick success and instant benefit, flaunting riches, highway robbery, refusing to help someone in real trouble, obscenity, gambling, drugs and so on, all run rampant in our society, ruining our national spirit and undermining our social morality. Therefore, how to cure this kind of spiritual anemia has become a tough project for all humanities and social science workers.

It is true that there are many methods to solve the problem of degeneration of humanistic spirit, for example, further improving the humanism is an indispensable procedure. However, it is far from being enough. Seen from the angle of national character of culture and dialectical unity of spirit of the time and excellent cultural traditions, the positive value of Confucian culture is the important thought resources that can be exploited.

The positive aspects of Confucian culture have been analyzed in details above. We believe that, in the process of reestablishing modern culture and the humanistic spirit of national culture, the positive ideas of Confucian Culture can serve as a new power to help the humanistic spirit grow. If transformed critically and enriched with
new spirit and content, they can become important constituent elements of the humanistic spirit.

It is very clear that under the guidance of deepening the reform and opening up, Chinese people at home and abroad all actively support and participate in China’s modernization. The grand project of achieving modernization itself is an unprecedented and great cause! For this reason, the value pursuit of making contributions can never be discarded for the modernization drive.

For the nation and individuals, if there is no positive and unremitting enterprising spirit, one’s enterprise will be at a standstill and life will shrink. Conversely, he will have prosperous enterprise and abundant life. The “three immortals” (improving virtues, making contributions, writing books and establishing a theory) and continuous self-improvement and an enterprising spirit that Confucianism always advocated conform to psychological and behavioral habits of the Chinese people, and it has great appeal and inspiration, thus it can become a resource for the establishment of a new humanistic spirit. Just imagine, if one has ambitions for his career, he will not be idle and make trouble out of nothing, and the mental attitude of individuals and society will be in a good condition. The significance of spirit, ideals and values will be fully displayed, and society will work better, more orderly and more effectively. Why not enjoy doing it?

The thought of improving virtues and gaining achievements, as well as personal practice which Confucian Culture emphasized also plays an important role in promoting the construction of new humanism today. In the era of the market economy which brings about a sea of human desire, how to stay calm in the face of disaster and make self-adjustments is a test of people’s cultural quality. Therefore, people who are actuated by high ideals should stick to the following principles, including keeping good conduct while pursuing success, strong opposition to superficial and short-term utilitarianism and moralism divorced from reality and without effectiveness.

Time is money and benefit is life, which should be universally applicable principles. Here, the so-called universality means that when applying this principle, one should take others into consideration according to the thought of Confucianism. When we think our time is money, we should suppose that other people's time is also money. We can never value our time while waste other people's time, especially official time. We regard our benefits as life and also allow others to treat their benefits as life. We can neither attach importance to our own benefits at the expense of someone else's benefit, nor sacrifice others to reap our own private ends.

If the above-mentioned can be fulfilled, the goal of improving virtues and gaining success can be achieved. In our society, such pursuit of improvement of virtue and enterprise needs advocating very urgently indeed. Confucian culture called for gentlemen to make money through honorable means, and this standard of behavior is still “the words to live by” today. Those who resort to every expedient in order to obtain a variety of fame and wealth and those who go astray because of seeking a moment's comfort, at bottom, focus on only succeeding in their enterprise, while they ignore and even contempt “improving virtues”. In fact, those businessmen who
discard morality for the purpose of gaining more profit and accomplishment would fail and miscalculate in business, the primary cause lies in the lack of moral enhancement. It is thus clear that transforming the thought of Confucian culture creatively has considerable significance in order to make people settle down and get on with their pursuits.

The great ambition of devotion to the world in Confucian culture is still instructive for us in establishing a new humanistic spirit. The well-known thoughts include: a noble man must have self-discipline and social commitment, different thoughts can carry on together without contradiction, the thoughts of the hundred schools can get to the same destination, and they possess long-term vitality in Confucian culture. This virtue of compatibility with others is of great value for the establishment of a new cultural system. We know that the construction of a new cultural system and Chinese humanistic spirit is a systematic engineering project involving many aspects. There will surely appear a variety of different opinions, viewpoints and arguments during its construction. If we consider the strategic development of cultural construction, these disagreements are not only normal but also conducive to deepening people’s understanding and the realization of the ultimate goal. However, admittedly, in academic circles, there are people who are narrow-minded, self-opinionated and superficial. They reject other people’s different research methods and academic viewpoints, and at every turn persecute others by political means, or even distort others’ opinions in order to seek private benefit.

For example, some people restrict their research fields to a designated sphere and prevent other researchers from asking about it. They regard the viewpoints which are different from theirs as “wrong” or “lack of common sense”, and they even attempt to finish it off for good by starting a rumor or defaming others’ reputation. Thus it can be seen that calling for the virtue of compatibility with others is of great necessity, and yet how difficult it is to carry out! For this reason, we have to emphasize the significance of compatibility with others.

All in all, as one of the important components of national culture, some rational elements in Confucian culture still have a positive meaning today. If we can make an objective analysis on it and exploit it critically, it may help to construct a humanistic spirit. Conversely, it can bring unnecessary trouble to us. The thought of Confucius and Sun Yat-sen are a tremendous heritage for us, and I hope that we can adopt them with a rational attitude.
Approaches to Promoting Economic Development through Confucian Culture

I. Dual roles of Confucian culture in economic development

Confucian culture is a concept rich in content. From the academic and practical level, we cannot draw a conclusion as a whole that Confucian culture can surely facilitate or hinder our economic development. Instead, we should make a more specific analysis.

Some thoughts of Confucian culture constitute an important component of traditional Chinese culture, which can, to a certain extent, serve as a driving force for socio-economic development in contemporary China. During the exploration and construction of a system of market economy, especially the research of the last two decades, it has been proved that some thoughts of Confucian culture can boost our socio-cultural development. Only when we find a conjunction point, that is, an appropriate approach, can Confucian culture become a booster for economic development in contemporary China. Otherwise, it would be to no avail, no matter how excellent Confucian culture is or how important a role Confucian culture plays in society. If we want to solve the problem of finding the best approaches, we should start from two sides of the social functions of Confucian culture and make a pragmatic and convincing analysis.

Confucian culture is not only a value target, but also a social culture phenomenon. It refers to a social culture which blends the following aspects together as fundamental characteristics, that is, regarding ruling by rites as a banner and maintaining feudal institutions as a basic political pursuit, taking agriculture instead of trade as the basic guideline of social development and unifying the whole country harmoniously.

From the perspective of our times, in modern society, Confucian culture cannot promote economic development directly. As achievements in Chinese farming and
classical civilization, the value system carried by Confucian culture cannot adapt to the market economy and its corresponding value system in the process of modernization. Thus, it is unlikely to boost economic development. The simple reason is that modernization is industrialization, commercialization and marketization. However, the basic orientation of Confucian culture is in contradiction with these. Feudal autocratic and socialist democratic politics are diametrically opposed in terms of people’s rights; the rule of virtue under the framework of the supremacy of imperial power is completely different from the rule of law that we pursue in contemporary society.

The most important is that the core value system of socialism today is entirely in conflict with the traditional value system marked by Confucian culture. Thus, this traditional value system cannot be integrated into the value system of contemporary society, and as a consequence, it is unlikely to play a driving role in a socialist market economy which has established a preliminary institutional framework. Under the guidance of morality as a supreme value, the economic philosophy of Confucian culture despises economic benefit. It acknowledges that: “The people bustling with activity in the world are all for the purpose of getting benefit”. However, its solution was “doing everything for righteousness instead of gaining benefits”. “Hunger is an extremely small thing, while being disloyal matters greatly”. Although the five constant virtues (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge and sincerity) can be transformed reasonably, the “three cardinal guidelines” (ruler guides subject, father guides son and husband guides wife) cannot prove its “modernity”, no matter how canny the interpretation. Such things indicate that there were plenty of limitations in classical agricultural civilization reflected by Confucian culture and also lots of contradictions with our modern society.

However, if seen from the perspective of national character, Confucian culture, as an important component of Chinese culture, has a positive meaning in facilitating economic development in some aspects. The philosophy in Confucian culture includes the Doctrine of the Mean, the theory that the new is sure to supersede the old without end, the principle of building up virtues, making full use of natural resources and maintaining a harmonious society. All of these are of reasonable value for economic development strategies and implementation of stage goals. Meanwhile, the ethical viewpoint in Confucian culture such as the theory of harmony, outlook of honor and dishonor, moral courage, being a man of noble character and the idea of moral and benefit are all of positive significance in improving the quality of national culture. The political ideas in Confucian culture such as the policy of benevolence, benevolent rule, people-based thought, the theory of enriching, educating and nourishing people, undoubtedly have significant meaning for today’s construction of good governance, improvement of the quality of civil servants, as well as identification and promotion of excellent traditional culture.
II. A practical approach to promoting economic development through Confucian culture

It is worth noting that some ideologies in Confucian culture are not in line with economic development and need to be abandoned. As for some other thoughts which have positive significance for economic development, they cannot be used until we interpret them from new perspectives and endow them with the new spirit of the time.

More importantly, to enable the positive contents of Confucian culture to promote economic development in real work, we must also open new breakthroughs and seek out effective approaches. In my opinion, we should put more effort into the following aspects: first, we should regard its ideology and culture as one of the contents of the contemporary value system; second, we should turn it into cultural self-consciousness of mainstream society, especially among civil servants, intellectuals and entrepreneurs; third, through the influence of media, we can make the economic value of Confucian culture into the basic cognition of the public; fourth, its spirit can become a force in the construction of a modern enterprise system and the fundamental components of corporate culture in contemporary China.

The historical influence of Confucian culture mainly focuses on its ideology and culture. In order to become a booster of today’s socio-economic development, reasonable thoughts of Confucian culture should be interpreted properly and endowed with the new spirit of the time. Thus, they can become one of the value systems of contemporary culture. According to existing writings, the basic content of today’s cultural value system include Marxist philosophy, the common ideal of socialism with Chinese characteristics, Chinese national spirit with patriotism as the core, the spirit of the time with reform and innovation as the core, and the socialist view of honor and disgrace.

In such a value system, the content which conforms to the reasonable elements in Confucian culture mainly focuses on the Chinese national spirit. Also according to existing writings, characteristics and essential elements of the Chinese national spirit highlight unity and solidarity, love of peace, industry and courage, continuous self-improvement and regarding patriotism as its core. From a theoretical perspective, Chinese national spirit refers to mental outlook constituting Chinese nation mentality, consciousness, ideas, customs and other aspects shaped in the long-term historical development of the Chinese nation, and it also reflects of Chinese cultural self-identification and self-belongingness of Chinese people and embodies the character of the Chinese nation as a whole. The substance of Chinese national spirit can be expressed as the followings: national feelings of patriotism, values of unity, thinking models of valuing harmony, plain quality of diligence and encourage, continuous self-reliance and enterprising spirit, great mind of self-discipline and social commitment, pursuit of morality and personal loyalty and scientific and modern spirit of democracy.

Obviously, on the basis of this expression, the Chinese national spirit is closely related to the emphasis on national interest and nationalism, great unity and
solidarity, harmony and moderation, self-improvement, self-discipline and social commitment and pursuit of morality and personal loyalty in Confucian culture. Therefore, these positive thoughts can be integrated into the value system of contemporary China after cultural integration and transmission. Respect for differences and inclusiveness of diversity are both important qualities and representations in today's cultural development. As for other positive factors in Confucian culture, they should be employed to play a role in encouraging Chinese people to strive for greater progress and sound development of the economy under the guidance of carrying forward and cultivating the Chinese national spirit. It should be pointed out that appropriate approaches should be found in order to enable Confucian culture to become the value system of contemporary culture and help to boost economic development. That means the positive factors of Confucian culture should be integrated into and guided by the core socialist value system, and not the other way around. The recent arguments that Confucian culture should be equal to or even replace the socialist culture and that Confucianism should be established as a state religion and authoritative ideology are totally confuse and disorientate the value outlook; they are even fanciful illusions!

For Confucian culture, there is another approach to boosting economic development, that is, it should become the cultural self-consciousness of mainstream of society, especially civil servants, intellectuals and entrepreneurs. Every idea and valuable cultural cognition has a carrier or a subject of communication. In the late Qing dynasty, due to domestic strife and foreign aggression, in particular a radical critique to traditional Chinese culture after the May Fourth Movement, as well as the ten-year catastrophe of the "cultural revolution", the value of the whole Chinese traditional culture including Confucian culture was completely negated. Since reform and opening up, firstly, the impatient desire for achieving modernization led to a denial of traditional culture, especially Confucian culture. Then, after the rise of the market economy, negative influences such as putting profit-making first and putting money above everything else have given rise to a denial of Confucian culture.

Of course, in an era of prevalent worship for GDP and materialism, Confucian culture is absolutely out of favor. However, economic and social development and exposure to various social problems in recent years, especially the problem of how to deal with native cultural resources in the era of globalization, have prompted Chinese people to look back on traditions and re-examine the advantages and disadvantages of Confucian culture.

Practice in recent years shows that among groups of intellectuals and civil servants and even entrepreneurs, people have already begun to realize the role that Confucian culture plays in modern society. In particular, the rise of studies of ancient Chinese civilization (including philosophy, history, archaeology, literature, linguistics, etc.) exerts a deep influence on the intellectual class, as well as civil servants and entrepreneurs. Although there is mingling of good and bad in the upsurge of studying ancient Chinese civilization, the keynote of the studies is still revitalizing our nation and achieving modernization. Moral disorder and spiritual degradation call for the reconstruction and exploration of Chinese humanistic
spirit; the demand for the quality enhancement of civil servants and management of modern government brings about enthusiasm for studies of ancient Chinese civilization; the pursuit of humanistic business management and the enhancement of entrepreneurs’ competence has evoked admiration towards Confucian merchants and the study of the successful business of ancient merchants (Shanxi merchants and Anhui merchants), all of which reflect significant value in Confucian culture and that intellectuals, civil servants and entrepreneurs have a better understanding of the value of Confucian culture.

However, from the strategic perspective of cultural development and the demands for sustainable economic development, perceptual intuition and sporadic publicity for Confucian culture is far from enough. As important body of modern society and carriers, disseminators and practitioners of mainstream values, intellectuals, civil servants and entrepreneurs can serve as the best assessors, carriers, disseminators and practitioners. Therefore, to make Confucian culture really help in promoting economic development, we should arouse its cultural self-consciousness through appropriate approaches. Only then can they be changed into the force of boosting economic development.

Another appropriate approach that helps Confucian culture to facilitate Chinese economic development is to publicize the economic value of Confucian culture via the power of mass media. An important characteristic of Confucianism is integration of a great tradition and a small tradition. The common people make contact with the “Way” of Ying and Yang in their daily life, yet they know nothing about it. The “Way” of carrying water and chopping firewood embodies the essence of Confucian culture. During the latter half of the last century, Confucian culture seemed to become synonyms of elite and classical culture which advocated profound and mysterious doctrines, putting righteousness first and pursuing metaphysics. All of these changed Confucian culture of living and practice into the culture of a museum. Thus, this led to the estrangement between the public and Confucian culture, that is, there seemed to be only an adverse and opposite relationship rather than a positive factor between Confucian culture and economic development. Owing to the above-mentioned reasons, the economic value of Confucian culture was screened. In fact, if we are not eager for quick success and instant benefits and not simply stress the effect of the linear development, Confucian culture can be regarded as spiritual power with Chinese characteristics in improving people’s spiritual realm and creating a harmonious cultural environment. This spiritual power can give us spiritual support and promote economic development. To solve this cognitive problem, we can take full advantage of modern media such as newspaper, radio, television, TV station and the Internet to publicize and explicate the economic value of Confucian culture, let more people understand the wisdom and power of Confucian culture and encourage people to enjoy learning and pursue justice and self-improvement when becoming rich, thereby creating a harmonious culture atmosphere and making culture and economy interact and bring out the best in each other under the new conditions.
To become a booster of economic development, another significant approach is to take Confucian culture as a spiritual power in the construction of a modern enterprise system and make it an important component of modern corporate culture. The modern enterprise system is a product of industrial civilization and an important symbol of the modernization process.

Although modern enterprise is derived from the West, China’s modern enterprise system should have the characteristics which are suitable to its national conditions. One of the important pursuits of the modern enterprise system is the commitment to social responsibility. For the relationship between individuals and society, Confucian culture has always advocated individual responsibility and emphasized serving and returning to society. Traditional principles including valuing honesty above benefits, and gaining benefits from honest labor are still of positive significance. The moral principles of loving others more than loving ourselves and correcting ourselves instead of correcting others still has a place for itself in today’s enterprise core values.

The corporate culture of contemporary China should not only take in advanced foreign culture, but also stand on our own land and reality and inherit and transform traditions. The core value of “benefiting the people and striving for continuous improvement” is explicitly stipulated in enterprise culture of China Mobile Guangdong Corporation. The principle of complete sincerity is also established as a responsible outlook of enterprise. These clearly define the strategies in terms of social responsibility in the framework of the “triple bottom line” of economic responsibility, social responsibility and environmental responsibility. Those who are familiar with Confucian classics all know that the corporate cultures and their core values are both derived from classics such as Commentary of Zuo, The Great Learning and Doctrine of the Mean, and they are the integration of related thoughts of Confucian culture. It is evident that as long as we adopt the reasonable elements of Confucian culture appropriately, they can still be material and intellectual resources in modern enterprise culture. If we rationally integrate the positive elements of Confucian culture into modern corporate culture and turn it into the spirit power of enterprise development, they will spontaneously play a role in promoting economic development.

On the whole, in modern society, Confucian culture can only indirectly push economic development, and this indirect effect does not mean the affirmation of certain specific content (this problem is relatively easy to handle), but means that we should find appropriate entry points or approaches in modern society. Only by doing this can Confucian culture give full play to promoting economic development and be full of vitality. Otherwise, they can, at best, only be idle talk.

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Modernization and Marginalization of Confucianism

Modernization and marginalization of Confucianism, which seems to be a superficially learned and professional subject, but in reality, it is a very practical and popular area of research which covers a broad range of fields and it is closely related to our social lives.

I. The origin and connotation of modernization and marginalization of Confucianism

The reason why we probe into this problem is that in the last half-century or for an even longer time span, that is to say, during the 80 years since the “May Fourth” movement, the Chinese nation has been pursuing the goal of developing modernization, integrating with world civilization, and we hope to stand on our own feet and revitalize our Chinese culture. However, this problem has not been solved successfully so far, and because the context of the times has changed and new problems have arisen, it is of great necessity to explore them today. We know that in the 1920s, with the “Down with the Confucius School” movement, the call for new schools of thought in science, democracy and freedom was prevailing in China. Since then, as representative of old culture and a spokesman for feudalism, Confucianism was fiercely criticized and abandoned. Since the PRC was founded in 1949 and before the reform and opening-up policy was carried out, under the main principle line of taking politics as commander in chief and class struggle as the key task, traditional Confucianism and traditional culture were completely rejected.

During the 20 years since we followed the policy of reform and opening up, the trends of foreign thought had great impact on us. Especially as we speed up the process of modernization, and enlarge and deepen social development, many social problems appeared. So, the question of how to solve these problems that occurred in the process of modernization was urgent. This issue is concerned with the way out for Chinese culture and the evaluation of Chinese culture. Among these, the
value orientation and the perception of the future development of Confucianism was a very important issue. Fundamentally speaking, can Confucianism be modernized and be able to adapt to modernization? Thus, the issue of the modernization of Confucianism occurs.

Why should we raise the issue of Confucianism? Because in the last 20 years, some overseas Chinese scholars vigorously promoted research and dissemination of Confucianism, and some scholars were busy with dialogue with Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Taoism and so forth around the world, promoting dialogue among different schools, civilizations, races and countries, an essential purpose was to promote the dissemination of Confucianism.

From these initiatives, we know that Confucianism in modern China was in the condition of being marginalized instead of being valued. Actually, in the first 30 years after the founding of the nation, Confucianism was completely negated. During the 20 years since we followed the policy of reform and opening up, it began to revive gradually, but it was still in a marginal position. It played a marginal role not only on the mainland, but also in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. What should we do? Some scholars have tried to make Confucianism become a central issue. Here comes another question: Should Confucianism continue to be marginalized, or will it eventually become a central issue? This problem actually involves the value orientation of ideological and cultural aspects of our modernization. To probe into this issue, I think we need to get a clear connotation of the modernization and marginalization of Confucianism.

What is the modernization of Confucianism? I think the modernization of Confucianism might include at least two aspects: one is that Confucianism has to adapt to society and update itself. That means it must “advance with the times”, renew and adjust itself. This is the modernization of Confucianism itself. The other is whether Confucianism itself is appropriate to the situation of modern society and whether it is able to exist in modern society, whether there are reasonable factors and values? In our opinion, the so-called modernization of Confucianism generally means that it should meet the needs of industrial civilization and business civilization. It should absorb some reasonable aspects of modern civilization such as sense of equality, sense of competition, sense of efficiency, sense of justice, global awareness and so on. If it can assimilate these ideas and reinvent itself, it can innovate and promote itself. Then, it is in line with modern requirements and can start its modernization process.

As for the marginalization of Confucianism, we will talk about two points of view. From a geographic view, it is marginal on a global scale, from the aspect of social practice, it is still marginal. First, let’s talk about geographic marginalization. As we know, Western civilization dominates the trend of promoting economic globalization and cultural globalization. Of course, there also arises an issue of cultural hegemony. However, Confucianism is not in the central position in the West, the Middle East or East Asia. It is neither the official ideology of particular countries and regions, nor is it a spiritual strength of intellectuals and civil society.
As to marginalization of social practice, Confucianism has long been marginalized for a long time in our country. As a value system, it has been abandoned. However, seen from the operational level of ideology and social life, after the 1911 revolution, Confucianism was no longer the official ideology, and especially after the founding of our nation, Marxism-Leninism was regarded as the guiding ideology, and Confucianism had already changed from traditional official ideology to a dispensable, decentralized and dissociative folk belief. It was neither a kind of ruling thought or popular code of conduct, nor a value criterion accepted and practiced consciously by the whole society. In the last 20 years, there were a very few scholars who advocated the values of traditional Confucianism and indeed practiced self-discipline. They even became spokesmen of contemporary Neo-Confucianism. But, after all, these few people could not represent the mainstream society. Confucianism became an object which was studied by some researchers. It was also the codes of conduct of a few people from a traditional center of social life, social philosophy and official ideology. I know that some scholars who sincerely believe in Confucianism practice Confucian values in their life. But they account for only a very small number out of 1.3 billion people. How can we expect it to become a mainstream or a center under such circumstances? In the last two years, the so-called campaign of reading early has become rampant nationwide, that is, let children read classics. These initiatives are not a revival of Confucianism, but a kind of commercial speculation with very huge commercial interest. All in all, marginalization of Confucianism is an indisputable fact that we have to encounter.

II. On the modernization of Confucianism

The marginalization of Confucianism is associated with the process of modernization. Then, can Confucianism be modernized? Does it have possibilities of modernization? The issue has been discussed for 20 years. Generally, there are three views: the first one is that Confucianism, as a value system, is against modernization as a whole. It is the product of a natural economy and small-scale peasant economy, and it serves feudal autocracy which is basically against human nature, therefore, it is impossible to get it modernized, since it is basically against modernization. The second view is that Confucianism can be modernized, and China's modernization can only rely on Confucianism, this is the point of view of the spokesmen of modern neo-Confucianism in our country. They believe that the greatest crisis of China's modernization is the loss of belief in Confucianism. Only by reviving Confucianism and taking Confucianism as the guiding ideology, can we achieve China's modernization. However, these two perspectives are two extremes. The former totally repudiates Confucianism with some tendencies of westernization. The latter tends to advocate the doctrine of “back to the ancient” or nationalism. There is a third one which is between the two points of view. They believe that Confucianism
has some aspects that cannot adapt to modernization and are even against modernization. Yet, many people hold the opinion that as an important element of national culture, Confucianism has some reasonable elements which can be remolded and used in the construction of culture today.

Basically speaking, from the standpoint of scientific rationality, I think modernization of Confucianism is possible. Why? We can see from the following aspects. Judging from the perspective of the cultural characteristics of our time, Confucianism as a whole is not suitable for the requirements of the time. Thus, in our society, it does not have outstanding status and is not practiced as the belief values by government or civil society. Now in Taiwan, some people say that the development of Confucianism on the mainland is growing so vigourously that it has the force of a prairie fire, this is just a figment of groundless imagination. Last October, I attended a conference on Confucianism in Taiwan. I asked this question to a spokesman: on what basis can you say that the development of Confucianism in the Chinese mainland is in full swing? He said that he heard some people say so. I asked who these “some people” were, and he said that somebody in Shanghai, someone in Guangdong and somebody in Lanzhou all agreed.

I told him that they were only three out of 1.3 billion Chinese people and what he heard was just one side of a story. When I told him the real situations on the mainland, he was very surprised. One example I mentioned was that according to traditional Confucianism, Chinese woman were required to obey her father before marriage, and her husband during married life and her sons in widowhood, yet, perhaps no modern woman are willing to do so. Another example was that in accordance with Confucian etiquette, girls must be dressed in a dignified and decent way, behave elegantly, smile without showing her teeth and walk in small steps, can modern women be willing to do? Instead, on the mainland, many girls wear miniskirts, bare midriff, skirts with shoulder-straps. What is more, some men have “concubines” and some rich women also have their own “fancy men”. The spokesman said that he never thought things were like that. I also told him if he came to Guangzhou, he would be surprised to see that the traditional Confucian values had been overturned and had no possibility of getting revived. Therefore, Confucianism as a whole is not suitable for modern requirements.

Seen from the times, Confucianism belongs to pre-modern ideology and has lost the rationality of particular history. If we can say that Confucianism in pre-modern times played a driving role in the development of Chinese society, then, in modern times, it has lost its holistic rationality. But if we judge from the national traits, you can see great possibilities for the modernization of Confucianism. First, judging from historical development, the Confucianism we are talking about today is an overall value system and code of conduct created by Confucius, Mencius from the pre-Qin period in ancient China and developed by later Confucians. Confucianism went through a long process of development, and it seems to me that it had four stages (some scholars believe it went through five stages, others also believe it went through three stages). During the first stage, there were Confucians mainly represented by Confucius and Mencius in the pre-Qin. They were called the original
Confucians who focused on the thoughts of benevolence and ceremony, taking benevolence as a starting point and constructing a set of systems and codes of conduct about ceremony. The second stage referred to those Neo-Confucianists represented by Dong Zhongshu in the Han dynasty.

The original Confucians of the pre-Qin differed from Neo-Confucians in the Han dynasty. The former had no concept of Yin and Yang, nor the theory of yin-yang and the five elements to build their own system. But Dong Zhongshu in the Han dynasty absorbed the theory of Yin and Yang and five elements to construct the Confucianism system. Furthermore, the original Confucians were incompatible with the Legalists. However, Dong Zhongshu in the Han dynasty absorbed the thought of Legalist, Mohist, and Taoist and put forward morality with priority on penalty. On the whole, Confucian scholars in the Han dynasty represented by Dong Zhongshu, taking Confucianism as a leading factor and the theory of yin-yang and five elements as methods and framework, absorbed legalism, Mohism, and Taoism of the pre-Qin scholars and built a Neo-Confucianism that could adapt to the new requirements of the time.

The third stage of the development of Confucianism was the Song and Ming dynasties, namely Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasties. Neo-Confucianism absorbed the thoughts, theories and methods of Buddhism and Taoism, enhanced the contents of Chinese philosophy, constructed a new ontology and made up for previous shortfalls, and it is commonly referred to as Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasties. Neo-Confucianism affected Chinese society for seven or eight hundred years until the fall of the Qing dynasty.

Modern Neo-Confucianism is the fourth stage of development. After the fall of the Qing dynasty and during the “May Fourth” movement, the radical anti-traditional movements provoked a backlash of Confucianism. There were a number of scholars who agreed to Confucian values and promoted Confucianism, meanwhile, they also agreed on the value of Western learning. They advocated the fusion of Chinese and Western learning so as to save Chinese culture, Chinese society and finally the destiny of the Chinese nation. They were modern Neo-Confucians. They were not the same as the traditional Confucians. They believed that there was lack of science and democracy in traditional Chinese culture, and they advocated learning from the West and opening up new situations.

To sum up, the development of Confucianism went through four stages: the first was original Confucianism in the pre-Qin period; the second was Neo-Confucianism in the Han dynasty represented by Dong Zhongshu, who constructed a Confucian value system by taking heaven-human induction as the core and the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues as its ethical pursuit; the third stage was Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasties represented by Cheng Hao, Zhuxi, Lu Juyuan and Wang Yangming. They had a discussion of values about the principle of nature and human desires; the fourth stage was modern Neo-Confucianism, which advocated learning advanced Western culture and extended to social practice to administer the country. Thus, traditional Confucianism went through four stages and three major transformations from ancient to the present,
which indicated that Confucianism had the function of self-renewal and self-adjustment. Therefore, seen from the history of development of Confucianism, it has the possibility of modernization and can do adjust, develop and update itself.

The modernization of Confucianism can also be proved from the characteristic of Confucianism. Strong inclusiveness is a striking feature of Confucianism. Confucianism stresses “Everything can get free development without harming each other, and the thoughts of the hundred schools can co-exist together without contradiction”. This is an essential belief of Confucians. Just because of this, Confucianism in the Han dynasty could absorb the thoughts of different schools. Later when Confucianism became an official ideology, it continued to incorporate things of diverse nature and had strong inclusiveness. Of course, there were limits to this inclusiveness, that is, under the premise of not interfering with the domination of Confucianism and the interests of the autocracy. Because of this kind of inclusiveness in ideology and culture, Taoism came into being and Buddhism spread to China in the Han dynasty, and then gradually developed in the country. In the Tang dynasty, Christianity was introduced into China, and subsequently, Islam. In Chinese history, intense religious conflicts and religious wars never happened as in Western history, and this has something to do with inclusiveness of Confucianism. Of course, this situation was also associated with the Confucian thoughts such as “helping others is helping ourselves,” “focusing on inner cultivation and setting examples for others,” and also related to the breadth of mind of “people are my brothers and all things are my kind”.

The manifestation of the modern Neo-Confucianism can also explain the modernization of Confucianism. Feng Youlan, a late professor at Peking University was an important figure of modern Neo-Confucianism. He wrote many books in his life, and he thought the best the following three. The first one was A History of Chinese Philosophy published before liberation (Volume 1 and Volume 2), the English version of which was studied for many years by scholars in Western countries; The second one was A Short History of Chinese Philosophy written in English, and its Chinese version published by Peking University Publishing House; The third one was A New History of Chinese Philosophy written after liberation, and the three volumes were published before the “Cultural Revolution”. After the Cultural Revolution, Mr. Feng said that those books written at that time were all against his will, and he would like to rewrite what he really wanted to write about the history of Chinese philosophy. So at the age of 80, he began to revise, rewrite and completed the seven volumes of A New History of Chinese Philosophy in the following ten years. Feng Youlan wrote a couplet for himself, which was an interpretation of his academic achievement during his life: Three history books interpret the past and present; Six book records were written at the crisis times of our nation”. “Three history books” in the couplet referred to the above-mentioned three books on History of Chinese Philosophy. “Six books” referred to the six books written in Chongqing during the War of Resistance, namely A New Philosophy of Principle, New Discourses on Events, New Social Admonitions, A New Inquiry into Man, A New Inquiry into the Tao, and A New Understanding of
Language. He thought he wrote the books to inspire national spirit and encourage people to fight the invading army, so his metaphysical philosophical approach was to serve the reality of the War of Resistance. But his books were criticized by progressives, who thought that he eulogized the virtues and achievements of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang and so on. After liberation, Mr. Feng also got a lot of criticism, but was always a member of the CPPCC.

During the “Cultural Revolution”, Chiang Ching personally went to earthquake tents to ask him to criticize Confucius and give lectures on the struggle of Confucianism and Legalism. All in all, Mr. Feng did a lot of work, and in the academic world there were great divergences on making an evaluation of his life, but he always persisted in working for the nationalization and modernization of Chinese philosophy. The basic paradigms, framework and main object of today’s research on the history of Chinese philosophy are basically laid by Mr. Feng and other scholars. Although History of Chinese Philosophy written by Hu Shi was prior to Feng’s, yet Hu’s contribution and influences could not be compared to Feng Youlan’s. Since reform and opening up, Mr. Feng had handwritten couplets hung in the house: new life for old state auxiliary and very wise way to moderation. He used to say that Zhou was an old State, yet it could revive through reforms.

The “old State” was the motherland, the Chinese nation, while “new reform” was socialism construction. He made a great effort to make contributions to China’s modernization drive in his old age. Later, Mr. Feng wrote many of the articles on this aspect and made great efforts to cultivate a lot of talented people. Therefore, we can say he was always keeping pace with the times, the social progress and tried to incorporate his theories into the country’s modernization.

Two other leading figures of the modern Neo-Confucianism were Tang Junyi, Mou Zong-San in Taiwan and Hong Kong. They give more publicity to the modern new Confucianism, that is, they tried to return to traditional and fundamental Confucian thoughts and learn science and democracy in the west. They advocated the continuation of wisdom of Chinese cultural wisdom, and they intended to carry forward the best of Chinese culture, promote cultural dialogue with world culture, especially Western culture, on an equal basis and enhance mutual learning and joint development in order to achieve China’s modernization. From this point of view, the modernization of Confucianism is possible.

We have said that there is a possibility that Confucianism can be modernized, but it does not mean that this is the reality. I think that several issues should be paid more attention if we wish to turn possibility into reality. The first problem is that Confucianism should reform and remold itself. Modern Neo-Confucianism in particular is strongly exclusive. In Taiwan, a modern Neo-Confucian school of thought is irreconcilable with other schools. When interacting with scholars from the Chinese mainland, they strongly emphasize ideological differences and claim to use Confucianism to “resolve diabolism”. Marxism being practiced in China has become diabolism in their eyes. They referred to this issue in their books repeatedly, and some even take “resolve diabolism” as their mission. I hold the view that only when modern Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Confucianists really combine with the
modernization of China, can they come properly into play. To do this, they should change themselves, resolve this intense ideological sensitivity and weaken the strong exclusiveness of their own. They should never dream of being a monarch, being a centre, or dominant ideology.

The second problem is that Confucianism should go to the society instead of remaining in the study. Many years ago, a scholar in Taiwan wrote an article called “Lonely Neo-Confucianists”. In fact, Neo-Confucianism was undervalued in Taiwan. What did Taiwan’s economic development depend on? Of course, it mainly depended on the capitalist system, not Confucian thoughts like some people assumed.

In Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, the government practices the capitalist system, and all sectors of the whole society from political systems to economic management follow the rules of capitalist values. Does traditional culture have any influence on Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, especially on Taiwan? The answer is yes! It has great and profound influence. A few years ago, when you were in Hong Kong, you felt like coming to a colony, pure and simple. But when you come to Taiwan, you feel you are back in your hometown, why? It is all because of traditional Chinese culture. In Taiwan, although people attach great importance to traditional Chinese culture, Confucianism is not the dominate doctrine. We all know that Taiwan used to take “The Three People’s Principles” as guidance, but now this doctrine only exists in name. There used to be “The Three People’s Principles” Research Institutes in the universities in Taiwan, like Marxism-Leninism Teaching and Research Offices in our universities, now, some have been delisted, some have been completely canceled, and some others have changed their names into Research Institute of National Development or other names. From this, we can see that “The Three People’s Principles” is not pure Confucianism. It is only an ideological system by absorbing and using Western democratic politics for reference.

As you see, Confucianism must adapt to our society and remold this society in order to achieve modernization. In fact, modern Neo-Confucianism in Taiwan is very lonely. About ten years ago, I once asked scholars in Taiwan whether it was true that there were many Confucian lectures in every University, students rushed to go to the lectures, and everyone put Confucian thoughts into practice. To my surprise, they told me that Confucianism had no market at all in Taiwan. Some people even took my question as a joke. Later, when I went to Taiwan, I felt Neo-Confucianism was really lonely, because very few people agreed with it. Hence, in order to achieve modernization, it should change and transform itself in the first place, abandon central consciousness and exclusiveness. Now Neo-Confucianism has become idle talk that a few scholars in Taiwan prefer in their study, or a channel of social communication among the same school of disciples. So, obviously, this is not appropriate, and it totally breaks away from the reality of social life. Last October, I went to Taiwan to attend a Neo-Confucianism symposium which left me with a deep impression. In the past, the symposium on modern Neo-Confucianism was often held at Taiwan Central Library (now called “National Library”), in
which the environment was very pleasant, and there were a lot of listeners. But when I went there last year, there were only about some 50 people including from Europe, America, Southeast Asia and the Chinese mainland. At the end of the conference, the President said, “Oh, it seems that not too many people like to attend this symposium!” The representatives from Taiwan drove here to make a report and walked away as soon as they finished reports. The people who could sit from beginning to the end were basically those who came from the Chinese mainland. From this, we know that the plight of Neo-Confucianism of Taiwan was in. It has become really lonely! So, it must combine with the reality of social life and then rebuild society.

Third, to achieve modernization, Confucianism should also try to change modern times, while it is being modernized. It should participate in real life, otherwise it is difficult to have a foothold. Changing modern times doesn’t mean replacing the modern things with the things before modern times, instead, it means eliminating some abuses in modern society with its reasonable resources under the premise of persisting in modernity, accordingly, demonstrating its values and rationality in modern society. Therefore, when we say the necessity of modernization of Confucianism, we mean that it must change itself, rebuild society and participate in it.

III. On the marginalization of Confucianism

Next, let’s explore another issue: the inevitability of the marginalization of Confucianism. In the view of modern Neo-Confucianists, Confucianism cannot draw people's attention, but in the long run, the revival of Chinese culture is absolutely the revival of Confucianism, and the value of Confucianism will be further explored and agreed by people. However, it is impossible for Confucianism to revive in the round and become the center and guidelines of the society. It will only be more marginalized.

In other words, the marginalization of Confucianism is inevitable. Why? Let's start our discussion from the following points. First, we must know that industrial civilization and commercial civilization has transcended agricultural civilization. Seen from the type of civilization, Confucianism grew up on the basis of agricultural civilization, and it could adapt to the needs of the latter. It became well developed in agricultural society and played a major part in the social development of agricultural civilization. But today's modernization focuses on industrialization and informatization, and aims to achieve industrial civilization and commercial civilization. Moreover, industrial civilization and commercial civilization have transcended agricultural civilization, and is a kind of critique and a negation to agricultural civilization. So, in the age of agricultural civilization, Confucianism that used to be in a central position is bound to be increasingly marginalized.

Second, judging from the value orientation, modernization carries out the market economy, handles affairs in accordance with the law, centers on the economy and
pursues efficiency. But the natural economy and small-scale peasant economy advocated being satisfied with a little achievement, and their happiness lies in contentment, being easily contented and so on. Furthermore, they object to competition and put too much emphasis on collaboration, which is at the cost of objecting to competition and losing efficiency. Therefore, seen from the values of Confucianism, under the conditions of the market economy, it cannot occupy a dominant position, and it surely will be marginalized. Even though Confucianism can assimilate the concept of the market economy and reinvent itself, its value pursuit and codes of conduct are still different from the orientation of modernization.

Third, seeing from the political reality of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao and the mainland, we pursue the ideology of Marxism and carry out the socialist system, so Confucianism cannot become the dominant ideology. In any era, the dominant ideology is the ideology of the ruling class, and this is the basic principle of historical materialism. Today, China is a socialist country with the working class in the lead role, and the ideology of Marxism as the guidance, it is impossible to adopt Confucianism as the dominant ideology.

The capitalist system is also adopted in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and Confucianism is unlikely not be adopted as a guiding ideology there. Macao used to be Portugal's colony. Prior to its handover to China, the Portuguese authorities did not take Confucianism seriously at all. Macao is only 23 square kilometers and has a population of more than 400,000 people, even smaller than a midsize county in mainland China. However, among hundreds of academic societies, there is not even one that studies Confucianism and Confucian culture. How can Confucianism become a central ideology under this situation? Macau governmental authorities (including Macao SAR government after the handover) practice the capitalist system, and it is also impracticable to practice social systems with Confucianism as guidance. There are few Confucian scholars in Macao. However, I saw a number of devout Christians, Taoists and Buddhists. Therefore, judging from the practice of the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, the marginalization of Confucianism is an established fact, it is absolutely impossible for Confucianism to be a central and dominant ideology.

Fourth, from the perspective of academic practice, whether on the mainland or in Hong Kong, Macao or Taiwan, Confucian scholars are always very lonely. Of course, you will say “Sages are lonely since ancient times” and wise men are lonely, too. Of course you could say it like this. But if that is the case, I am afraid you cannot exert influence on our society and promote social progress. Therefore, from this perspective, Confucianism will be inevitably marginalized.

Fifth, judging from modern history and the reality of contemporary China, the marginalization of Confucianism is also inevitable. The opium war in 1840 made Chinese people suffer the humiliation of defeat to the fullest extent. After signing the Treaty of Nanjing, China was gradually reduced to a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country. Since then, Chinese society began to be occupied by the enemy step by step. To change this humiliating fate, China carried out Westernization movement
Modernization and Marginalization of Confucianism

in industry, and advocated the thought of “Chinese learning for fundamental principles and Western learning for practical uses” in ideological and cultural aspects, that is, based on Chinese culture and learn advanced science and technology in the west.

People at that time kept ruminating on the questions why cannot we beat them? It is because our ships, guns, cannons are not as good as others. So we must learn from others, drawing from the experiences of others to transform ourselves. As a consequence, in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894, the Beiyang Navy was completely defeated. However, evidence indicated that, in the Sino-Japanese war, the tonnage and military equipment of Chinese warships as a whole far exceeded those of Japanese fleets, but they were wiped out by the Japanese with just one blow. This question is worthy of exploration. It is no use having powerful ships and cannons, the key problem is the issue of people and systems. Even the best weapons cannot play a key role without a good system. Therefore, later, the constitutional monarchies of Western countries, including the thought of democracy and republicanism were introduced and assimilated completely through the Reform Movement of 1898, also known as the Hundred Days Reform Movement. We can see that the advocacy of “Chinese learning for fundamental principles and Western learning for practical uses” and the Reform Movement of 1898 both gradually broke away from the shadow of traditional Confucianism.

Those who advocated retaining Chinese culture and learning from Western science and technology were devout Confucians, but they had to learn from the West painfully, humiliatingly and passively, and accepted the outstanding achievements of human civilization in modern times, which was in itself an impact on the central position of Confucianism. Then, the Revolution of 1911 advocated the ideology of bourgeois democracy and Republicanism, which was far away from Confucianism. Later, the May Fourth Movement held high the banner of science and democracy, thoroughly criticized old ideas, old culture, old morality, promoted and developed new ideas, new culture, and new morality, which also caused the decline of the status of Confucianism.

Since the foundation of China, two stages could be roughly defined, namely, the era of Mao Zedong from 1949-1978 and the later 20 years. But Mao Zedong passed away in 1976, until 1979 the reform and opening up policy was officially announced, so the years of 1976, 1977 and 1978 actually were a transitional period of wondering between the two stages.

We briefly called this period “the first 30 years,” In this way, the first 30 years was the proletarian revolution under the dictatorship of a proletariat led by Mao Zedong, the whole society was organized under the ideological and political condition of revolution and dictatorship, which was the complete negation of the value and status of Confucianism. The later 20 years was dominated by economic construction because of the policy of the market economy. Moreover, the influence of Western learning since the opening also determined the inferior status of Confucianism. Although the situation of Confucianism was taking a turn for the better, yet it was still a kind of folk learning as a whole instead of being a systematic
and academic school of thought. Therefore, the marginalization of Confucianism is not only inevitable, but also an established fact.

Sixth, from the perspective of the trend of the times, the marginalization of Confucianism is also of necessity. We know that the trend of economic globalization is having a dramatic impact upon the whole world, including contemporary China. The Chinese Government and the people consciously and willingly joined the tide of economic globalization. For example, China’s accession to the WTO was a significant manifestation of joining the process of economic globalization. In such a situation, Confucianism is not an official ideology, nor does it have a stratum (or group) as a carrier. As a value system, a religion, a philosophy of life, Confucianism must have a stratum or a group to carry it. However, there is no such stratum. Therefore, according to Neo-Confucianism, Confucianism has been in a really difficult situation. Therefore it cannot be a centre, and its marginalization is inevitable.

IV. The tension between the modernization and marginalization of Confucianism

The last issue is the tension between the modernization and marginalization of Confucianism. According to the logic requirements of modernization of Confucianism, Confucianism must be modernized in order to exist, develop, demonstrate its value and obtain reasonable status. Furthermore, to adapt to modernization, it must be modernized first of all. But this seems to be a paradox, thus, it will certainly become increasingly marginalized. In my words, the more the society becomes modernized, the more marginalized Confucianism becomes or vice versa. There is antinomy between them.

But modern Neo-Confucians have such ambitions, and they think that not only China but also the whole world should be in accord with the values of Confucianism. A scholar from Taiwan once said in his article, “There will be no heavenly principles if the world does not return to Confucianism”. From this, we can see some kind of narrow-mindedness and exclusiveness. In this sense, the theory of “harmony in diversity” and “all-inclusiveness” advocated by traditional Confucianism has been abandoned by modern Neo-Confucianists unconsciously. From a rational perspective, Confucianism must make an effort to realize modernization and face all trials so as to survive. But in the process of becoming modernized, it must adapt to the modernization process, and it will certainly become more marginalized.

Superficially, it seems to be a very weird thing, but actually it is in line with the course of historical development, and it is logical. Because you want to bring in democracy and science, social justice, concepts of efficiency and contract, competition awareness and so on, in this sense, it is not the original and traditional Confucianism. The unique value of traditional Confucianism does not exist anymore, so it is impossible to have the importance it had in the past. But it will be
weeded out if it is not modernized, and it will also be weeded out if it isn’t adapted to modernization.

Confucianism must adapt to modernization in order to develop, so it is inevitably going to be modernized in the process of modernization. It is important to make a reasonable choice in the dilemma within its capacity and promote Confucianism scientifically and rationally instead of becoming a centre. Thus, Confucianism can maintain the status of marginalization in the process of achieving modernization, so that it will not be completely drowned in the modernizing tide.

There is a saying from our ancients, that is, “It is important to have a peaceful heart”. Whatever happens, as long as we view this with a steady heart, we would face any hardship calmly and unhurriedly, and would never worry about personal gains and losses. What drives Neo-Confucians out of favor is that 2000-year domination of Confucianism has fallen from the throne of power, and it will never be restored to its glorious days.

On the other hand, if we see from the perspectives of social development and building a modernized country of civilization, prosperity, and democracy, the marginalization of Confucianism should be acceptable. The modernization of our country cannot be hampered because of the battle of schools of thought and status. I have always said that each era has its particular academic thought and spirit. The fundamental political structure, psychological conditions, social and economic foundation of Confucianism disintegrated a long time ago, and there is no reason to make it return to a central position. We should accept the reality of its marginalization calmly.

Confucianism, as a part of the traditional culture, or as some factors in constituting Chinese culture today, has its rationality. However, it should not and cannot be in a dominant position. Of course, one problem needs to be noticed, that is, should Confucian scholars give up Confucianism when it is marginalized? Is Confucianism absolutely without merit? The answer is: No. Confucianism and Confucian scholars still should enhance the sense of participation. Meanwhile, they should have consciousness of critique and distance, which means participating in social life and using moral reasoning to guide society, trying to promote the national spirit rather than drift with the current. I think that we should endow Confucianism today with new spirit, a new content of the time. Only by doing so can it be used by our new culture. We should have a correct understanding of the status and function of Confucianism, and know that it can absolutely be modernized with some prerequisites and restrictive factors. In the meantime, we should see its inevitability. All in all, people should find a moderate bonding point between the modernization and the marginalization of Confucianism.
Since the May 4th Movement, as spiritual support and fundamental values of traditional Chinese society, Confucianism has been under unprecedented attack. Meanwhile, as an ideology with official status, Confucianism has actually no longer been in existence since the beginning of the Republic of China. Moreover, since 1949, it has come under unparalleled criticism and thorough denial. But as an important part of Chinese cultural life and basic elements of traditional culture, Confucianism has been constantly endowed with new interpretations and new discussions with the ups and downs of ethos and ideological trends in Chinese culture. Towards the end of this century, it is both a very interesting academic question and a practical social problem to retrospectively examine the uneven development course of Confucianism and reflect on its position and role in the development of modern China, and then to look forward to the developmental prospect of Confucianism by exploring the relationship between Confucianism and ideological trends in modern China.

I. A tripartite situation of culture: Conservatives, reformists and revolutionaries

History has shown that since the May 4th Movement, cultural trends in Chinese society have begun to disintegrate and recombine constantly in the logical evolution of cultural criticism and culture reconstruction. On the whole, Chinese modern culture might be roughly divided into three powers according to the attitudes towards traditional culture. Namely, conservative, reformist and revolutionary.

The conservative was mainly composed of vested interests. As a school of cultural thought, it reflected the values of vested interest groups; as a way of thinking, it emphasized more metaphysical moral principles than practical technology; as a means of cultural change, it advocated maintaining normal practice and “backward-looking” values and the thought that: “Heaven is unchanged, so is
the Way”, which were also closely associated with traditional Confucianism. It is well-known that traditional Chinese culture is dominated by both Confucianism and Taoism. If considering the broad and profound impact on secular society and seen from the whole function of value orientation, Confucianism was supreme and unchallenged in boosting social development. Confucianism is essentially a conservative doctrine which can be used to safeguard both the vested interest of the rulers and the existing social order. For this reason, during the long period of 2000 years from the Qin and Han dynasties to the May 4th period, we can find a regular phenomenon, that is, whenever society declined and the transition from the old to the new took place, Confucianism often came under fierce attack and anti-Confucianism became mainstream in cultural thought; whenever new rulers came to power and stabilized their states, Confucianism would be worshiped as an idol, and respecting Confucianism and returning to the ancients would be the mainstream of cultural thought.

The reformists mainly referred to those more enlightened people in the ruling class. They took a long-term view and valued the overall and long-term interests and advocated taking eggs by raising hens instead of by killing hens. As a kind of cultural thought, it reflected the values of liberals within the ruling class; as a way of thinking, it regarded both moral principles and practical technology as equally important, meanwhile it advocated moral improvement and technological innovation so that they could complement each other; as a way of cultural change, it proposed to carry out progressive and slow change rather than radical transition.

The thoughts and methodology of reformists were connected with the Confucian school ideologically. Everybody knows that Confucius advocated “increase and decrease”, that is to say, opposing radical change and only making internal adjustments without touching the fundamental interests of the rulers. When elaborating the evolution of ritual systems, Confucius said: “The Yin dynasty followed the regulations of the Xia; wherein it took from or added to them may be known. The Zhou dynasty has followed the regulations of Yin; wherein it took from or added to them may be known. Some other may follow the Zhou, but though it should be at the distance of a hundred ages, its affairs may be known”. This means that the basic principles of ritual systems would not change, and they should not be changed, either, but they can be remedied appropriately according to specific situations.

Dong Zhongshu, a Confucian master in the Han dynasty, developed the thought of Confucius and put forward the viewpoint of emphasizing Jing (immutability) more than Quan (adaptability). In his opinion, natural law and history both had immutability and variation. He said, “Spring and Autumn Annals also contained principles and flexibility”. As for the relationship between the two, he thought Jing should be taken as primary and Quan could be used on the premise that Jing took precedence to Quan. The purpose of implementing a contingency approach still resided in maintaining the loftiness and the stability of Jing. In his own words, in extraordinary circumstances, a contingency approach could be taken, but this could only be done within the scope of tolerance. In politics, he emphasized that social
institutions could be changed but the fundamental principles could never be altered. All in all, whether advocating increase and decrease or contingency approach, his main thought was: "The fundamental principle of a society is never unchangeable like the natural law". Confucius and Dong Zhongshu laid the foundation of such a reformist Confucian thinking, which profoundly influenced later Confucian scholars, as well as all liberal politicians and ideologists who were in the hope of making the rule of feudalism maintain prolonged stability.

The Westernization Movement and the Hundred Days of Reform in modern China, judging from its ultimate objectives and thinking method, both belonged to the category of reformism. These reforms urged the liberal politicians and thinkers in the ruling class to make efforts to achieve their political expectation by facing the reality, modifying old moral principles and bringing in new practical technology, so that they could develop great moral principles generation after generation.

The revolutionary force came from the opposite of the ruling class and they were the chief rival of the old forces and their ideology. They represented both the interests of the oppressed and the ongoing orientation of the time. They aimed to fundamentally change the feudal autocratic system and old concepts of culture, education and economy, as well as its corresponding systems. As a cultural trend, it represented the value of the broad masses; and as a way of thinking, it strongly advocated discarding the old and establishing in its place the new order of things, emphasizing moral principles more than practical work; as a way of cultural change, it proposed resolute and thorough-paced renewal and advocated achieving fundamental change of culture traits and making great leaps by swift and violent struggle.

In general, in the rough course of cultural development in modern China and the brand-new prospect of cultural changes, the three forces of conservative, reformist and revolutionary were seen as forming a cultural situation of tripartite confrontation insofar as the social and political force as well as the modes of thinking are concerned. This cultural trend itself represented complicated Chinese cultural traits. In the meantime, it was one of the underlying causes behind why cultural criticism and value reconstruction went through a bumpy ride.

Of course, with the development of society, the general trend is that old thoughts become increasingly unpopular, and the word “conservative” has become an extremely harsh and pejorative value judgment in the field of politics and culture in modern China. The ideology of reformism, in essence, belongs to the category of “conservative”. But for the thoughts and methods of reformism, a historicist and dialectical analysis should be made. For example, the reform of the Hundred Days Reform cannot be entirely denied or generalized. For revolutionary ideas and methods, it is beyond all doubt that we should inherit and carry forward them actively, but also rationally summarize experience and make the best use of advantages and disadvantages so as to promote the cultural construction of contemporary China.
II. Academic schools of thought: Marxism, Western schools and Neo-Confucianism

In response to the above-mentioned situation of tripartite cultural confrontation, there have always existed in modern China three academic trends which contended against one another, namely Marxism-Leninism, wholesale westernization and modern new Confucianism. Of course, these three academic trends were not equivalent to the above three cultural trends. However, like those cultural trends, they reflected intertwining ideological struggles during the development of modern Chinese culture and represented further development of modern China in the fierce struggle of “where should China go”.

In modern China, there were various and complicated social contradictions and a variety of schools of thought which contended for supremacy. Meanwhile, various academic thoughts with diversified genres were unified dialectically by supplementing each other. But the most representative and significant in terms of typicality were Marxism-Leninism, total westernization and modern new Confucianism.

After the May 4th Movement, Marxism-Leninism was introduced into China. A large number of intellectuals accepted Marxism-Leninism and used it as an ideological weapon for observing the world, understanding and changing society. For example, Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, Qu Qiubai and Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Hou Wailu, and Du Guoyang all attempted to come to grips with traditional Chinese culture and critically clean up historical and cultural heritage from Confucius to Sun Yat-Sen by using the principles of Marxism-Leninism. Meanwhile, they presented their propositions for accepting Western culture critically and further clarified their views on the construction of modern Chinese culture. The school of Marxism-Leninism opposed not only national cultural nihilism but also the cultural conservatism of modern Neo-Confucian.

Hu Shi, Chen Xujing, Yin Hai-kuang, Li Ao, and Lin Yusheng all belonged to liberal school of westernization. They advocated discarding traditional Chinese culture and finding a way out in Western culture. As for the Westernization school, they were opposed to both Marxism-Leninism and modern Neo-Confucianism.

Modern Neo-Confucianism advocated preserving Chinese culture, returning to traditional Confucianism and learning some strong points of Western culture so as to open a new road to modern science and democracy. They opposed both Marxism-Leninism and wholesale westernization. All these three schools of academic thought existed over 70 years with their strengths growing or declining. The three schools were diametrically opposed to each other and the long-term debate among them was centered on the issue of “where should China go”.

Under the guideline of this thought, the three schools all proposed that China should and would be able to achieve modernization. However, this superficial agreement in proposition could not cover up intense and furious ideological struggle. The three schools had totally different opinions in choosing the road to achieving modernization of China. Marxist-Leninists adhered to socialist modernization and emphasized “Chinese characteristics” in practice. They absolutely
rejected capitalist modernization from Western countries. Liberalists advocated copying old ways of capitalism modernization from Western developed countries. In fact, they believed that modernization was westernization”. Modern Neo-Confucianism adhered to traditional Chinese culture. They hold the firm faith that Chinese culture had no insufficiency” in nature and proposed absorbing Western science and democracy and taking the road of “Confucian capitalism” practiced in industrial East Asian countries.

Obviously, there are fundamental divergences in terms of ideology among the three schools. It is also easy to ignore the similarities or consistency among them. Some scholars point out that the three thoughts had much common ground. For example, all of them took into deep consideration how to treat traditions, introduce Western culture and how to construct new Chinese culture; they were all overwhelmed by nationalist sentiment, taking saving the nation from subjugation and ensuring its survival as their primary goal; all searched for truth from Western countries, but tried to avoid the kinds of conflicts and problems exposed during the developmental course of Western civilization. They all hoped to walk out of the Middle Ages and march towards modernization, which had the characteristic of cultural enlightenment. In my opinion, this is a more natural and objective perspective.

It should be noted that the three ideological trends represented three different modes of modernization and reflected fusion and conflict among different cultures. This conflict could neither be resolved by employing administrative decrees or even other high-handed measures nor by invectives, nor curses. It can be predicted that, before we can achieve modernization on the Chinese mainland and before Chinese descendants at home and abroad can reach a consensus on reshaping Chinese cultural value systems, the coexistence and confrontation of these three schools will not disappear.

The phenomenon of this coexistence of three trends of thought shows that cultural phenomenon is an extremely complicated problem and there are always intricate ideological struggles; there exist both opposite aspects and similar or even consistent aspects; uniformity of public opinion is only the subjective wish of those who are ignorant of culture; we must accept the objective reality of different thoughts and make the best use of circumstances and learn widely from others’ strong points during the construction of a new culture. If we can really do this, the modernization of Chinese culture can be expected.

III. Approaches to cultural reconstruction: Seeking gradual improvement through radical means

It is noteworthy that in the development of Chinese culture in modern times, driven by the purpose of saving the nation from subjugation and ensuring its survival, during the work of cultural criticism and culture reconstruction, there appeared
ways of thinking and attitudes of solving problems which were completely contrary
to the traditional “golden mean”, that is, to seek gradual improvement through
radical means.

It was domestic disturbance, foreign aggression and national humiliation that
spurred Chinese people burning with righteous indignation to look for truths that
could save the country and the people from danger and obtain new life. However,
the dam of old culture formed in a 2000-year-long feudal despotism was very
strong, and foreign avarice was like a valley that could never be filled. Moreover,
the contradictions of ancient and modern were complicated and Chinese culture
collided with Western cultures in many ways, all of which led to the slow
development of Chinese society and the twists and turns of cultural renewal. In this
case, Chinese people were so eager to throw off their chains and achieve
modernization that they behaved rather radically.

Then, the 1911 Revolution led by Sun Yat-Sen overthrew the reign of the Qing
dynasty and built a bourgeois democratic republic through stormy armed struggle.
Revolutionaries heroically destroyed the fence of feudal ideology and culture using
the weapons of thought of a bourgeois republic, such as democracy, liberty, equality,
fraternity, opening up a new era of ideological and cultural development in China.
The Three People’s Principles advocated by Sun Yat-Sen were relatively
comprehensive guiding principles of bourgeois democratic revolution. From the
perspective of cultural types, it belonged to the category of modern Western culture
which differed completely from traditional Chinese culture, focusing on politics and
ethics. The political views of the democratic republic and its corresponding political
practice gave an extremely heavy blow to 2000-year-old Chinese feudal autocracy
and ideological basis. In this sense, the 1911 Revolution was a huge success.
However, history has proved that the Revolution did not really eradicate the old
forces on which the feudal political system grew, especially the old ideological and
cultural traditions, thus the dregs of society, such as Zhang Xun’s restoration, Yuan
Shih-kai’s autocratic rule as the first official President of the Republic of China and
other old ideology and culture, gained an upper hand. In this sense, we can see that
the 1911 Revolution did not achieve the expected goal. What it eventually obtained
merely modified gradual improvement.

As a thoroughgoing national-democratic revolution of anti-imperialism and
feudalism, the May 4th New Culture Movement criticized traditional Chinese
culture in unprecedentedly drastic ways. The participants in the movement were
mainly young students, whose radical attitude and high spirit impressed and
encouraged people greatly. However, as various old forces were very powerful and
the radical revolutionary movements were interfered with wantonly by foreign
invaders, the revolution could not fully achieve the expected goal. Therefore, the
wheel of history was pushed forward, but it was slow and rough going. Of course,
the extreme radicalness of the New Culture Movement was closely associated with
a profound and fierce social contradiction in modern China and an extremely severe
national crisis. Meanwhile, this also proved that “the heavier the oppression was,
the more intense the resistance”.
Achieving incremental improvement in radical ways was not only reflected in large-scale revolutionary movements, but also gave expression to the schools of Marxism and westernized liberalism which had great influence in three major thoughts in modern China. Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao and other Marxist scholars fiercely criticised Chinese feudalism. Chen Duxiu indignantly pointed out that “Eastern people were characterized by despicable and impudent traits” and they were not entitled to “talk about manners and civilization without shame”; they had many “disguised, adulatory and extravagant rules and regulations” and pretended to be gentlemen at the beginning but turned out to be mean persons. He believed that the doctrine of Confucius could not be used to govern the state and dominate society, and he thought Confucianism and new democratic politics and beliefs were totally opposite, and therefore, bourgeois new morality and belief such as equal human rights should be imported into people's mind, otherwise, the new ideas could not be established if the old were not abolished.

In conclusion, he strongly advocated comprehensive learning from the Western countries, totally abandoning autocratic systems and the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. Li Dazhao thought that “the disease of Chinese civilization at that time was deeply rooted in the old systems and the destiny of the Chinese nation was on the verge of destruction. Therefore, it is imperative to learn the strong points of Western civilization. As for Chinese civilization with “static” features, it should be thoroughly wiped out by adopting “motional civilization” (Western culture). Obviously, such Marxists as Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao adopted very aggressive attitudes and approaches to the criticism and reconstruction of Chinese culture.

Hu Shi, Chen Xujing and other scholars were the representatives of westernization of liberalism. Hu Shi was the one who realized consciously the difficulties of cultural development in modern China, thus he proposed to seek a gradual improvement in radical ways. He said in the article “Cultural Conflicts,” which he wrote in 1929, that “a kind of civilization is very profound in nature and will affect most conservative people. Because the broad masses were easily affected by the natural inertness, most people always tried to protect the traditional elements which they cherished by all means. Therefore, the thinkers and leaders of one country had no reason and no need to worry about the loss of traditional values. If they moved forward one thousand steps, the masses would probably be driven to advance less than ten steps”.

Furthermore, in the article “A Way Out of Chinese Culture,” Chen Xujing also advocated more openly “thorough westernization of Chinese culture”, and he thought “the way out for Chinese culture was undoubtedly to begin with overall westernization”. It must be noted that both the large-scale revolutionary movements and the schools of Marxist and westernization of liberalism, they all showed the radical attitudes to reforms and ways of thinking. Moreover, in modern China, progressive thinkers often exhibited the same spirit. Lu Xun's criticism on traditional Chinese culture was a clear proof. He strongly advocated “relentlessly beating the drowning dog (refers to the bad person who has lost power)” and “slowing down fair play”. He insisted that the country's current situation should be improved.
through radical reforms, and he said that “in any case, reform is always the good ways to improve, but the fastest way was using fire and sword. He pointed out that “reform is like opening the window in a dim room. As Chinese people like to compromise and reconcile, “they will not definitely allow doing this”. But “if you claim to remove the roof, they will reconcile, and be willing to keep windows open. Therefore, “if there are no fierce claims, they will even reject the peaceful reforms”.

It is noteworthy that although cultural criticism and reconstruction of value had significant characteristics of seeking incremental improvements in radical ways during the whole period of modern China, there were differences between the history from 1840 to 1919 and the history from 1919 to 1949. It could be said that the changes of Chinese culture had two different stages: focusing on gradual reform from 1840 to 1919 and on radical revolutionary struggle from 1919 to 1949. That is why people paid more attention to ideological and cultural reform and became more and more radical after the May Fourth Movement.

In short, during the difficult development of Chinese culture in modern times, due to serious national calamity, people's awareness of unexpected development was on the upswing. They hoped to abolish feudal culture and autocratic systems as soon as possible. Meanwhile, they were eager to develop a new culture and democratic system. Therefore, they always adopted very radical attitudes and methods of accomplishing the work of cultural criticism and reconstruction of value, seeking affirmation from negation, keeping harmony in radicalness. Of course, it should also be noted that not all the radical changes and persons mentioned above were aware of the truth of “aim high”, and realized that only by adopting drastic approaches, can relative incremental improvement be made. What I mean here is that from the results of the cultural development of modern China, the radical reforms could only (or “at most”) achieve the effects of incremental improvement. This also shows from one side that how hard it was to achieve the goals of making social progress and renewing culture in modern China.

It should be pointed out that the scholars researching social ideological trends at home and abroad all suggested that there existed three major trends in modern China, including conservatism, liberalism and radicalism. In my view, such division of schools of thought is rational. According to the above-mentioned three main schools including westernization, Marxism-Leninism and new Confucianism, new Confucianism apparently belonged to the category of conservatism; westernization could be categorized into both liberalism and radicalism; Marxism-Leninism, in the sense of advocating drastic and rigorous cultural criticism and cultural revolution, belonged to radicalism. It was evident that, on the basis of this division, modern Neo-Confucianism, as a representative of conservatism, was under the joint attack of liberalism and radicalism. In this sense, it was also under fierce attack from Marxist-Leninism and westernization. Confucianism in modern China suffered. Thus, we can also see that thoughts of Confucianism did not occupy a dominant position in modern China; instead, it was just a kind of spiritual support and value pursuit of a few Confucian scholars and followers of Confucianism.
IV. The contemporary fate of Confucianism

As we mentioned before, Confucian thoughts in modern China fell within the category of conservatism. However, during the historical development of cultural criticism and reconstruction of modern China, the basic reason why Confucianism was repeatedly subjected to harsh criticism and rejection was its conservatism. We all know that the term of “conservative” has complicated meanings in modern China. It is customary that the so-called conservatives referred to those who just wanted to maintain the existing social order instead of seeking political changes. This kind of “conservative” was often opposed to revolution and advance.

But the “conservative” in his article is not limited to this meaning. Instead, it mainly refers to maintaining the achievements of the predecessors in terms of cultural values. Benjamin I. Schwartz (1916-1999), an American scholar, pointed out in his paper entitled “On Conservatism,” “conservatism of modern China is primarily ‘cultural conservatism’ instead of ‘social and political conservatism’ which cling to existing social politics”. I think this is reasonable. Of course, during the process of China’s modernization, Confucianism always advocated carrying out “increase and decrease” rather than “thorough reconstruction” on value system of traditional culture, and this manifested a thinking mode totally different from radical thinking of westernizers and Marxist-Leninists which had great influence and represented the overwhelming majority. However, throughout the whole course of modern China, the social culture was advancing towards the road of increasing radicalization, thus Confucianism played the tragic role of falling behind eras. Especially after 1949, on the Chinese mainland, there was “political thinking only” which was characterized by rejection of traditional culture and values pursuit of “politics only”, which made the destiny of Confucianism even more miserable.

Under the guidance of “political thinking only”, during the whole period of the Cultural Revolution, traditional Chinese ideology and culture, particularly Confucianism, experienced great havoc. After more than 10 years of reform and opening up, when we reflected the simple mistakes and political denial on Confucianism after 1949 from the historical perspective of constructing a modern new culture, we would certainly deny the wrong thoughts and conclusions, but from another perspective, as a fragment of history – even though it was distorted, we could still see that Confucianism in modern China really suffered plenty of setback during its rough development.

With reform and opening up, there appeared a remarkable cultural debate on the Chinese mainland in the 1980s, and its ultimate aim was to realize the modernization of Chinese culture. During this period, the focal point of the debate was about how to treat the relationship between traditional culture and modernization. Whether people would admit it or not, the so-called traditional culture referred to Confucianism that occupied dominant position. Therefore, in the cultural debate, the topic of the relationship between traditional Confucianism and modern China prevailed for a time. In brief, in the cultural debate of 1980s, the theories about the way out for Chinese culture mainly included “complete reconstruction”, “adherence
to Chinese traditions while following Western trends”, “the revival of Confucianism”, “integration and innovation” and so on.

Among them, “complete reconstruction” was made up of “inheriting traditions by means of anti-tradition”, breaking “ultra-stable systems” by introducing foreign culture, “employing Western advanced technology to develop the economy” and “wholesale westernization”. All the proposers of these arguments actually advocated absorbing Western culture in radical approaches by all means and changing Chinese culture fundamentally in order to realize “modernization”. The theory of “adherence to Chinese traditions while following Western trend” persisted in culture conceptions of “material civilization of Western culture and spiritual civilization of Chinese culture”. The proponents advocated integration of East and West and building new forms of culture with Chinese culture as the soul.

However, this argument was only a duplicate of the theory of “taking feudal ethics as main body and Western technology as subsidiary”, which advocated eclecticism in terms of thinking mode and theoretical methods. The theory of “integration and innovation” proclaimed publicly “making the past serve the present, making foreign things serve China, inheriting critically, integration and innovation”. It was interesting that theory of “revival of Confucianism” was openly advocated by Chinese descendants who lived overseas and had foreign nationality and lectured frequently on the Chinese Mainland in recent years. This showed indirectly that the value and status of Confucianism in modern China had been long neglected. People studied Confucianism over and over again, and their aims were by no means to revitalize Confucianism as some people claimed. Instead, they aimed to take a new look at Confucianism and transcend Confucianism so as to realize the modernization of China. Indeed, there were some scholars making enlightening remarks on the mainland, and they openly and strongly advocated the revival of Confucianism so as to realize China’s modernization. It is known to us all that there are at least hundreds of thousands of liberal arts scholars, out of 1.2 billion people on the mainland. But, if readers pay a little attention, they will easily find that there was only one scholar on the mainland who openly held the banner of the reviving Confucianism so far! Moreover, the significant books and articles of this scholar was not (and under no circumstances) published in the “hometown of Confucianism” (borrowing the author’s words)—also the hometown of the author, China, but was published in Goose Lake, a monthly magazine in Taiwan, a famous front of modern new Confucianism. Then the books were resold to the place of production across the sea! Is it not a perfect irony? The supposition which the author believes, that Confucianism has been in a period of “heading for its hometown”, the Chinese mainland.

On the whole, among the vigourous culture discussions of the 1980s’ on the mainland, the propositions of “complete reconstruction” and “integration and innovation” accounted for an overwhelming majority of all the above-mentioned opinions about the way out of Chinese culture. Others only accounted for a small number. Although the schools of “complete reconstruction” and “integration and innovation” had different viewpoints about the role that Confucianism could play
in modern China, they both believed that Confucianism as main constitution of traditional feudalism and spokesman of modern Chinese conservatives, could not independently take the significant responsibility of leading China towards modernization. At this point, “complete reconstruction” and “integration and innovation” happened to hold the same views.

In conclusion, during the development and continuous struggle of ideological trends in modern China, Confucianism did not play the leading role, particularly under the impact of “political thinking only” in the Chinese mainland after 1949, it was already an indisputable fact that the life of Confucianism gradually fell into decline and its prospects remained doubtful. However, from a macroscopic historical standpoint, it should be acknowledged that Confucianism actually did not help boost the social development in modern China, or at least did not serve as a driving force, whether it was on the mainland or in Taiwan or Hong Kong. Moreover, from the perspectives of school inheritance and changes of ideological trends, the circumstance of Confucianism was not very encouraging.

From the self-examination of school inheritance, Confucianism did not form a rigorous system in modern China, much less one with power. Starting from the declaration of “adhering to the road of Confucians, holding the banner of Confucianism” advocated by Liang Shuming and other scholars in the 1920s, up to the changed situation on the mainland in 1949, although modern new Confucianism that people always took delight in talking about developing a school of its own in the aspects of cultural values, and although there was participation of those excellent masters such as Feng Youlan, Helin, Xiong Shili and so on, yet, its social influence and “orthodoxy” distribution could never be mentioned in the same breath.

After 1949, only Liang Shuming held out hope for Confucianism, He Lin became a Communist Party Member, Feng Youlan proclaimed that he believed in historical materialism, and Xiong Shili escaped into Buddhism. It could be said that Confucianism on the mainland was really struggling survive and develop. As for those people such as Qian Mu, Tang Junyi, Mou Zong-San and others, who went to Taiwan, though they made great efforts to disseminate Confucianism by running the school and educating students, the future of Confucianism was still uncertain. Therefore, they described themselves as “falling petals”. This also indicates that Confucianism was incompatible with ideological trends and social development in modern China. Thus, I think, as a school of thought, Confucianism fell behind the times in contending for the hegemony of different schools of thought in modern China; as a school that embraced the value systems which aimed to “intervene in politics through learning”, the ideal of Confucianism fell through; as the mainstream of traditional Chinese ideology which guided national code of conduct, Confucianism has fallen off the altar of domination. In short, Confucianism, as both an official orthodoxy and the mouthpiece of the rulers, has come to an end in modern China.

However, the end of prominent status of politicized Confucianism does not mean the termination of Confucianism as a school of thought. It should be admitted that
Confucianism, as important components of traditional Chinese culture and fundamental representations of traditional cultural spirit, has its own intrinsic vitality, truthfulness and particular value for existence. Modern Neo-Confucianism has gained ground in Taiwan, Hong Kong and overseas since the 1950s, and it has become a significant research topic in academic circles on the mainland since the 1980s and a hot topic on university campuses, which was an important phenomenon. Therefore, we can neither use “the idea of seeking for roots” to evade the truth nor use “worshipping Confucians and legalizing old morals and customs” to devalue it. Moreover, there was an increasingly popular trend toward reappraisal of Confucianism on the mainland after the Cultural Revolution. In the cultural debate of the 1980s, there were indeed such people who advocated the values of Confucianism in the name of “inheriting excellent traditional culture”. Among them, Gu Mu, former Chinese Vice-Premier, was a cultural symbol of great significance. He became an honorary president of the “China Confucius Foundation”. In the second half year of 1989, ceremonies were held in Beijing to commemorate the 254th birthday of Confucius. In the commemoration conference, Jiang Zemin, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, delivered a speech. These not only demonstrated that the time when Confucianism was totally repudiated was gone, but also indicated that it won a place for itself in China’s social development and numerous debates on ideological trends.

Frankly speaking, the reason for this situation is the value of Confucianism itself, in addition to a variety of external causes. We know that Confucianism has consistently advocated the mode of thinking of not going to extremes, emphasizing morality over profit, interpersonal relationships of showing kindness to others and taking others into consideration, focusing on inner cultivation and setting examples for others and so on. If we promote the positive and discard the negative of its content, inherit its basic spirit, and endow it with new vigour and vitality, it can become one of the important sources of thoughts for forming the value systems of modern culture, as well as one of the basic standards of modern cultural and ideological progress. Nowadays, with the development of the commodity economy on the mainland, Confucianism can be used as a good medicine for those who care for nothing but lust and who are losing their conscience utterly.

To sum up, in modern China, Confucianism, which was regarded as an official ideology and basic value criterion to guide people’s lives, no longer outmatches other schools of thought as a distinguished school. It has become stale and unfashionable. However, as an independent academic school, the essential components of traditional national culture and a new cultural gene of modern China, Confucianism is valuable, even indispensable. Moreover, in the strict sense, even though it cannot exist independently as a school of thought, yet, as accumulation of national culture and cultural inheritance, it is neither possible that it will die out or to be destroyed by political pressure or academic suppression.

Confucianism will continue to develop, though it cannot revive; it will continue to be criticized, yet, it will never be extinct!
Formation of Ruling by Rites in the Han Dynasty and its Ideological Features

During the two thousand years from the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 24) to the last period of the Qing dynasty, Chinese traditional society was clearly characterized by the rule of rites.

What are rites? It is institutionalized norms and social customs. What is the rule of rites? According to the conventional view, that is to use the rites to rule the world, especially based on the principles and values of rites. The rule of rites is a kind of statecraft, a kind of political value orientation and a kind of classical ideal for harmonious society. From a theoretical perspective, the rule of rites includes ritual study and etiquette. In other words, it involves the theory about rule of rites and its system while the latter is often reflected in practice.

The rule of rites from Han dynasty to the Qing dynasty in traditional China, including its notion, institutions, regulations and so on, was mainly formed in the Han dynasty.

As a complete ideological system and a new value system, the rule of rites in the Han dynasty experienced a long development. From a macroscopic perspective, the development of history and thought culture in the full period of both the Western and Eastern Han dynasties was a process in which the ideological system and values were created gradually.

This period can be roughly divided into several stages: from incubation, through establishment up to maturity. Incubation started from founding by Emperor Gao to the Wen-Jing Period (the forepart of Western Han). Establishment was from Emperor Wu of Han, who dismissed the hundred schools and revered only Confucianism, to Emperor Xuan of Han when the Shi Quge Meeting took place and *The Book of Rites* was finalized and it widely spread (the middle period of Western Han dynasty). Maturity was from Emperor Zhang of Eastern Han when the Bai Huguan Meeting took place and *The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan* appeared. Meanwhile, the official selection system and other establishments and improvements of the political and social system proceeded simultaneously. Due to the limitation of the length and topic, this article mainly discusses the issues from the aspects of the ideas of the rule by rites and its order.
I. The embryonic stage of ruling by rites: The establishment of the country by the Emperor Gaozu of Han to the period of Emperors Wendi and Jingdi of the Han dynasty

After the state founding by Gaozu in Western Han dynasty, Shu Suntong, Lu Jia, Jia Yi and so on worked for the new establishment of the rule by rites.

As a greenwood hero, Liu Bang (Later becoming Emperor Gao of Han dynasty) did not recognize the value of Confucianism in strengthening the ruler’s interest and its role of preserving their accomplishments. According to the historical record, Lu Jia often mentioned *The Book of Songs* and *Shang Shu* before Emperor Gao who was not in favor of Confucianism. For it, Lu Jia was scolded by Emperor Gao, “I got control over the country by military force, what does it have to do with *The Book of Songs* and *Shang Shu*?” Lu Jia, to other’s surprise, was bold in response to Emperor Gao, “You got it by force, will you govern it by force? Emperor Tang and Emperor Wu got the sovereignty by force but managed it by rites. The way to combine force with nonviolence is a long-term policy...If Qin dynasty pursued benevolence to rule the country and followed the example of previous wise rulers after getting it, how could Your Majesty get it?” The argument between Emperor Gao and Lu Jia actually is about the Confucian problem of how to maintain the achievements that one had got. In a broader sense, it is about how to treat the function of the rule by rites.

Fortunately, Emperor Gao had a little cultural consciousness. He also asked Lu Jia to write books to illustrate the reasons why the Qin dynasty was destroyed and why the Han dynasty thrived as well as the lessons of history despite the unpleasant interrogation of Lu Jia. Thereupon, “Mr. Lu sketchily described the cause of a nation’s survival, in total 12 articles. Each time Lu Jia reported one to Emperor Gao, the latter praised the former’s work while all the ministers in the hall called out ‘May Emperor Gao live long’.

These 12 articles later turned into the book *The New Accounts*. What is new in *The New Accounts* by Lu Jia? On the whole, he specifically pointed out the strategy to rule the country by morals and benevolence based on the historical lesson of the collapse of the Qin dynasty. He held that “it is hard to change the natural way but easy to change the rules by man”. The key to putting an end to unauthorized quotas in a country lies in “doing righteousness and benevolence and following the examples of previous wise rulers”. “A country is dangerous but will not topple over. The people live easily and comfortably but will not make troubles. All these are attributed to the management by righteousness and benevolence.”

Of course, management by righteousness and benevolence is the rule by rites. The rule by rites advocated by Lu Jia mainly meant the ruling strategy with Confucian benevolence as its core value orientation. It should be noted that Lu Jia laid stress on the idea of “combining force with nonviolence is a long-term policy”. In the past, a lot of scholars insisted that this was the embodiment of Lu Jia’s thought involving Confucianism and Taoism or Confucianism and Legalism. As a
matter of fact, this was a necessary result from the renewal of Confucianism since Xunzi in pre-Qin dynasty, which was the nature of Confucianism.

Xunzi attached importance not only to rites but also to law. However, the latter is subject to the former. Xunzi clearly believed that by saying “The classics of rites are the premise of government by law and the general principle of various rules”. He thought that “law is the start to rule one country”, but there was more of his emphasis on “rite which was the key to strengthening a country and the best rule of conduct”. All of these above illustrated that Xunzi, the great master of Confucian thinking at the end of the Warring States period, indeed asserted that the way to rule a country lay in combining force with nonviolence. Understanding this truth, it is easy for us to find out the developmental logic of the thoughts of Lu Jia’s theory of combining force with nonviolence, Dong Zhongshu’s opinion of morality guiding supplemented by punishment and Emperor Xuan of Han’s mixture of Confucianism with Legalism. So it is not hard to understand the specificity of the rule by rites.

Jia Yi further promoted the thought of rule by rites. He thought that the safety of one country was not formed overnight but through long-time accumulation. “The one who governs the country by rites will gain benevolence while the one who governs the country by punishment will get violence. When punishment increases, popular discontent spreads against the government. When benevolence is accumulated, the people are kind and on intimate terms with the government. So, all of the rulers want his people to be kind and on intimate terms with the government, whereas the ways to make people kind and loyal are different. They either rule the people with morality or drive them with laws. Those who are governed by morality are happy while those who are driven by laws are pitiful. Complaint is the cause of disaster while happiness is the root of welfare”. Here, the rule by rites was clearly put forward for the strategy to govern a country. In terms of construction of system, Jia Yi proposed that “the calendar, color of robe and system should be corrected, the official’s name should be defined and courtesy and music should be promoted”. Also, Jia used the theory of five elements to persuade the Han dynasty to uphold the color-yellow and the number-six. He reasoned that the Han dynasty ran according to the principles of five elements, which would boom only if this is followed. For stable rule, he made use of the terrible example of the Qin dynasty’s collapse to advocate rule by rites in his famous work The Governance Policy. The Qin dynasty wiped out the small sates around it but did not rule them reasonably, so they, including its king and treacherous men, betrayed Qin by the chance of chaos”, said Jia.

According to Jia Yi’s view, the root cause of the demise of Qin dynasty was that Qin dynasty did not propagate courtesy, righteousness, honesty and disgrace. In other words, the Qin dynasty did not implement rule by benevolence and rites. Hence, he obviously pointed out in The Security Policy that “today once the correct system is formed, it can distinguish the king from the ministers, it can make the fathers and their sons get their own benefits. It can eradicate all treacherous men so ministers trust their kind without any doubt. Once the sovereignty is kept stable, people of generation after generation will live peacefully and the late-comers will
follow”. All of these thoughts are important links to the development of rule by rites in the Han dynasty. Viewed from the angle of his thought's development, Jia Yi's idea of the rule by rites mainly carried on the ideas of Confucius and Mencius and absorbed the theory of Yin and Yang. Because of the influence of the theory of Yin and Yang, his idea had the possibility to finally become religious faith characterized by divination combined with mystical Confucian belief, which was later embodied obviously in Dong Zhongshu's idea, especially the divination combined with mystical Confucian belief.

If Lu Jia and Jia Yi just did the work on the level of theory for the construction of rule by rites, Shu Suntong made more contribution to it on the level of system. Shu Suntong was asked to be the adviser by Liu Bang, and he made uncountable contributions to stabilizing Liu's regime and realizing the value of rites. After Liu Bang became the Emperor, he said to Liu that “a Confucian is hard to create new cause but can maintain the ready-made”. He explicitly pointed out that the function of Confucianism for the state and society lay in “maintaining the ready-made cause”. “I would like to call up the Confucians in Lu to establish the etiquette and rite on the imperial court”. “Rite is to enact regulations so as to control and modify people's behavior according to the present situation” he asserted. He wanted to “create new rite by roughly mixing the ancient formality with ceremony in Qin dynasty”. That is, the rites on the imperial court that Su Suntong created for Liu Bei was a comprehensive design containing both ancient rites and Qin dynasty's rites. “Let's have a try!” Shu Sun tong's suggestion was accepted by Liu Bang, “But you should make it easy to understand and master, and you should also take what I can do into account!”

After some endeavor, the rites on the imperial court made by Shu Suntong and his fellow Confucians were approved by Liu Bang. The year when the Palace of Chang Le was completed, the feudal princes and ministers held the worship ceremony. In a solemn atmosphere, “all people were afraid of making mistakes so as to keep silent and respectful…The feudal princes and ministers all held their breath and lowered their heads. They, in proper order of seniors and juniors, waited their turns to propose a toast to the Emperor…Nobody dared to make hubbub or behave impolitely. Thereupon, Emperor Gao said, “I do not realize the honor to be an Emperor until today!” After Liu Bang went away, the successor Emperor Hui of Han had Shu Suntong “made the rites in ancestral temple of the ruling house”. “All rites in Han dynasty were polished and recorded by Shu Suntong”. It is thus clear that Shu Suntong played an important part in starting the rule by rites in the Han dynasty.

Keeping consistent with the tone of thinkers, the top monarchs in the early period of the Western Han dynasty also recognized the function of the rule by rites, which thus pushed the implementation of the rule by rites forward. Ban Gu commented in the end of his work The Book of Han, “The Emperor Gao got the world by war, and he was glad to accept official's opinion, thus became a famous king”. In the past, people took little notice about the conclusion from Ban Gu. Nowadays, it offers insight. Liu Bang, Emperor Gao, got sovereignty by war and
then Confucians persuaded him to practice the rule by rites through wisely explaining the function of maintaining ready-made achievements. Because politicians like Liu Bang used administrative strength and cooperated with ideologists, the preparatory phase of rule by rites was formed, which is the so-called “great achievement”. “Grasping the opportunity, Shu Suntong dedicated to establish the rites for Emperor Gao”. this is the finishing point made by Ban Gu. What is “the opportunity he seized”? It was exactly his meeting with Liu Bang who could accept the suggestion of rule by rites. Therefore, it is a one-sided view that for a long time in the past Liu Bang was regarded as a greenwood Emperor who did not think a lot of rites.

After getting the sovereignty of the country, Liu Bang “ordered Xiao He to revise the law, Han Xin to declare the military law, Zhang Cang to make principles, Shu Suntong to set rites and Lu Jia to author The New Account”. In the 23rd year of Emperor Wen of Han, “rules laid emphasis on helping people to change by morality so as to enrich the country and make the rites popular”. Ban Gu praised the period of the Rule of Wen and Jing in the end of his work The Annals of Emperor Jing, The Book of Han, “about fifty to sixty years, the common people became honest and kind. In the Zhou dynasty, the period in Emperors Cheng and Kang was harmonious and happy, so was that in Emperors Wen and Jing in the Han dynasty”. “Changing existing habits and customs” actually meant to change tyranny of the Qin dynasty, and guide politics with Confucian rites, which made the common people honest and kind. In two thousand years’ history China’s feudal society emerged. From the ideological perspective, the rule of Emperors of Wen and Jing was the initial result of rule by rites in the Han dynasty.

II. The establishment stage of ruling by rites: The periods from Emperor Wudi to Emperors Zhaodi and Xuandi of the Han dynasty

The rule by rites of the Han dynasty was established in the middle of the Western Han dynasty. This period was a time represented by the politicians and thinkers like Emperor Wu of Han and Dong Zhongshu who joined hands to create the system of rule by rites. It is their contributions that transformed the rule by rites, as a value system and strategy of ruling the country, into a reality from the ideal of Confucius, Mencius and Xunzi of the pre-Qin dynasty.

After his enthronement, Emperor Wu of Han gradually promoted the perfection of rule by rites. The year he ascended the throne, 140 B.C., he decreed an imperial edict in which he ordered officials at all levels to “recommend good and able men who could be brave to use blunt words to remonstrate with the ruler”, however, he accepted the suggestion of Wang Wan, prime minister, which was to exclude “the theories of Shen, Shang, Han Feizi, Su Qin and Zhang Yi” in order to avoid “disorder of politics of the nation”. This was the first time to forbid the theories of Legalists and political strategists since the Han dynasty. This meant that it would take the theory characterized by a combination of the strict law of the Legalists with
canvassing of political strategists. Clearly, it aimed at carving out a space for Confucianism as the national ideology. In the same year, Emperor Wu of Han decided to set up the hall for emperors to declare their policy, and sent emissaries to ask the Tetrarch of Lu by steady and comfortable carriage with silk cloth and precious jade. The 6th year of Jianyuan (136 B.C.), he “set learned scholar of The Five Classics”. In the 1st year of Yuanguang (134 B.C.), at first “each prefecture was ordered to recommend one filial person and one clean-fingered person”, and then he ordered talented and virtuous to offer a general plan to truly “carry forward the great cause of the former emperor and cultivate people’s virtue, which was on a par with such ancient sages as Yao, Shun and the emperors of these three dynasties, Xia, Shang and Zhou. Under such a situation, “therefore, Dong Zhongshu, Gong Sunhong and so on appeared!” Moreover, Emperor Wu made these ideas come true through his power of administration in the society of Han dynasty, which opened a way and laid a foundation for the later feudal rule by rites. In addition to earlier quoted materials, we can found many related records in The Annals of Emperor Wu, Book of Han.

In the 1st year of Yuan Shuo (128B.C.), Emperor Wu of Han sent out an imperial decree saying that “the mission of the officials is to make up the general plan to unify the implementing measures, propagandize the politics of the kingdom and make perfect the social morality. Their mission is also to praise and reward the good and honest, to encourage people to do good works and punish unruly conduct based on kindheartedness and justice. This is the reason why society under ancient five Emperors and three Kings was prosperous. "I am yearning day and night to step on a broad way to success along with people with lofty ideals in the world. So, I give special treatment to the old and dutiful sons, I select people of outstanding talents and who think highly of literature, and I discuss affairs of state with them, expecting to meet peoples’ expectations. I also called in the officials in charge many times to encourage honesty and recommend the filial. All these become common practice to continue the great cause of former sage-kings... It is an ancient way to award these who promote the good and honest while punishing these who cover them up”. These who do not promote the able or do not receive orders are irreverent and these who do not look into the honest are incompetent. They ought to be removed from the imperial court”, advised some ministers. As a reply to the proposal, the history book recorded, the emperor “approved”. In the 5th year of Yuan Shuo (124B.C.), Emperor Wu ordered that “the citizens should be guided with rites so as to make the music popular”. At the same time, he pointed out that “now the rites and music take no effect, so it needs officers of rites to encourage people to learn rites and righteousness and become knowledgeable, and in this way we promote rites as a model for the world".
The Premier Gong Sunhong proposed Emperor Wu to allow doctors to recruit apprentices. Emperor Wu approved it and later “there were more and more scholars”.315 In the 6th year of Yuan Shuo (117 B.C.), Emperor Wu ordered that “when righteousness is popular, people will do good deeds; when justice is established, the things of poor taste will disappear”. In the 2nd year of Yuan Ding (115 B.C.), the Emperor ordered, “the benevolent and righteous people should not escape from hardships and difficulties for justice”. “I undertake the greatest task with my humble body so as not to make light of morality and disorder rites and music”. He said in his imperial decree in the 1st year of Yuan Feng (110 B.C.). The ideas such as emphasizing etiquette, advocating filial duty and honesty and trying to establishing rule by rites were here and there in The Annals of Emperor Wu, especially in the decrees of Emperor Wu.

The situation is totally different from that in the periods from Emperor Gao to Emperors Wen and Jing. Just as Ban Gu said in the ending praise of The Annals of Emperor Wu, Book of Han, “At the beginning of the Han dynasty, Emperor Gao brought order out of chaos when facing various malpractices left by former emperors. Then, Emperors Wen and Jing mainly aimed at cultivating people but ignored ancient rites, which made the later come short”. Once he ascended the throne, Emperor Wu dismissed other hundreds of schools but praised the six classics, The Book of Songs, Shang Shu, The Etiquette, The Book of Changes, The Book of Music and The Spring and Autumn Period. ... He started encouraging to set up the imperial college, reorganize the rites of sacrifice, correct calendar, coordinate music, write poems to honor movement, establish temples to offer sacrifices to Heaven and worship all of the gods, grant the descendants of Zhou dynasty. All of the decrees of Emperor Wu were bright and worth praising”. 316 It should be said that Ban Gu’s comment is accurate. It was the achievements of the Emperor Wu’s government by civilians that ultimately ensured the establishment of rule by rites in the Han dynasty.

Emperors Zhao and Xuan continued the ideas and conducts of Emperor Wu after his death. Differing from the period as long as over a half-century (54 years) of Emperor Wu, Emperor Zhao had done little due to his 13 years’ reign. Nevertheless, Emperor Zhao described himself in his decree to protect temples, “I am early to rise and late to retire and so cautious and to finish the cause left by former emperors. I read The Biography of Bao Fu, The Book of Filial Piety, The Analects of Confucius and The Book of History but I did not get them clear.317 What is interesting is that there was a little clear discussion about rites or rule by rites in the decree of the 5th year of Shi Yuan (82 B.C.) according to The Annals of Emperor Zhao, The Book of Han, actually Emperor Zhao ordered many decrees. Except for the cause of brief reign of Emperor Zhao, the more important reason may be that emperor took over a troop with many malpractices after Emperor Wu’s death while the nation was empty and the population decreased to a half”. The situation was rather serious. Then, Emperor Zhao ascended the throne when he was nine years old, the senior general Huo Guang helped him with imperial affairs. Facing economic depression, he “knew the time of the day so that he lowered tax
rates to let people rehabilitate”. To restore the economy and to resolve the people's difficulties were the most urgent task. Naturally, the establishment of rule by rites was ignored. About eight years after Emperor Zhao ascended the throne, at the time of transition from Shi Yuan to Yuan Feng (around 80B.C.), “Han dynasty started peace-making marriage with the Huns and people lived a substantial life”. After restoring economy, he continued to implement the policy of Emperor Wu to “promote the good and honest and thought highly of literature”. This was a right choice when setting up the rule by rites in Western Han dynasty. As a matter of fact, Emperor Zhao put agriculture foremost, reduced the burden of taxation and cost and let people rehabilitate. He put his predecessor's idea of rule by rites into practice, which was indispensable to the achievements made by Emperor Wu and latter Emperor Xuan for the formation of rule by rites.

Emperor Xuan was a notable person after Emperor Zhao. In the 1st year of Yuan Ping of Emperor Zhao (74B.C.), Huo Guang, the senior general, pointed out in his decree that “Liu Xun learned from The Book of Songs, The Analects of Confucius and The Book of Filial Piety, so he behaved frugally and showed concerns and love for others, he could succeed to the throne and carry forward the great cause of forefathers and lead his people”. This decree was approved. Soon Liu Xun took the throne, who was Emperor Xuan of Han. According to Huo Guang's proposal, Liu Xun could be promoted to the position of emperor because of his cultivation of Confucian ideas of the rule by rites and his potential manner of being an emperor that conformed to Confucian scholars' expectation, being kindhearted and benevolent. Emperor Xuan was engaged in the rule by rites and he profoundly recognized the function of Confucianism to maintain the achievements that had already been made. So, he spared no efforts to promote rule by rites even he himself took part in the discussion and gave his own arbitration on it.

From The Annals of Emperor Xuan of Han, we can learn that there were plenty of discussions about Confucianism and the rule by rites in Emperor Xuan's decrees. In the 2nd year of Ben Shi (72B.C.), two years after his enthronement, Emperor Xuan fully expressed his admiration for Emperor Wu's achievements of civil administration, raising the imperial college, reorganizing the rites of sacrifice, rectifying the calendar, coordinating music. He held the Taishan closure ceremony and built a dyke beside the Palace of Xuan, auspicious signs appeared over and over, the gold cauldron was shining and the white Kylin brought good fortune. His achievement was so great that it was known to people afar. In the 4th year of Ben Shi (70B.C.), his decree demanded that “talented and knowledgeable people” should help him administer the country and ordered “three prefectures of Sanfu, Taichang and Neijun to respectively promote one able man”.

In the 3rd year of Di Jie (67 B.C.), he once again demanded in his decree that “the able men should point out my mistakes, the upright and benevolent should help me correct my faults without any doubts”. The emperor expressed himself that “I could not make these people in distant follow me” due to his “imperfect morality” In the same year, he specially issued a decree to “promote the able and
upright to serve for people” for fear that he would shame the former emperors “holiness”. In the 4th year of Di Jie (66 B.C.), the Emperor Xuan said in his decree, “once the people are guided with filial piety first, the world will be harmonious”. “I know little about six classical arts (rites, music, archery, charioteering, reading and writing, and mathematics), I am not good at the comprehensive strategies of running a state, so I may not be able to run the country smoothly”. He said in the decree in the 1st year of Yuan Kang (65 B.C.). Perhaps this was just a kind of pretension, but six classical arts and the strategy of running a state became the motivation of a prosperous country where people would feel secured and peaceful. This, after all, shows that Confucian rule by rites turned into the Emperor Xuan’s main strategy of running the country. Moreover, the Emperor Wu advocated that “the people should be guided by rites first” while the Emperor Xuan advocated that “people should be guided by filial piety first”. Rites, of course, include filial piety while the latter is the embodiment of the former. It can be clearly concluded that the ideas of Emperors Wu and Xuan really came down in one continuous line. In the 3rd year of Yuan Kang (63 B.C.), the Emperor Xuan said in his decree that he once “learned about literature and Confucian classics” under Zhang He’s tutorship in his early years. In the 2nd year of Gan Lu (52 B.C.), the Emperor convened his ministers and discussed the affair of the respects paid by the Huns. “A wise emperor would pay more attention to the morality and rites”. His minister responded. “We know that these five emperors and three kings in history did not carry out their rites in distant area, nor did their politics”. These statements show that Emperor Xuan received a Confucian education since his childhood and insisted on managing the country with Confucianism, so that efforts would be made to realize the rule by rites.

From the perspective of intellectual history, Emperor Xuan, in his reign, did two important and far-reaching things. One is that he attended the Shi Quge Meeting, where he participated in the discussion about Confucian classics and he himself decided what was right or wrong. The other is the declaration about ways to manage a country: “Han dynasty has its own system, which uses both moral education and punishment to manage the country”.

In the 3rd year of Ganlu of Emperor Xuan (51 B.C.), he “called up Confucians to discuss the similarity and difference between The Five Classics”. Xiao Wangzhi, the prince’s teacher, and his fellows made it clear and requested that a decision be made by the Emperor. This is the famous Shi Quge Meeting in the history of Confucian texts. The historical materials show that the Emperor Wu spared no efforts to honor Confucianism and set up doctors to promote The Five Classics soon after his enthronement, and asked them to lecture on Confucian classics. The Emperor Wu banned the hundred schools of thought but espoused Confucianism as the orthodox ideology of the state, so Confucianism became popular. However, the study of Confucian classics involves different schools, including the studies based on earlier texts or new text and the studies from State Qi or State Lu. Some of them designated educational officials, some did not; divergence of opinion existed in the study of Confucian classics. Emperor Xuan united the recognition through the
Shi Quge Meeting in order to tell the wrong from the right of the contents of the study of Confucian classics. Most participants of this meeting were the scholars of new text, it was said that this meeting was held for scholars of new text to discuss the similarity and difference between The Five Classics. This meeting focused on the similarity and difference between the Spring and Autumn by Gong Yang and the Spring and Autumn by Gu Liang. Emperor Xuan liked the Spring and Autumn by Gu Liang. There were two groups debating, “telling the similarity and difference between the Spring and Autumn by Gong Yang and the Spring and Autumn by Gu Liang”. One group was led by Yan Pengzu, the doctor of Gong Yang school, the other was led by Yin Gengshi and Liu Xiang, etc. Scholars of Gong Yang school. Finally, the Gu Liang school won the debate”. So the doctors of Yi by Liang Qiu, The Book of History by Xia Hous and The Spring and Autumn by Gu Liang were set”. Consequently, the study of Gu Liang went popular”. Since then, the Spring and Autumn by Gu Liang became the orthodox ideology. The study of Gong Yang was from Qi and the study of Gu Liang was from Lu. This meeting ended with the victory of the study of Lu. Furthermore, the study of Qi and the study of Lu existed side by side.

As we all know, Emperor Wu thought highly of Dong Zhongshu and took the Spring and Autumn by Gong Yang as official study, which made the study of Gong Yang rather popular; whereas, Emperor Xuan was in favor of the Spring and Autumn by Gu Liang and he used the Shi Quge Meeting to set the Spring and Autumn by Gu Liang as official study under the background of “inspecting the rites in the past”, thus the study of Gu Liang was in favor. Of course, this was a consequence brought by the Emperors’ personal preference. It is worth noting that the rulers, from Emperor Wu thinking highly of Gong Yang to Emperor Xuan worshiping Gu Liang, had a broader and broader mind for ideology and culture and took the orientation of multi-culture under the unified government when they put the rule by rites into practice. What is more important is that Emperors Wu and Xuan took part in the discussion of Confucian classics and made decisions with their administrative power, which showed that the formation and development of the rule by rites was always characterized by the era of cooperation of politicians with ideologists.

Undoubtedly, both Emperor Wu and Emperor Xuan used rites to rule the country. But, why did Emperor Xuan claim that the system of the Han dynasty was “mixture of Confucianism and Legalism”? In fact, the mixture of Confucianism and Legalism also belongs to Confucianism and Confucian strategy to rule a country. According to the record of the Annual of Emperor Yuan, Book of Han, Emperor Xuan refuted the suggestion of the prince (who later became the Emperor Yuan), “Confucians should be put in important positions”. The former said, “Han dynasty has its own system, which uses both moral education and punishment to manage the country, is it necessary to only use moral education to manage the country? Which is the political strategy of Zhou dynasty? And common Confucians cannot keep up with the pace of need of the times, They exalted the past and despise the present, their theories on name and reality are fanciful but cannot guide us on what to do and what not to do, how can we expect it to fulfill the great cause?"
Academic circles misunderstood these words all the time, which even mislead society. Many explanations suggested that Emperor Xuan did not agree to adopt only Confucianism, but together with Legalism; they thought that the way of rule by moral education was Confucianism while the way of rule by force was Legalism. Actually, this understanding is misleading. On the basis of Confucianism and the value system and historical development of ideological culture and political society of the Han dynasty, we could find that the system was a mixture of morality and force, which favored the substance more than the name, and preferred the present to the past. Confucianism, moral education and the politic of the Zhou dynasty were not useless, but they should not be adopted in simplistic ways. In other words, we cannot only use moral education to manage a country.

At the same time, Confucian scholars and Confucianism were not useless, they needed to be used. These who did not suit their actions to the needs of the times, who accepted the past but refused the current, who favored name more than substance and who did not know what to keep were “commonplace Confucian scholars”. Actually, the existence and development of any kingdom or any regime must depend upon the perfect implementation of a state’s function, the function of a priest and the function of a slaughter, no single one can be omitted. Emperor Xuan here just told the truth of rulers! Naturally, Emperor Xuan’s words also showed the ruler’s attitude towards Confucian scholars and Confucianism, choosing the right for the use of sovereignty. As a matter of fact, Confucius, Mencius, Xunzi and Dong Zhongshu all emphasized advancement with the times and valued the leadership of the social reality. Their ultimate aim was to construct a well-organized society with lasting political stability. If the main value of ideology of Confucius and Mencius was benevolence and rites and its method to solve problems mostly relied on moral education, the importance attached to rites and laws by Xunzi and Dong Zhongshu’s moral education assisted by punishment clearly showed the basic model of Confucian rule by rites.

In other words, two strategies to manage a country—a mixture of moral education and punishment! Whereupon, Emperor Xuan’s strategy to manage the country and Confucian ideology of the rule by rites are not contradictory, but consistent! To a large extent, Emperor Xuan’s declaration of the Han dynasty’s system, with a mixture of rites and force, was a further confirmation of Dong Zhongshu’s strategy, moral education assisted by punishment. It is obvious that politicians of the Western Han dynasty like Emperors Wu and Xuan and ideologists like Dong Zhongshu were completely consistent on the choice and realization of the mode of rule by rites. The way to rule by force surely belongs to Legalism, but it is not equal to Legalism. Confucianism had the way of rule by force, which was just brought into the content of moral education and carried forward in the name of rule by rites.

Of course, efforts made by politicians like Emperor Wu were far from being enough to construct the ideological system and political model of the rule by rites. The efforts of the ideologists like Dong Zhongshu, Gong Sunhong and so on and the cooperation of politicians were the base of rule by rites in Han dynasty.
In the earlier Western Han dynasty, many ideologists including Shu Suntong, Lu Jia, Jia Yi, Gong Sunhong and Dong Zhongshu drew lessons from the rapid breakdown of Qin dynasty and one after another put forward a series of strategies to manage the country by rites. Among these ideologists, Dong Zhongshu made the most influential and systematic achievements. Dong Zhongshu's greatest contribution was to integrate the institutional culture and even ideological culture. He created the feudal culture and value system with the Three Cardinal Guides and the Five Constant Virtues as the core, which offered a way for people to live peacefully and a way for the country to keep stable forever. All of the feudal system of culture and value, from its formation to its nature, belonged to the rule by rites.

It is worth noting that *The Book of Rites* was finished and became popular at this time. Academic circles have various views about the age of *The Book of Rites*. Feng Youlan, a famous Chinese philosopher, holds the idea in his *The Manuscript of Historical Data of Chinese Philosophy*, that *The Book of Rites* is a collection of Confucianism and the author of each chapter cannot be completely confirmed. The time of each chapter was not consistent, and they were roughly the works from time of Warring States to the early time of the Western Han dynasty. Mr. Feng did not clearly interpret the time of *The Book of Rites* in the third volume of his later work, *New History of Chinese Philosophy*, but discussed *The Book of Rites* between Dong Zhongshu (the 27th chapter of his work) and Liu An (the 29th chapter), which was an independent chapter (the 28th chapter, “The Book of Rites and the Super Structure of Chinese Feudal Society”).

It is obvious that Mr. Feng believes that *The Book of Rites* reflects the ideology of the mid-Western Han dynasty. Zhang Dainian thinks that "*The Book of Rites* was some selections of Confucian works from the time of Warring States to the starting time of the Han dynasty", which was edited by Confucian scholars of Emperor Xuan. Ren Jiyu thinks, in his edited work *The Development of Chinese Philosophy* (Volume from Qin to Han dynasties), that “the author of *The Book of Rites* is not single, and its time is from the time of Warring States to the early time of the Han dynasty. The works of Confucian scholars in the early time of the Han dynasty contributed most”.

Including *The Book of Rites* by Dai De and *The Book of Rites* Dai Sheng, the contents of *The Book of Rites* were a “collection of papers reflecting the feudal ethical code in the early Han dynasty”. The experts focusing on ritual study of the Western Han dynasty also think that the formation of *The Book of Rites* was in the time of Emperor Xuan of the mid-Western Han dynasty. The author thinks that, including both *The Book of Rites* by Dai De and *The Book of Rites* Dai Sheng, these two were most likely to be formed in mid-Western Han dynasty and *The Book of Rites* by Dai Sheng was finally edited by Ma Rong and Zheng Xuan of Eastern Han dynasty.

Certainly, the theme of *The Book of Rites* was of long standing, some chapters of it might be formed earlier, but its main rough idea and its massive structure were completed in the mid-Western Han dynasty. Dai De and Dai Sheng were selected as doctors of *Rites* for their knowledge and achievement on ritual studies. In the time
of Emperor Xuan, they, together with Qing Pu, became the three greatest masters of *Rites*, the official study. As a result of official close attention, the efforts of ritual scholars and specially the social need made the study on rites spread further. Even during the Eastern Han dynasty, Ma Rong and Zheng Xuan's notes on *The Book of Rites* left more influence, which finally became one part of the contents of *The Thirteen Classics with Annotations and Commentary*. Pi Xirui said in his *The Bright Period of Confucian Classics, The General History of Confucian Classics*, "the study of Confucian classics was popular but were not divided into parts. It was pure so that its research outcomes were rather delicate and quite useful". Mr. Pi's words above should prove it clearly. In the time of Emperors of Wu and Xuan, the spread of the study of Confucian classics has been the historical truth and common view in academic circle.

The problem lies in these words, "its study results are rather delicate and quite useful", what do they mean? In the value system of Confucianism and usefulness, they, of course, stood for real function, which was so called reference for governance. The popularity of ritual study, after all, was rather "useful" for the stability of society, for the guidance of people and for the realization of rule by rites! Emperor Zhao once clearly claimed that "officials ought to clearly state the principle of right and wrong with Confucian classics". The officials should deal with government affairs using Confucian classics as guidance and concrete methods, otherwise it can be regarded as going against the righteous cause. Since Emperor Wu, the imperial court often coped with government affairs according to the Confucian classics. After Emperor Xuan, the Confucians gradually grew powerful, the officials positioning to ministers in the three dynasties of Yuan, Cheng and Yuan were all great Confucian scholars then. Even among common officials, there were famous Confucian scholars. History records that "the writer of history, driver of carriage, village head, door keeper, infantry on the street, wardenry and tax official all were Confucians". How could this be? The reason is simple, Confucianism was good for governance.

Owing to the cooperation of politicians like Emperor Wu and ideologists like Dong Zhongshu the model of rule by rites was finally established in feudal society. From that time up to the end of the Qing dynasty, the management model of feudal states took Confucianism as guidance, cardinal guides and constant virtues as basic values and moral education assisted by punishment as basic strategy, which was feudal rule by rites. Hereby, our opinion that the establishment of rule by rites of the Han dynasty was in the mid-Western Han dynasty, at the time of Emperors Wu, Zhao and Xuan, was a sound conclusion.

It should be noted that the establishment and perfection of the system of doctors of the classics in Han dynasty were also an important part of the construction of the rule by rites of the Han dynasty. From the doctors of the Five Classics set by Emperor Wu to the doctors majoring in one classic (such as *Gong Yang*, *Gu Liang*, *Rites* and *The Book of History* by Xia Hous, etc.) and so on, all these showed that education was perfected by the rule by rites. However, the perfection of the education system, especially the doctor system taking rule by rites as core played a very important role for the development of ritual studies and the rule by rites.
III. The mature stages: During the period of Emperor Zhangdi of the Eastern Han dynasty

The mature period of the rule by rites of Han dynasty was the time of the Eastern dynasty, which was especially marked with the Bai Huguan Meeting in the time of Emperor Zhang of the Eastern Han dynasty and the appearance of The Coherent Argumentation of Classics. Emperor Zhang was “good at Confucianism” in his childhood. After ascending the throne, he carried forward the idea of rule by rites. He paid close attention to the establishment of rule by rites and managed the country with Confucianism. In the 4th year of Jian Chu (A.D. 79), Emperor Zhang said in his decree, “all rulers of three generations made efforts to enlighten people to take teaching first”. Unlike the tyrant Qin dynasty, the Han dynasty continued the Five Classics in order to set doctors. The coming learners of Han dynasty made smart progress. Although it was called a continuance from the Confucian masters, they also made innovations.

Emperor Xiao Xuan thought that the current scholars were far from being saints and people should never get tired of learning. So he instituted The Book of History by Xia Hous and later Yi by Jings. Till the middle time of Jianwu, he once again set doctors of The Spring and Autumn by Yans (also read as “Yan” and “Yan”) and by The Spring and Autumn Yans (also read as “Yan” and The Book of Rites by Dais (Dai De and Dai Sheng). All these aimed at helping a declining academy and encouraged innovations and to spread academic results. The decree in the 1st year of Zhongyuan said that The Five Classics was detailed and complicated, and needed corrective interpretation.

Until the 1st year of Yongping, Shu (full name Fan Xiu), the military officer of Chang Shui offered a piece of advice to the emperor, the great cause of former emperors should be carried forward in time. If the Confucian scholars were needed to understand the meaning of Confucian classics exactly, all the scholars should be improved by themselves. Confucius once said that “Learning virtue without proper cultivation and not thoroughly discussing what is learned are the things which occasion me solicitude.” And he also said: “There is learning extensively, and having a firm and sincere aim; inquiring with earnestness, and reflecting with self-application – virtue is in such a course. Alas, all people should be diligent!”

These words reflect that Emperor Zhang consciously carried on the ideological line of ousting the hundred schools of doctrines and only revering Confucianism, and the strategy of running a country with rites. Emperor Wu and then Emperor Zhang skillfully put forward the further unification of ideology. It not only helped a declining academy and encourage the dissemination of results, but also prevented redundancy and various interpretations in The Five Classics. Confucian scholars had to understand Confucian classics so that the scholars would have something to follow.

Under the guidance of such an idea, Emperor Zhang held the famous Bai Huguan Meeting. Historical materials recorded that “Emperor Zhang ordered master of ceremony, general, senior official, doctors, court counselor, general officials, students and Confucians to get together in Bai Huguan and discuss the similarity
and difference of The Five Classics. He requested Wei Yingcheng (Knight General, an official's name), to write questions down and have Chong Yugong (the Privy Counselor) report to him. He himself made the final decision and finished The Discussion in Bai Huguan, just like what happened in the Shi Quge Meeting in the time of Ganlu. 335 The topic of Bai Huguan Meeting apparently focuses on the differences between The Five Classics, and it sought further unity of ideology. The so called “rectifying the meaning of classics” is to correct and unify the knowledge about Confucian classics. “Rectifying the meaning of classics” was preparation for making Han Rites, and it was also a very important step to make rites.

It is worth noting that Emperor Zhang took the strategy of holding discussion in the royal court in the process of correcting the meaning of classics and making Han rites. Officials and scholars in all sectors discussed the differences between The Five Classics. Finally, Emperor Zhang himself decided on the orthodox and correct interpretation of the ideology. This practice was an imitation of his antecedent, Emperor Xuan’s practice to hold Shi Quge Meeting and make decision. They were alike in methods and the nature of ideology. It is easy to make out that the top rulers of the Han dynasty paid close attention to the construction of a new ideology and the establishment of rule by rites, demonstrated by Emperor Wu’s practice of promoting competent men and ousting the hundred schools of ideological doctrines, Emperor Xuan’s decision at the Shi Quge Meeting and Emperor Zhang’s decision at the Bai Huguan Meeting. At the same time, it reflects that the rulers of the Han dynasty used administrative power to intervene in academic ideology and culture and made Confucianism serve their practical politics. Academics were utilized by politics; the politicians applied Confucianism for themselves and ideologists consciously or unconsciously took part in the operation of practical politics. Certainly, this has been a significant feature of Chinese traditional ideological culture since the Qin and Han dynasties.

The eventual outcome of the Bai Huguan Meeting are The Discussion in Bai Huguan and The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan. The former was lost, while the latter was edited by Ban Gu and passed down to the present. The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan, based on the theory of Yin, Yang and five elements, made a conclusion and exploration for New Text Confucianism from Dong Zhushu and the theories of the divine right of kings and the interactions between Heaven and mankind, which was advocated by divination combined with mystical Confucian belief (prevailing during the Eastern Han dynasty, 25-220). It particularly expounded the plausibility and divinity of political order and natural order in feudal society.

Although this book only explained the problems with interpretation of 43 terms together, its content is rather miscellaneous, and it was mainly the concrete illumination and clear stipulation for hierarchy in feudal society. It introduced prophecy into Confucian classics and integrated it with Confucianism of earlier texts and new texts, which helped establish the feudal moral outlook of “three cardinal guides and six of Confucian discipline”, that is “ruler guides subject, father
guides son husband guides wife”. Hence, the feudal ethics became systematic, absolute and sacred. These views and statements in The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan were more profound discussion about rites raised in the Shi Quge Meeting by Emperor Xuan. The main topics about rites in the Shi Quge Meeting were the most important part of feudal society such as weeds, posthumous law, sacrifice, ancestral temple, adoption, archery and so on. The experts on rites think that the discussion laid more groundwork for the perfection of rule by rites in the Han dynasty. 336 In fact, the theory of Yin, Yang and five elements and the feudal moral outlook of three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues were put forward as early as Spring and Autumn Studies and Three Schemes about Heaven and People by Dong Zhongshu. The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan did nothing but made it more systematic and more ceremonial. It is particularly important that The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan, starting with moral obligations and preaching, more clearly expanded and deepened Dong Zhongshu's ideas from the level of the establishment of rule by rites. One important manifestation of the expanding and deepening was that books of omens were turned into codes of law and ceremony by political power.337 Classics and books of omens went into one, classic studies became holy while theology became classical, which revealed the religious characteristics of Confucianism.

Are correcting the meaning of Classics, making rites of the Han dynasty and unifying ideology an inseparable entity? Of course not! Even in Emperor Zhang's view, the respect for different academic opinions should be respected to some extent. Four years after the Bai Huguan Meeting (the eighth year of Jian Chu, 83 A.D.), Emperor Zhang issued an imperial decree, “After analysis, The Five Classics are far from saints. There are many missing words in the books and some mistakes cannot be easily understood and corrected, I am afraid that the sublime words with deep meaning of our forefathers may lost. Otherwise, we would lose old maxim and never find the truth in the world. Now, I order all of the Confucian scholars to choose top students to study and teach Zuo Shi (The Spring and Autumn Annals by Zuo Qiuming), Spring and Autumn of Guliang, The Book of History, and Mao Poetry so as to help the declining academy and promote new ideas”. 338 We can make a comment on these measures with the words in Biography of Rulin, Book of Post Han, “searching for talents and saving different views from different schools”.

A few years after the Bai Huguan Meeting, Emperor Zhang ordered his minister of rites, Cao Bao, to make The Rites of Han. Cao Chong, Cao Bao's father, was a doctor of the classics in the year Jian Wu of Emperor Guang Wu. He once followed Emperor Guang Wu to Taishan Mountain and held a religious sacrificial ceremony. As soon as Emperor Ming took his place, Cao Chong submitted a written statement to his emperor, “It is thus clear that the establishment of Han rites was the core that Cao's father and son's thinking and it is also the cause they must carry forward. Definitely, due to the limitation of historical conditions, Cao Chong's ideal to make rites for the Han dynasty did not come true. This ideal was finally realized by his son Cao Bao in the time of Emperor Zhang.
Emperor Zhang always took as his lifelong pursuit “following the example of Yao to manage a country and imitating the civilization of Tang Yao to make rites and music after receiving Heaven’s order” 339. In order to please Emperor Zhang, Cao Bao submitted, “in former days, saints became the sovereign because of the mandate of Heaven, none of them did not make rites and music to celebrate their merits and virtues. Music was made after merits and rites was done after good fortune came true in order to treat and cure the deceases in the world and draw on good luck for people. Now, Heaven brings good luck, the already lucky signs are better than language. They should be written down and turned into rites of Han so as to show great virtues and magnificent achievements of our forefathers.” 340 Cao Bao’s memorial script was precisely what Emperor Zhang had been expecting. But, Chao Kan, master of ceremony, and his fellows thought that the establishment of the Han rites was “a grand event of one country, it should not solely be done by an individual person like Cao Bao”. 341 While Emperor Zhang insisted that “the rites of the imperial court must be established in time”. Accordingly, he ordered decree in the 3rd year of Yuanhe (86 A.D.), “Han dynasty took over Qin dynasty wherein the rites and music had collapsed. Furthermore, it was not good to do everything according to routine. Those who know it very well can do their best”. 342 Cao Bao completely understood Emperor Zhang’s intention, so he “did not pass on to others” and reported only to Emperor Zhang, “the ministers ought to highlight the sovereign according to cardinal principles of righteousness”, he reported in his memorial to the emperor. He “demonstrated the basic principles of rites and music and his intention of reformation”. 343 Ban Gu, a famous Confucian, suggested that the regulation of rites should be made on the basis of “wide discussion” by all Confucian scholars in the Capital. Emperor Zhang rejected his proposal. Emperor Zhang held that under such circumstances, “everyone would dispute and be envious of one another in the name of discussion about rites, but the final conclusion could not be easily reached”. Therefore, he called Cao Bao to make The Rites of Han in the 1st year of Zhanghe (87 A.D.). “He ordered the eunuch to take twelve pieces of Han Manners (by Shu Suntong) handed in by Bangu, he told Cao Bao that these were loose and many of them did not confirm to Confucian classics. Cao Bao needed to correct them and made them more practical”. 344 In December of the same year, Cao Bao presented The Rites of Han by himself to the emperor, but “the emperor thought that it would be hard to reach agreement, owing to the different opinions amongst the officials, so he just accepted Cao’s work and ordered officials not to talk about it anymore”. After Emperor Zhang died and Emperor He was enthroned. Zhang Fu, the supreme government official in charge of military affairs, and Zhang Min, the minister reported that “Cao Bao took the liberty to make The Rites of Han, which broke the holy ethics, so he must be killed”. 345 Though Emperor He did not accept their suggestion, neither did he implement the
Rites of Han. The Biography of Cao Bao, Book of Post Han described that Cao Bao had a wide range of knowledge and understand ancient culture so that he could be the master of Confucianism. This is really a high appraisal. One should know that Dong Zhongshu, in West Han dynasty, was just praised as “the master of Confucianism”.346

Certainly, even if Cao Bao did not accomplish that achievement of “the master of Confucianism” made by Dong Zhongshu, such high evaluation, without doubt, was essentially attributed to his efforts to make rites for the Han dynasty. The argument is quite simple. In the early time of the Han dynasty, Shu Suntong indeed copied Confucian rites to make Han rites, but he “sometimes referred to the methods of the Qin dynasty” at the same time. Although this was helpful for solving some malpractice in the society at that time, “the former emperors’ rites and codes had many defects” so Jia Yi, Dong Zhongshu, Wang Ji, Liu Xiang and so on “sighed angrily and constantly”! Emperor Zhang of the Han dynasty “specially ordered the minister of rites to compose the constitution, which was a great cause”. The Rites of Han by Cao Bao was the very “constitution” meeting the needs of Emperor Zhang. This was “the great cause” that Jia Yi and Dong Zhongshu wanted to gain but never reached. Unfortunately, because of the death of Emperor Zhang and the opposition from chief officials after Emperor He’s accession, The Rites of Han were not put into practice. In other words, “it was left unfinished”!347 Although The Rites of Han by Cao Bao were not put into practice then, the idea and interest of composing The Rites of Han and its mode of the rule by rites characterized by etiquette were gradually carried out by later rulers in social political practice.

In conclusion, Emperor Zhang paid undivided attention to making the rites of Han. In order to unify the ideology, he “corrected the meaning of the Confucian classics”, held the Bai Huguan Meeting and even “made decisions himself” so that The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan was accomplished and further made into The Rites of Han.

Thereby, the construction of a feudal value system with Confucianism at the core, which showed that rule by rites of Han dynasty had been in the stage of maturity. There are some “words of praise” for Emperor Zhang in the end of The Annals of Emperor Zhang, The Book of Post Han, which describes him as “knew Confucian classics and literature very well and packed criminal law and rites into his heart”. His way to manage a country was to “think highly of loyalty and forgiveness and pay great attention to rites and music”, which was the very estimation about the achievements of rule by rites to the point.

IV. The ideological characteristics of the Han dynasty

After the time of Emperor Zhang of Eastern Han dynasty, the rule by rites of Han dynasty developed smoothly because of the maturity of the theory and the system of the rule by rites. Though the national power of the East Han dynasty gradually decreased due to various causes, the rule by rites, as a strategy to manage the
country and value orientation of politics, did not decline. In contrast, it was
strengthened. This was the development of Confucian classics in the Eastern Han
dynasty, especially He Xiu and Zheng Xuan's annotations on Confucian classics
that consolidated the ideological results of the rule by rites. As a matter of fact,
judging from the development of ideology and strategy of ruling the country, the
method to “manage a country with filial piety” advocated by the rulers in the Wei
Jin period was a continuation of the rule by rites of the Han dynasty. In this sense,
the construction of the rule by rites in the Han dynasty was successful.

In fact, when we say that the rule by rites of the Han entered a period of
consolidation after Emperor Zhang of the Eastern Han dynasty, this can be
reinforced by Pi Xirui's related discussion on the history of Confucian classics. Pi
Xirui thought that the “Confucian classics went into a climax period from the time
of Yuan and Cheng of the Han dynasty to Post Han”. The core of the Confucian
classics is ritual studies. When Confucian classics were enormously popular, so was
ritual study. The appearance of a Confucian ethical code in the Eastern Han dynasty
was closely related to the popularity of Confucian classics, especially the popularity
of ritual studies. As to taking the propriety of Confucian classics as a standard of
official selection and incorporated it into the official selection system, the officials at
all levels took rites as administrative guidelines. These measures consolidated the
achievements of rule by rites. Pi Xirui's description about the situation then and there
can be a reference, “prime minister (in feudal China) should be a scholar, which
started with Emperor Wu of Han, the Emperors Yuan, Cheng, Guangwu, Ming and
Zhang continued it... Schools were set up all over the country. In the end of Han
dynasty, the number of students in the Imperial College reached 30,000, which was
a great event that had never happened before”. “The talents recruited by Post Han
must know Confucian classics very well and have received a good cultivation”. 350

To sum up, we can find some ideological features of the rule by rites in the Han
dynasty according to its development process:

First, ideologists had cooperation with politicians. One of the most important
factors leading to the formation of the rule by rites in the Han dynasty was the
cooperation of politicians such as Emperor Gao, Emperor Wu and the Emperors
Zhao, Xuan, Yuan, Cheng, Ping and Zhang with the ideologists like Shu Suntong,
Lu Jia, Jia Yi, Gong Sunhong, Dong Zhongshu, Si Maqian, Dai De, Dai Sheng, Liu
Xiang, Liu Xin, Ban Gu, Yang Xiong, Ma Rong, He Xiu, Zheng Xuan and so on.
From theory into practice, it needs some media to turn the rule by rites from the
level of thought into the system. And then it comes to affect peoples’ behavior. The
medium was politics, especially the step of administration.

As the official representative, the emperor, the supreme ruler, was the enforcer of
the media, who embodied the intervention of practice. This case logically showed
the actuality and practicality of ritual studies and the rule by rites in the Han
dynasty, which inevitably attached to politics. The appearance of the Confucian
ethical code and its disintegration were a typical reflection. The rapid development
of ritual study in the Han dynasty, of course, laid the basic model and value
orientation for later ritual study with the politicians’ participation and recognition.
This was a spiritual comfort for ideologists who sought and built the way to keep prolonged political stability.

Second, emperors participated in academic discussion in person and arbitrated between right and wrong. Emperor Wu’s method to promote talents, Emperor Xuan’s Shi Quge Meeting and Emperor Zhang’s Bai Huguan Meeting in Eastern Han dynasty all shaped the tradition that top rulers directly intervene in academic affairs because all emperors paid attention to academic discussion and made decisions on academic problems personally. All these affairs went through more than ten dynasties, or two periods of the two Han dynasties, which was over 200 years. Thus, the emperors were not only the top political authority, but also the top academic authority. Academic autonomy was squeezed into abnormality by the practical political needs of rulers. Academic studies became an appendage of politics.

This not only shows that the formation of the rule by rites in the Han dynasty and its maturity were the results of practical political needs, but also shows that the appearance of the rule by rites of Han itself was not the result of the independent development of the academics. Because of this, the distance between practical politics and society that academics and scholars ought to keep had disappeared. This had a very deep impact on later generations.

Third, Confucianism was worshiped greatly but other ideological doctrines were also tolerated. Emperor Wu dismissed the hundred schools and revered Confucianism only, which was a conscious choice for statecraft but not participation into academic discussion. In other words, Emperor Wu treated Confucianism and Confucian in his standpoint of political needs but not in the name of academic theory. Consequently, Emperor Wu took Confucianism to manage his country. His implementation of the rule by rites did not necessarily mean negation or even elimination of other theories. The history shows that the other theories still existed even under the guidance of the idea that the hundred schools were dismissed and only Confucianism were revered. The other theories were not destroyed or prohibited, they were not simply regarded as national ideology or the basic strategy to manage the whole country. Similarly, under the banner of the rule by rites, there were conflicts about earlier text or new text inside Confucian classics and there were debate about earlier rites or new rites and debate about Confucian rites or various rites. Everything should be tolerated and both near and distant are treated alike. The idea that, “all living creatures grow together without harming one another, ways run parallel without interfering with one another”, actually came true under the situation of Confucianism worship only after the time of Emperor Wu of Han. The problem was that the rulers insisted on monism but rejected pluralism when choosing a governing concept, ideology and guidelines. But for the development of culture and ideology, they tended to approve diversity. The idea of *The Great Learning* and *The Doctrine of the Mean*, included in *The Book of Rites* could be gradually spread out, which indicated that cultural diversity could exist under the unified ideology of Han.
Formation of Ruling by Rites in the Han dynasty and its Ideological Features

Fourth, the formation of the rule by rites was consistent with the realization of exclusive dominance of Confucianism. For the ideological development and the construction course of cultural value, the formation of the rule by rites of Han dynasty itself was the process of establishing and securing the exclusive status of Confucianism. The fundamental issue that the rule by rites of Han needed to solve was the construction of a new value system, which was about everlasting political stability. After a long-term exploration by politicians and ideologists and adaptation of both parties, finally they reached an agreement on choosing Confucianism as official ideology. It was marked by the accomplishment and implementation of the general plan of dismissing the hundred schools but revered only Confucianism.

Seen from the development of ideology and culture of Han dynasty, the formation of the rule by rites was not accomplished at one stroke and the realization of exclusive Confucianism could not be achieved either. It was unnecessary to talk about what happened before Emperor Wu, the development of the rule by rites and realization of exclusive Confucianism experienced a long history even after Emperor Wu accepted Dong Zhongshu’s suggestion to dismiss other schools but only to pay tribute to Confucianism. If the time span is counted from Emperor Wu, it was more than 200 years before Emperor Zhang of the Eastern Han dynasty. The Bai Huguan Meeting in the time of Emperor Zhang and the appearance of *The Discussion in Bai Huguan* and *The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan* marked the maturity of the rule by rites of Han and also the realization of the general plan of dismissing the hundred schools but revering Confucianism. Virtually, the formation of the rule by rites of Han and the exclusive status of Confucianism, as regards the development trajectory of ideology and culture, were simultaneous. After that, the whole Chinese feudal society used rites to rule the country and took rites as a model all the time. And its guidelines for social politics were Confucianism throughout its course.

Fifth, despotism was consolidated and improved. The formation and perfection of the rule by rites in Han dynasty, judging from its ideological and cultural functions, was good for consolidation and perfection of feudal despotism of the Han dynasty and its social order. Whether the social development of the Han dynasty was smooth or bumpy, the formation and perfection of the ritual studies in the Han dynasty in fact played a role of “assisting in ruling”. The whole bureaucratic system of two Han dynasties, including the sovereign institution, the official promotion system, the education system with school as its core, the moral value with the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues as its core, statecraft that was claimed to have justice and morality and so on, all without exception played a very important part in the consolidation and perfection of despotism. Simply speaking, the better developed the ritual study of Han was, the more consolidated and deeper the despotism would become.

As ideology went into people's heart, it became easier to control people's mind and behavior. The rule by rites is neither a people-oriented ideology, nor is it a type of democratic politics. With an attitude of historicism, we can do nothing but admit that the appearance of despotism in the Han dynasty had its historical necessity and
rationality. As opposed to the tyranny of the Qin dynasty, despotism in the name of the rule by rites in Han was an historic advance. Moreover, the rule by rites was more suitable for the situation and social mentality of patriarchal society at the time.

Sixth, the theory that man is an integral part of nature ran throughout two Han dynasties. The formation of the rule by rites was the development of the theory that man is an integral part of nature, which takes Heaven and morals first. Heaven is the mother of all things and the lord of gods. “The emperors should get the divine revelation”, “people’s destiny is determined by the heaven”, “man is an integral part of nature”, the way of Heaven is holy and the way of people should follow the example of Heaven’s way, and all of these are the ultimate aim of the constructing the rule by rites in Han dynasty. *Evolutions of Rites, The Book of Rites* clearly stated that “the rites are from Heaven and applied on the earth, and then made the changing world more orderly. The rites are mainly in funeral, sacrifice, shooting, driving, drinking, coming-of-age ceremony, marriage, going to court and engagement. So, saints show the natural law and human feelings with rites and thus the world and the country can be regulated”. It follows that the principles and value of rites are from nature but applied by people. The rulers administer the country with rites so that the world and the countries can be harmonious. The thinking model and value are a typical syndrome of the theory that man is an integral part of nature. As regards to Dong Zhongshu’s idea of harmony between man and nature, which took interaction between Heaven and man as core. This primary aim sought for bringing the rule by rites of the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues into the theory that man is an integral part of nature so as to enforce its sanctity and public appeal. Dong Zhongshu clearly pointed out that “the three cardinal guides of benevolent kingcraft can be learned from the nature”. In his opinion, “the law of justice and humanity” are all from the nature. The divination combined with mystical Confucian belief was in fashion in two Han dynasties, especially in Eastern Han dynasty. Without doubt, it was another extreme manifestation of the theory that man is an integral part of nature. In conclusion, the powerful ideological and theoretical support behind the formation of the rule by rites in Han dynasty was the theory that man is an integral part of nature. To a great extent, the theory that man is an integral part of nature got matured in Han dynasty, and it has been shaped during the course of formation of the rule by rites of Han.

Seventh, admiration for the past, saints as models and worship of Confucian classics. The process of the formation and maturity of the rule by rites of Han is characterized by admiration for the past, saints as models and worship of Confucian classics. The past was admired and everything in the past was right. Three Emperors and Five Sovereigns (in ancient China) and previous saints were regarded as examples of value. The way of past Emperors was the guideline for people’s action. The saints were the Emperors of the past, who were the examples to be followed.

Confucian classics became the value principle for the rulers to administer their country and for people to live peacefully. When the government discussed affairs and officials brought their administrative power into force, they all cited Confucian classics in support. As for scholars and officials (in feudal China) and common
people, they must not discard Confucian classics. If they did, it was equivalent to rebelling against the orthodoxy. In such a way, the ancients, saints and classics, were interacting between each other, which became a clear trajectory of thought during the course of constructing the rule by rites of Han. The thought model and value orientation to admire the past, model the saints and worship the Confucian classics went through 400 years, two Han dynasties, and turned into a very important ideological gene affecting succeeding generations.
Dong Zhongshu's theory of harmony between man and nature, with interaction between Heaven and man at the core ran through his whole ideological system, which was chiefly represented in the field of political philosophy. His political philosophy was mainly about the exploration of management, historical change and the social order. Its ultimate goal was to improve the Confucianism of the pre-Qin dynasty, which was to maintain grand unification.

I. The political theory of benevolent governance with morality given priority over penalty

The politics of benevolent governance is a consistent part of Confucianism. In the view of Confucianists in the pre-Qin dynasty of Confucius and Mencius, benevolent governance was the right way carried out by former emperors. *Hong Fan, The Book of History* describes: “Avoid deflection, avoid partiality; broad and long is the royal way. Avoid partiality, avoid deflection; Level and easy is the royal way. Avoid perversity, avoid one-sidedness, correct and straight is the royal way”. To be specific, benevolent governance was to rule the world with benevolence and treat the world with a nobleman or elder's broad-mindedness, contrasting to “the rule by force” advocated by Legalists to get and manage the world with violent force.

Dong Zhongshu continued the benevolent governance of Confucius and Mencius’ Confucianism and made it come true through his effective political struggle. Thereby, he made the Confucian theory of benevolent governance become the main part of ancient Chinese political culture. Roughly speaking, Dong Zhongshu's politics of benevolent governance mainly involved “improvement” which was based on governance by the natural law and the policy of benevolence which took rule by benevolence over rule by force.

The “improvement” supported by Dong, after all, meant that rule by benevolence took the place of rule by force, “improvement” is “restructuring”. For the ideological system, it was to change the power politics of Legalists and the inactivity
policy of Huang-Lao Taoism. Harsh law and severe punishment supported by the Legalists used great powers to rule the country. Although the rule by doing nothing that is against nature, advocated by Huang-Lao Taoism, once played a great role in economic restoration and development in the early Han dynasty, Huang-Lao Taoism was not enough to keep the social function normal or intensive regulation since the period of Emperor Jingdi.

This was proved by governors’ claim to make rivals as an equal and collusion of local government officials and wealthy merchants at that time, who fought for profits with common people and central government. Especially, the Wu-Chu rebellion of the seven states in the period of Emperor Jingdi was a clear evidence of this. Therefore, the current social situation was in need of changing the old ruling system and creating one anew, not only combining the strong points of Legalism and Huang-Lao Taoism, but also discarding their short points. The strategy to dismiss the hundred schools and revere only Confucianism proposed by Dong the third time and accepted by Emperor Wudi was the inevitable result of this idea. In other words, Confucianism since then was regarded as the official ruling ideology.

According to the lessons of the dead Qin dynasty and the experience of rule since the Han dynasty, Dong held that economic policy should be improved first. He pointed out several measures, such as: to “limit the people to occupy more lands which were given up to those in need, to stop the way of land merger”; to “let salt and iron be in charge of people”; to “release slaves and maid-servants and abolish the right to execute them arbitrarily”; and to “decrease the tax and corvée in order to save people’s labor”\(^{355}\). These measures were helpful in limiting the merger of lands by the despotic with little profit for the common people, which also played a positive part in developing social productivity.

Meanwhile, Dong specially attached great importance to the construction of a social system and moral principles. He brought forward the establishment of the ancient system of civil servants and positively took part in it, which made Confucians’ ideal that “those who excel in academics end up in officialdom” become a reality. He took “the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues” as hinges to interpret the basic principles of feudal morality at the theoretical level and laid a sound foundation for it.

In addition, he spared no efforts to support “changing the beginnings of lunar calendar and changing the color of the robe” and implementing education policy. He required that the government should pay more attention to morality than punishment, raise more schools to train scholars, and attach greater importance to righteousness. As well, the government should unify ideology. All this was brought into the ideological framework of interaction between Heaven and man and the political field of “improvement” from saints’ “rule by natural law”.

It is thus evident that Dong’s “improvement” from “rule by natural law” succeeded and developed the Pre-Qin Confucian idea of “profit and loss”, which, taking the doctrine “a new king must start reformation” as a precondition and constructing a new country and new system with eternal unity as the ultimate goal, realized the transformation from theory into political practice better under a new
historical situation and cleared the ideological obstacles away for the reformation inside of the same dynastic realm. So to speak, Dong's theory of improvement was a practical method to carry out social reformation without any external conflict, under the governance of feudal despotism. For this reason, the new king starting reformation and management by the Mandate of Heaven and the popular wishes of the people never ceased. This specific historical phenomenon, different from that of the Middle Ages, was inseparable from Dong's theory of improvement from rule by natural law. Of course, his very theory was clearly deceptive and absurd, for example, interaction between Heaven and mankind, changing the lunar calendar and the color of robes. However, in a time when autocratic monarchy came before everything, his theory can yet be regarded as a wise choice.

For improving the tyrannical rule of the lost Qin dynasty, Dong inherited Mencius' theory that rule should attach more importance to benevolence than violent force. Nevertheless, he did not give a clear definition of “benevolence” but interpreted it from different perspectives.

On the whole, Dong's political policy had pertinence. He advised rulers over and over that “a king should love the whole world”. He thought an emperor “could be benevolent if he loved his people universally and did not afford or punish them in accordance with his own mood”. This was a continuance of the Pre-Qin Confucian ideology of loving people. Under such an ideology, Dong intensively discussed his claim of rule by moral education. In other words, his ideology of benevolent government mainly rested on his claim to rule by moral education.

Moreover, he repeatedly stated these opinions in the articles The Natural Law is Non-Dual, Noble Yang and Humble Yin, The Positions of Yin and Yang, The Meaning of Yin and Yang and so on. He rather clearly described the political philosophy, that he advocated rule by moral education and rejected rule by violent force.

It must be pointed out that benevolence and morality marked by Dong with the politics of benevolent governance did not follow Mencius’ policy of benevolence. While struggling to boost benevolent governance, he neither rejected nor gave up rule by violent force. In contrast, he brought these two parts into one part of “benevolence”, which was different from Mencius who put benevolent governance and violent governance into two different parts. He said, “the way of violence or benevolence is from humanity”. In reality, his ruling strategy of morality given priority over penalty itself embodied a combination of benevolence and violence. In this regard, what he inherited was Master Xunzi's idea of “attaching importance to rites and laws”. Therefore, it suffices to say that Dong's policy of benevolence, taking rule by benevolence over rule by force, was not only a continuance of Mencius and Master Xunzi's social political philosophy but also a kind of creative development, which integrated Mencius’ idea and Master Xunzi's idea under a new historical condition.

Dong's policy above, at his time, played a rather great role in correcting political mistakes, bringing order out of chaos and keeping the society stable. However, just as Lu Xun said, “rule by benevolence was never there in China”. “Seemingly, the
rule by benevolence in China was opposed to the rule by force, in fact they were like brothers. Sooner or later, rule by force must appear”. The reason why people praised it was that they hoped rule by force could be reduced or could not be enhanced”. The situation revealed by Mr. Lu was more incisively exhibited in the middle ages of Chinese feudal society. We should pay greater attention to this point when the historical significance of Dong’s ideology.

II. The theory of the historical cycle of three unities

From the aspect of his ideological trend, Dong’s concept of historical development was for maintaining the social order in existence. With “conservation” as a precondition, it changed with time and had a necessary improvement under the banner of “obeying nature and following the routines”. In his own words, it needed “system reformation” but not “change the way”. The historical view he insisted concentrated in the theory of the historical cycle of three unities, of which, new emperors’ reformation, mutual salvation between the form and the nature, cycle of the five virtues, the theory of three unities and the theory of the three beginnings were the main constituent parts.

The so called “new emperor must start system reformation” means that new dynasty could not inherit everything from the previous dynasty but needed a reformation. Confucianists had an existing principle for this reformation, that was recorded in *The Great Biography, The Book of Rites*, “It was necessary for a sage on the throne of government to begin with the procedure of human duty. The appointment of the measures of weight, length, and capacity; fixing the elegancies (of ceremony); changing the commencement of the year and month (calendar); alterations in the color of robes; changing the flags and their blazonry; updating vessels and weapons and distinctions in dress. These were things and changes which could be enjoined on the people. But no changes could be enjoined upon them in what concerned affection for kin, the honor paid to the honorable, the respect shown to the aged, and the different positions and functions of male and female”.

Considering ancient cultural development in China, it can be said that these reformation principles designed in *The Book of Rites* defined the basic orientation of feudal cultural development after the Qin and Han dynasties. This not only showed the difference between the new dynasty and the old, and the rationality of substituting a new regime for the old, but also kept the basic ideology and cultural system tracing with the same origin.

Dong appreciated this Confucian ideology principle of “changing the tools but not the methods”. He expressed his expectation in politics by elaborating the idea that “new king must start reformation” and developed it into ideological principle that “it needed to change the system but not the way”.

At first, he held the opinion that a new emperor should start system reformation and he should follow the law of the nature and follow the routines. He emphasized that “the way of Spring and Autumn was to follow the nature’s law and the
The system reformation, based on learning from the past and observing the current, should confirm to the nature and the people’s will in order to accord with the destiny. The emperor could show that he “was appointed by Heaven” through system reformation; If he “inherited the system and cause of previous emperor without any changes, this was a complete continuance of previous and that makes no difference”. Therefore, a new emperor must “change the residency, the title, the colors of robe and the commencement of the year and month (of lunar calendar)”. These above were the main content of system reformation.

Second, Dong also laid stress on the idea of “system reformation” but not “changing the way”. He declared that “the great cardinal guides, justification, politics, enlightenment, customs and literary content are all the same and it is unnecessary to change them! So emperors had a reputation of system reformation but not changing the way in reality”. That was what he often said, “there is something perpetual in change”.

Such ideas of Dong, so to speak, was the first cultural conservative theory with much stronger theoretical features in ancient China. It set the relationship between the inheritance and the reformation of ideological culture and system culture right in the time of a unified country and a stable regime. According to this theoretical framework, in the same society with same system or in the same regime of same family, the basic ideological culture and system culture could be preserved while the old system could be reformed and be installed into new energy in the light of the changes of times in order to strengthen the inherent activity of system. Meanwhile, it could also restrain and inspire the rulers so as to reduce or even erase social contradictions.

In Dong’s view, the interaction between form and the nature of writing was closely related to reformation. Generally speaking, form stands for literary grace while quality for the nature or content of writing. The relationship between these two is that between form and nature. Dong applied the concepts of the form and nature of writing to the political reformation and the rise and fall of a regime. “The system of dynasties, one is like Shang dynasty emphasizing the nature (content) and the next like Xia emphasizing the form. The nature asserted by Shang dynasty follows the way of Heaven while the form asserted by Xia dynasty after the way of the Earth, when it is the time of Spring and Autumn, the people is the core…The Shang dynasty attached great importance to nature, which was so called Heaven while Xia dynasty thought highly of form, which was so called Earth, so as to the Spring and Autumn, it valued people. Thus, the ranks of nobility were divided into three levels. … The emperor who attached importance to Heaven and imitated the Shang dynasty had a way of Yang and his followers often similarly thought highly with kindheartedness, justice and plain…The emperor who valued the earth and learned from the Xia dynasty had a way of Yin, which surpassed the way of Yang, so his subjects usually respected the important and the old with many rites”. 364

Dong’s comparison of Shang dynasty to nature and Xia dynasty to form was not the real system about form and nature carried out by these two dynasties, but he, through the comparison, induced the theory that nature and form could save one
another and proceed to support the new king's reformation and the circulation of three unities. “The nature follows Heaven while the form follows the Earth”, said in *Three Principles, Baihu Discussion*. So, Heaven is holy and the Earth is educated and cultivated by the former, this is form. *Standard Interpretation of Shangshu* recorded that “the emperor holds both the nature and the form, thus he has both ways of Heaven and Earth”. *Cultural Cultivation, The Garden of Anecdotes* says that “the Shang dynasty was always consistent in its nature, which was from Heaven. The Xia dynasty was great because it thought highly on form, which was from the Earth” “The past is used to remind the successor and the form and the nature are interdependent”, said in *The Records of Rites and Music, the Book of Song dynasty*. It was obvious that the interconversion between the nature (content) and the form was not only elaborated by Dong, but also was recognized by ancient cultural traditions.

It was according to the principles of interconversion between nature (content) and form that Dong propagated the event that *The Spring and Autumn Annals* began the relevant changes of a new emperor” and “saved the form with the nature”. In such a way, the transition of regimes from the old to the new and the formal evolution of the system before and after were reasonable.

In Dong's view, the system reformation started by a new emperor and the mutual salvation between the form and the nature (content) all happened against an almost unchanged historical background. The unchanged history background was exactly the theory of three unities and three beginnings.

These theories originated from the theory of the “Three Ages” created by Gong Yang who sought to show the reasonableness of “great unification”. The Three Ages are the Age of Disorder that Confucius personally witnessed, the Age of Approaching Peace that he heard of from his elder contemporaries and the Age of Great Peace or Great Unity that he read about through handed-down records. These three regimes have their own inner order and certainty of rise and fall. It is a natural law that society evolves from disorder and approaches peace.

Dong brought into play this theory in the *Spring and Autumn Annals by Gong Yang*, so that the *Spring and Autumn Annals* put twelve different regimes into three categories: the regimes that Confucius witnessed, there were three; the regimes that he heard of, there were four; and the regimes that were read through handed-down records, there are five. Thus, the regimes of King Ai, King Ding and King Zhao were those which Confucius witnessed; the regimes of King Xiang, King Cheng and King Wen were those Confucius heard of; the regimes of King Xi, King Min, King Zhuang, King Huan and King Yin were those Confucius read through handed-down records.

Accordingly, he put forward the theories of “three unities and three beginnings”. Three unities are the common term of “Zheng” and “Shuo” of three dynasties, Xia, Shang and Zhou. The Xia dynasty constituted the Jian Yin calendar, the year of which began with the first month of the lunar year, and it was called unity of people. The Shang dynasty constituted the Jian Chou calendar and its year began with the 12th month, and it was called as unity of earth. The Zhou dynasty constituted the
Jian Zi calendar and its year began with the 11th month, and it was called as unity of Heaven. “I once heard that a new emperor must leave the descendants of two previous emperors in the reserve, including the new emperor, so as to symbolize the three unities of Heaven, the Earth and the people”, recorded The Annuals of Emperor Chengdi, The Book of Han. Each unity advocated a different colour. The Xia dynasty advocated black, Shang white, while Zhou advocated red, so three unities are the common term of black unity, white unity and red unity. Three beginnings are the common term of ancient Chinese calendar of the beginnings of Zhou dynasty, Yin dynasty and Xia dynasty. Three beginnings means respectively taking the first day of the three months (the 11th month, the 12th month and the 1st month of lunar year) as the beginnings of each year in three different dynasties. Jian refers to “the orientation that the Big Dipper points at”, in clearer words, the time that the Big Dipper points at. The time is from Zi (the name of time in ancient Chinese calendar) to Hai, the Big Dipper moves once each month, it points at another time period. According to Dong's theory of three unities, “the way of Heaven revolves from the beginning to the end” and the black, white and red unities revolve in endless cycles, so to say, the dynasties fall and rise one after another. So at the starting point of each dynasty, “the new emperor must conduct system reformation”. The chief task of system reformation or the most remarkable sign of system reformation was to change “Zheng” and “Shuo”. The so called “Zheng” refers to the first month of each lunar year, lunar January; the so called “Shuo” is the first day of each lunar month, the first day of Chinese lunar calendar. Zheng Shuo is the first day of each year in Chinese lunar calendar.

The goal of changing the beginnings of calendar was showing that the new emperor “is ordered by Heaven” to replace the old system with a new one, which has the legitimacy in the name of “the will of Heaven”. At the same time, it also seeks for showing that everything looks fresh and gay when a new year restarts and “the new emperor must make somewhere differing from the previous”.

Dong’s theory of three unities learned from the theory of five elements, in other words, the former absorbed some ideas of the cycle of the five virtues. The cycle of the five virtues was a theory about history development created by Zou Yan, a Yin-Yang scholar in the end time of the Warring States. In Biographies of Mencius and Master Xunzi, Records of Great Historian, Zou Yan said “the five virtues shift endlessly since Heaven was separated from Earth. Each dynasty has its own suitable system which follows this law”. He thought that metal, wood, water, fire and earth (the five elements) respectively stood for corresponding power, they are mutually generated and restricted to changes in cycle, which determines the fall and rise of a dynasty. Dong believed in this idea and combined the theory of five elements with the theory of Yin and Yang, taking it as his ideological framework. He praised the saying that “among five elements, the earth is the most honorable” and “yellow color is also the most honorable among the five colors”. He claimed that the Han dynasty should receive orders in the name of “the virtue of the earth”, which was later identified by rulers and ideologists.
Judging by the political purpose, the theory of the three unities' circulation created by Dong was of course “for making the constitution of the Han dynasty”. Some scholars from Taiwan pointed out that Dong went out of his way to propose the theory of three unities while the theory of five virtues was popular and his “primary cause lies in the need of creating calendars”. “He wanted to bring the politics of Han dynasty into the right way of Confucianism in the name of Heaven's will”.369 This opinion is rather sensible. But in my view, what is more important is that Dong constructed a new political system in order to lay down a strategic establishment for Han dynasty's prolonged political stability. And it must surpass the traditional and historical theory—the cycle of the five virtues. In fact, the implementation of “the calendar of three unities” exactly reflected Dong's inventive mind in making the constitution for Han.

III. The theory of political order of “Heaven changeth not, likewise the Way changeth not”

“Heaven changes not, likewise the Way changes not”.370 This was a proposition with a great influence in Chinese history put forward by Dong Zhongshu. In the past decades, the academic field observed it in the angle of development, so it was a typical topic of metaphysics. Of course it makes sense. From this philosophical view, the academic field acknowledged that Dong's proposition was for preserving the Han dynasty, even whole feudal dynasties. Under the circumstances, we must place it into the domain of politics when we change the view to investigate it from the aspects of culture type and cultural traits. Consequently, it can be regarded as one theory of social order. In this manner, we can interpret it in terms of social status, worshiping Heaven and protecting people and the unchanged Confucian orthodoxy and so on.

According to the steady situation in existence then, Dong proposed the opinion of “analyzing terms and names thoroughly”, which tried hard to define each person's social role and social status. In articles such as Deep Analysis of Terms and Names, he made a more detailed elaboration.

First of all, to define the names and status is the prerequisite to govern a country. “The beginning of governing a country is in distinguishing the important thing, the beginning to distinguish the most important thing is in deeply analyzing the terms and names”. said Dong.371 He also said, “The beginning of governing a country is in defining the names and status,”372 which put the definition of names and status into the primary position to establish social order. It is noted that the definition of names advocated by Confucius was for protesting “a country without principles” and resolve the disorders, but it was in vain. The idea to define the names put forward by Dong was for keeping the grand unity and the political situation that “Ceremonies, music, and punitive military expeditions proceed from the son of Heaven (emperor)” stable. It has the great significance for the time.
To define the terms and names is also to determine the social hierarchy so as to establish a sound social order. In his view, different names or terms have different leading function for people's behaviors and values. “Those who are called as emperor should regard Heaven as their father and treat Heaven with filial piety; Those who are called as the dukes should submit to the emperor cap in hand; Those who are called as scholar-officials should enhance their loyalty, etiquette and kindness to surpass common people. Thus it will be enough to educate common people. The duty of Shi (scholars, a social stratum in ancient China, between senior officials and the common people) is to serve while Min (ordinary people) behave with lack of wisdom”\(^3\). This defined different political duties and behavioral norms for people in different social classes. Through these regulations, he attempted to make “the honorable have an honorable name while the humble have a humble one”\(^4\) and “make the social class clear and people follow it according to their own status, whether it is gentle or simple”\(^5\). The whole society will run in the feudal dynasty’s interest.

Furthermore, the terms and names are the standard to judge truth and error. Dong held that the terms and names were from the real situation of everything. “Terms and names originate from the reality. If it is not real, it will not have a name or term…So, name or term is used to express the truth”. As the name and term are from the reality, people ought to take the name and term as theoretical standard to judge truth or error. He said, “If you want to determine the bent and the straight, use the rule; if you want to determine the right and wrong, use the terms and names.

The examination of term and name for truth and error is just like rule for the bent and straight. Only to require the truth of a term or name and observe the changes of a thing, the cause of the right and wrong will not be interrogated with abusive expression”. From the philosophical view of the name and nature, Dong's opinion of taking name to judge the nature of course goes against the principle that practice is the sole criterion for testing truth, which is an ideal view of the name and nature. However, we should note that Dong's idea above is not unreasonable if we examine it from the angle of theory construction. Because the social activities themselves need theoretical guidance and the theory play a rather important role of guidance for practice. So a series of publicly accepted terms and names expected by Dong were actually the demands to formulate a theoretical system so as to keep people's words and deeds suitable for the ideological principles in existence, which just shows that he attached great importance to the establishment of theory and had a foresight about it. The problem is that he thought the meaning of a name or term borne was just a mysterious “will of Heaven”. Thereby, this theory, in the name of epistemology, fell into mysticism and agnosticism.

Lastly, the term and name are appointed by saints on behalf of Heaven, the former should be subjected to the latter. Dong declared that “the term and name are Heaven's will found by saints”, only saints could experience and observe the will of Heaven and define the term and name of everything in the nature”. The clarification of the truth and error is standardized by the right and wrong; the clarification of
the right and wrong is by the term and name; the term and name by Heaven and Earth". Accordingly, everything must “follow their terms or names, which must follow the will of Heaven”. In this way, Dong brought his ideal of analysis of terms and names into his ideological system of the theory that man is an integral part of nature. Thereupon, he rendered this ideal a little mysterious with religious overtones.

On the whole, this ideal proposed by Dong does not focus on the logical problem of the relationship between name and nature, but on the service for keeping the new political system and the society peaceful. In the name of politics, it has its own significance. It needs to know that any society objectively has different classes, but the question lies in how to treat and deal with the relationship between different classes correctly. In feudal society, any ideologist from the landlord class would never accept the idea that everyone is equal, but they could suggest the idea of moral human relations that people have the priority in rank. Dong, of course, would not surpass the historical background to design society’s blueprint. So, we cannot simply negate his idea of analyzing the terms and names. I always feel that those who scold the ideas to put terms and names into different classes as “reaction” and “conservation” do not have an attitude of historicism. However, Dong owed his term and name to the will of Heaven, in particular, especially he gave play to some characters’ pronunciation and drew a forced analogy, which indeed showed that his theory was groundless and absurd. There is no wonder that some scholars from Taiwan threw sharp words toward him for his idea became “a big obstacle on the way of studying history, because he returned the terms and names to the curses of primitive society”.377

In order to establish a steady social order, Dong also continued pre-Qin Mocius’ idea of “Heaven’s will” that people should worship Heaven’s way to protect their activity. Roughly speaking, Dong inherited the following parts of this idea:

First, Heaven is the top ruler in the universe, who should be benevolent to people and things and reward the good and punish the bad. Mocius thought that Heaven “gives the standard to the emperor”. The holy emperors of three dynasties, Emperor Yu, Emperor Tang, Emperor Wen of Zhou and Emperor Wu of Zhou, loved the world, so Heaven appointed them. In contrast, Emperor Jie, Emperor Zhou, Emperor You of Zhou and Emperor Li of Zhou carried out tyrannical rule, consequently, Heaven let their countries be defeated and their homes lost. Heaven controlled everything in the world and even the right to decide people’s life and death. “When the emperor practices virtue Heaven rewards, when the emperor does evil Heaven punishes”. Whoever “sins against Heaven there is nowhere to seek shelter”. Dong pushed it further strongly that Heaven was “the supreme king of gods”; He thought “Heaven is the progenitor of all creatures”. And then, he claimed that emperor’s power was granted by Heaven, “one’s mandate is appointed by Heaven, so his name or term is called the Emperor”. Heaven concerns and loves people’s emperors. It awards their good conducts with auspicious sign while punished their bad conducts with disasters. Heaven and people all have their own emotions and all put benevolence
and loyalty at first. In this manner, both Mocius and Dong regarded external thing, Heaven's will, as the origin of everything and the value disciplines so as to make everyone obey the external power.

Second, Heaven's will is the standard for people's truth, error, good and evil. Mocius “established the will of Heaven as people's standard”. In other words, he used the will of Heaven as the standard to test right or wrong and good or bad. He declared that just as “the wheelwright uses his compasses and the carpenter uses his square as their standards so as to judge the circularity and the squareness of objects”. He specially declared that the reason why he emphasized the will of Heaven was that “Mocius will measure the jurisdiction and government of the lords in the empire on the one hand, and the doctrines and teachings of the multitudes in the empire on the other”. In a word, if the rulers' administrative measures and common people’s behaviors are in accordance with Heaven’s will, these are good conducts, whereas they are bad when running counter to the will”. The will of Heaven has only to be obeyed” and “this only can be taken as the model and the standard”.

Similarly, Dong regarded Heaven’s will as the standard for the right or wrong and the good or bad. He demanded that “a gentleman should take the will of Heaven to sort the good from the bad”. “Everything operates in accord with its name and term, which are appointed by Heaven”. “The term and name are the will of Heaven found by saints, they have to be analyzed deeply”. Thereby, beyond the social practice, Dong established another unshakable and undoubted principle to determine the right or wrong. In front of this principle, it seemed that everyone is equal, including the emperors. In fact, it supported the emperor’s despotism. Because the emperor enforces justice on behalf of Heaven according to Dong’s theory of the relationship between Heaven and people, people must absolutely follow emperor’s wishes. Though the emperors have made mistakes they should not be pointed out by his subjects, let alone corrected. They can only be warned and punished with various odds or disasters.

Third, all the world obeys the emperor while the emperor obeys the will of Heaven. Mocius’ famous idea of “identification with the superior” is a kind abstract wish that everyone is equal and all under Heaven are of one family. Mocius protested against variable politics and disorderly ideology. He wanted to unify ideology: “unify the standards in the world” and “unify the standards in each state”. The whole nation should be obedient to the emperor. “If the latter says yes, the former must say yes; if the latter says no, the former must say no”, “all the people of the country must think alike to the emperor's idea”.

Nevertheless, this is not the ultimate value principle, but “the emperor will further organize the purposes in the empire and identify them with the will of Heaven”. In this regard, Dong and Mocius were along the same lines. In his theory about the relationship between man and Heaven, he emphasized the infrangible Heaven’s will and put his effort into elaborating that the emperor was the saint who could understand Heaven's will and carry it out. The whole nation should follow the emperor consciously so that the stable nation with unified
ideology might come into form. However, the emperor might “make mistakes”, only Heaven itself is absolutely right, “the root of way comes out of Heaven.” According to the principle recorded in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, “common people should yield to the emperor whereas the emperor should yield to Heaven. …” This still put the ultimate principle down to Heaven.

All these above are the major points that Dong continued and developed Mocius’ theory of Heaven’s will. However, he did not stop continuing it simply, but developed it creatively, which is mainly expressed in the following:

First of all, he constructed a close theoretical system with the interaction between Heaven and man as core so that he removed the conflicts between Mocius’ idea of Heaven’s will and ghosts in the air. What is particularly important is that he eliminated Mocius’ strong idea of Anti-Fatalism, which made the small producers restrain their lust to show themselves under the unbreakable will of Heaven and even finally to fade away.

Second, he used the theories of five elements and Yin-Yang to explain Heaven’s will, which enriched the connotation of Heaven and enlarged its denotation so as to enforce Heaven’s function. Because of this, Dong’s theory of Heaven’s will not only absorbed the traditional ideology about destiny and Mocius’ idea of Heaven’s will, but also polished them and made them more practical.

Moreover, he replaced universal love with benevolence and put the latter down to Heaven’s will. Consequently, the immanent contradiction between universal love and identification with the superior proposed by Mocius under the same theoretical guideline, Heaven’s will resolved.

In general, Dong, as far as the essence of thoughts is concerned, spared no effort to develop Mocius’ theory of Heaven’s will in order to promote the position and function in people's mind. The goal of praising the way of Heaven is to maintain the series of his political views, which can be understood like this, “to enhance justice on behalf of Heaven”, in other words, to follow the way of Heaven so as to protect people’s activities. It naturally seems extremely absurd today when science is flourishing. However, under the historical background of despotic kingship and in the Middle Ages when superstitions were on a rampage, it played an important role in establishing culture and stabilizing social order then.

In order to make feudal despotism system live forever, Dong clearly put forward the political view that “Heaven doesn’t change, neither does the way” while constructing the theories above. This political view was put forward when Dong answered Emperor Wudi’s policy questions. In the context then, the “way” in this view referred ruler’s methods, ideology and relevant system to rule the country. He explained that “the way stands for the right methods to rule a country, benevolence, justice, rites and music are all the tools”. Only when the best way to manage a country is selected can it keep a long period of stability. If not, “the society will be filled with chaos and unrest”. According to Confucianism, “the way” has its corresponding “system”. This “way” was inherited through three dynasties by Confucianists. The way of three dynasties can be traced to the same origin, a series of way that “everything has nothing to lose” could and must be concluded when it
was passed on the Han dynasty. It has something wrong, it is not the way but the “drawback of the way” 394.

All Dong did was summarize a set of “ways” which could satisfy the needs of the feudal regime and make it standard, systematic and stable. He pointed out that every emperor hoped his regime would live forever and was afraid of collapsing in one short day. Certainly, there were quite a few emperors who let their states perish. The reason was that “these emperors were not right for the position and their ways were not right either”.395 Therefore, he would investigate and create a new “way” to respond the Emperor Wudi’s inquiry—”is there a best way to govern the country in the world?” so as to content the emperor’s desire to carry out the way without any limits and let his imperial throne and feudal regime “be inherited endlessly”. The political view that “Heaven doesn’t change, neither does the way” not only reflected Dong’s efforts to establish a new ideological system but also showed his steady belief in his own theory and the reasonable, hopeful and perpetual regime of the landlord class.

For creating the “way” fitting to the time and living forever, Dong did large amount of difficult works about ideology and culture. He tried hard to promote the unity of ways, which was also one of the major contents.

In Dong’s view, the Han dynasty governed the country after inheriting the Qin dynasty’s troubled times. “Those who inherited the ruler whose way resided in governing the country have the same way while those who continue a turbulent society must have a changeable way”.396 Hence, the need to inherit the ways of Yao, Shun and Yu (three emperors in ancient China) and save form with nature, and then manage the country with benevolent governance. This emperor’s “way” without any mistakes was from the will of Heaven, so these three holy emperors “all accepted it and preserved it”.

Precisely because of this, the way definitely became an unbroken “unity”. Consequently, the theory of following nature and following the routines naturally came into existence. If the emperors act on this theory to manage the country and his subjects live according to it, any kind chaos will not take place. Also, the cultures of system and ideology of autocratic monarchy will be handed down forever. It was the secret that Dong advocated the Confucian orthodoxy. Of course, his demonstration about Confucian orthodoxy was inferior to both Mencius and Han Yu, with little contribution to theory construction. However, his methods to study Confucian classics and ideological principle, his worship for the Spring and Autumn Annals and his high praise about ancient saints’ governance are all the concrete reflections to Confucian orthodoxy. Therefore, for the Confucian orthodoxy, Dong took both knowing and doing into account and even the latter was better than the former.

It is no need for reticence that Dong recognized the importance of “changes” and tried hard to promote it, but it must happen under the premise, a large reformation of “the great way”, which was mainly reflected in his discussion about invariability and flexibility, stability and change.
When summarizing ideological principle in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, Dong said, “The way of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* has its own invariability and flexibility. They both serve for themselves. Change for change while stabilization for stabilization. Each has its own law and they don’t interfere one another”.397 The *Spring and Autumn Annals* has not only its own steady content, but also its dynamic”.398 His summary was not for reminiscence, but for protecting the current by saying the past under the ideological principle—obeying the nature and following the routines and for demonstrating his political ideal that Heaven doesn’t change, neither does the way. “Heaven has an invariable way, which cannot runs with its opposite at the same time. It is called the sole. The sole does not change, which is Heaven’s movement”.399 Heaven’s way often changes from Yin to Yang or from Yang to Yin. The Yang is the morality of Heaven while the Yin is the punishment given by Heaven.400 Yang is senior while Yin is inferior, which is the “invariability”. Under the precondition that “the steady way” doesn’t change, some appropriate changes such as “improvement” talked about before and so on are known as “changes follow the same line”.401

In a word, Dong’s idea that “Heaven doesn’t change, and neither does the way” was his argumentation for the steady society and harmonious development. His view that “Heaven changes orderly and correctly along with the same line” shows that he not only maintained the social order in existence and make it live forever, but also prove the necessity and rationality of improving and reforming the system, which could make the society have “order”, “extent” and “diversity”.

From the perspective of inevitable improvement and development, the theory of social order “Heaven doesn’t change, neither does the way” without doubt blocks social development. But, seeing it under the historical background of Dong’s time, his hope that the whole society might have order, extent and diversity was right for the demands of the time. Furthermore, it is this thought model and theory about social order that made Dong become a great Confucian who put the theory of harmony of pre-Qin Confucianism into practice, providing a necessary ideological foundation and social condition to the establishment of the ancient Chinese culture type which aimed at pursuing goodness and seeking the best method of government.
Dong Zhongshu’s Thought on Heaven and Man and its Significance in Cultural History

“The investigation into the relationship between Heaven and man is the main thread of the development of ancient Chinese philosophical thought”.⁴⁰² To explore the relationship between the nature and man and to thoroughly understand the changes from ancient to today” is the holy mission for the ideologists through ages. In the development of Heaven-human thought, Dong's thought became an independent school, which creatively pushed the Chinese theory of heaven-human to a new stage.

By absorbing the theory of Yin-Yang school, he firstly used the traditional view of theocracy to integrate Confucianism and Yin-Yang theory together. In order to support his theory of interaction between Heaven and man, he related Yin-Yang, five elements, four seasons and four directions to the theory of Confucianists' politics of benevolent governance, and then made Heaven, human and society make up a dynamic balanced system. Through his inductive and deductive analysis about the similarities of things, he took affinity as the foundation of similar interaction and thus analogized it to the relationship between Heaven, human and Earth. By confirmation of category and match of numbers, Heaven interacted reciprocally with human beings, and nature thus was humanized while human beings were in turn naturalized.

Thereby, all of these run by the order and relationship between Heaven and human designed by him, which serves the political ideal of “making human follow the emperor while the emperors follow Heaven”. Therefore, he established an external framework of Heaven-human thought which was different from the Confucianism by Confucius, Mencius and Master Xunzi in pre-Qin dynasty but objectively provided a model for the later theory about the relationship between Heaven and human.
I. The theory of mutual interaction between Heaven and humanity

The idea that man is an integral part of nature was put forward by pre-Qin Confucianists represented by Mencius. This school focused on human subjectivity and maintained that that people should examine themselves so as to reach Heaven's benevolence and “fully develop one's mind and know one's nature”, and that man's nature was to physically manifest Heaven's nature.

According to their idea, people should accomplish the pursuit that man was an integral part of nature in realm of spirit. He did not have an external theoretical framework, nor was the idea of interaction between Heaven and human. While continuing Mencius' opinion that people's heart should conform to that of Heaven's and people should examine oneself to master the core of benevolence, Dong was the first one in Chinese intellectual history to bring Yin-Yang ideas into Confucianism and based on it he creatively put forward his famous theory of interactions between Heaven and mankind, creating an external framework for Confucian Heaven-human thought that enriched Confucianism.

Dong took grand unity as the guidance of his theory of benevolent governance whose philosophical foundation was the theory that “man is an integral part of nature”, whose core was the doctrine of interactions between Heaven and mankind. For the sake of protecting the royal unity and supporting the certainty and rationality of emperor's position appointed by Heaven, Dong used traditional theocratic spirit to create an omnipotent Heaven. In his view, Heaven is the “greatest king of hundreds of gods”, to whom the emperor should respect the most. Heaven will stand for people's will, so people should not go against Heaven's will.403 “Those emperors ought to learn the governance approach from Heaven”.404 “Heaven operates on its own way, so it becomes the lord of creatures, so as to the emperors, they are the lord of one nation”.405 However, “people are subjected to Heaven”.406 Moreover, “the destiny of an emperor is assigned by Heaven, so he is called as the son of Heaven, and the emperor should regard Heaven as his father and treats it with filial duty”. Therefore, in the order of common people (including subjects), emperor and Heaven, “people should be after emperor while the later ought to be after Heaven... The emperor is superior to the common whereas Heaven is superior to the emperor”.407 The priority in place or rank was a theoretical precondition for the interaction between Heaven and human.

By nature, “Heaven” in Dong's view was a kind or order, deterrence and power to sustain the society, which can reward the good but punish the evil. His politics of benevolent governance with much moral education but little punishment mainly focus on that the “Heaven” can love everything and make the emperor serve for the ordinary people. So, the emperor should execute his administration in time and the passions such as pleasure, anger, sorrow and joy must be appropriate for the four seasons—spring, summer, autumn and winter”.408 As the emperor, he ought to have the right reasons to decide one's life or death, just like these four seasons”. Otherwise, the “Heaven” will punish the emperor with disaster. That is because there is an interaction between Heaven and human, which lies in the universal Yin-Yang and five elements.
It is accepted in the academic field that the ideas of Yin-Yang and five elements were popular in Han dynasty, and Dong fully made use of the theory of Yin-Yang and five elements to justify the interaction between Heaven and human so as to construct his own systematic theory. First, Dong gave Yin-Yang to the society, human and “Heaven” and enabled them to have the same factors and functions, which could get through the connection between them. His vital precondition was that “Heaven has two regulations, Yin and Yang”. He thought that “Heaven has Yin and Yang, so does man”.

“Man and woman could be compared to Yin and Yang, just like Heaven and Earth to Yin and Yang”. Yin and Yang are just like woman and man while it will be true in contrast. Man is immersed into the Qi of Yin and Yang, so “people communicate with it with Qi of mildness and chaos and thus they merge together”.

This puts Yin and Yang between Heaven and human, also into the peace and disorder of a society. Dong further elaborated that “people have tendency in themselves, just as Heaven has Yin and Yang”, “People have both benevolence and greed. The fame of human beings are bestowed from Heaven. Heaven releases the Qi of both Yin and Yang simultaneously. Similarly, people have natures of benevolence and voracity. People decrease their lust, which is the same to the law of Heaven whose Qi of Yin and Yang do not interfere with each other”. He also said that “the Qi of Yin and Yang are in charge of Heaven and human else. To people, they are leisure, hatred, happiness and anger; to Heaven, they are warmth, coolness, cold and hotness. This links human’s emotion with natural phenomenon through the spread of Yin and Yang. Moreover, Dong defined that “the evil originates from Yin while the good from Yang”. There is no permission to change as soon as ethical concept is linked with Yin-Yang. Based on it, he brought Yin-Yang into the relationship among family members, family and country. He held that “the relationship among emperor, minister, father, son, husband and wife is from the law of Yin and Yang. Emperor, father and husband all belong to Yang whereas minister, son and wife belong to Yin”. Yin and Yang are in a particular order. Yang is prior to Yin, which regulates the relationship between family members and the relationship between family and county.

For Heaven, human and society all have both sides of Yin and Yang, they are constructed logically. Thus, Yin and Yang become the foundation of “interaction between each other of the same kind”. For sake of explaining how the power of Yin and Yang’s growth and decline operates and what the development order of things is, Dong merged the theories of five elements and Yin-Yang together. In his opinion, the cause of Yin and Yang’s growth and decline depends upon the “inter-promoting and mutual-restriction relation” in the five elements. “Five elements are alike to official positions, the adjacent two reinforce each other while the apart two overcome one another”. Due to the inter-promotion and mutual-restriction relation amongst five elements, the nature has seasons come and seasons gone, the emperors in the society use four policies—celebration, reward, punishment and penalty in turn and individuals have different emotions such as happiness, anger, sadness and joy. Dong considered that the operation of five elements has its own
order. Mu (wood) is the beginning whereas Shui (water) is the end and Tu (earth) goes between them, “which is the order designed by Heaven”. According to Dong, the order of the five elements' inter-promotion relation, as well as its content and certainty. In his opinion, through the loop of the five elements' inter-promotion and mutual-restriction, the nature, especially the society, would be purified and perfected. As a result of “inter-promotion” of the five elements, human upholds benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and fidelity but protests evil. They are loyal to their emperors and punish the sinful. Priority is in rank and respect is for seniority. As a result of “mutual-restriction”, human resists luxurious life and actions in collusion with each other among friends; they support the hierarchy but protest flattery and over taxes. Actually, it is through the operation of the five elements and growth and decline of Yin and Yang that Dong aimed at interpreting his political view, which focuses on reorganizing office system, making the whole nation work with one heart and rendering society harmonious.

While integrating the theories of Yin-Yang and the five elements and enforcing the stability of universal order, Dong also combined four seasons and four directions with Yin-Yang and the five elements. He said that “Heaven has five elements, wood, fire, earth, gold and water. Wood generates fire, fire generates earth, earth generates gold while gold generates water. Water stands for winter, gold stands for autumn, earth for the end of summer, fire for summer and wood for spring. The main task in spring is breed, growth in summer, raise in autumn and storing in winter”. Meanwhile, he held that spring, summer, autumn and winter respectively represent the “four emotions”, love, joy, seriousness and grief, which is right for the “principles of four seasons”.

He emphasized that “saints manage the country in light of the law of Heaven, so it is in spring that celebration is right for warmness, it is in summer that reward is right for hot, in autumn punishment for cool and in winter execution”, which is the “interaction of same kinds, supplementing each other”. Hereby, he concluded that “Heaven has four seasons just as that emperor has four policies. Four policies are alike to four seasons; they are the same kind that both Heaven and human own”. Therefore, Yin-Yang, five elements, four seasons and four directions, for Dong, have been integrated into one part which constructs a dynamic and balanced system. And each subsystem of this large system, such as Heaven, human and society, respectively have Yin-Yang and five elements, so they can interact and “develop each other for the same kind”. In such a way, after making lots of practical efforts, Dong finally pushed the question to the point that what the cause and function of interactions between Heaven and mankind are and how, in methodology, they connect Heaven and mankind.
II. The theory of harmony between man and nature

Dong inherited and developed the idea of natural interaction proposed in *Springs and Autumns of Master Lü* that “all things of the same kind should act in coordination with each other, and all things with same Qi (an energy force) should draw close and all things with the same sound should respond each other”. He clearly put forward the point that “all things of the same kind have interaction between each other”. He believed that “Yang Qi (positive energy) and Yin Qi (negative energy) themselves can benefit each other or harm one another”.... Once Heaven’s and Earth’s Yin Qi appears, human’s Yin Qi raises correspondingly, and their operation rules are the same... So, as soon as one melodious tune is played on one zither, the same tunes on other ones will respond themselves. This is the interaction between each other of the same kinds”. He also suggested that “all things on earth will leave the place where they do not belong to but somewhere they can find sense of belonging to. Hence, things with the same Qi will assemble and things with close sound will respond each other, whose effect is rather clear... Five tones can sympathetically respond to each other if they are close, which is not miraculous but its natural law. He that lies down with dogs must rise up with flea, which shows that the interaction between the same kind must appear”. Dong, inferring from the points listed above, thought that the similarity of things constituted the basis of interaction of the same kind. Analogizing from the interaction of the same kind, all things of the same kind can interact each other. To apply the theory of interaction of the same kind into all the things of Heaven, Earth and human is one vital method of Dong’s theory of interactions between Heaven and mankind.

Applying Yin-Yang theory to the nature, society and human actually links up these in light of genre and makes them interact with one another. Thereby, all creatures in the universe are arranged in a certain order and they operate in such a way as to create the philosophy of interactions between Heaven and mankind. Why and how do Yin and Yang grow and decline? In other words, what is the motivation of the growth and decline and what is their condition? In Dong’s view, it depends upon the running of five elements. He believed that five elements are the motivation and sequence of objects’ development and the “inter-promotion” and “mutual-restriction” of five elements contribute to Yin and Yang’s growth and decline. From the aspect of sequence, in his view, wood is the beginning and water is the end while earth goes into the middle, which is “the order made by Heaven”; From the generating sequence, wood, fire, earth, gold and water are generated successively just like father and son; From the aspect of direction, wood is in the left, gold in right, fire before, water behind and earth in middle, which is similar to “the order of father and son’s relation”. Therefore, the dependents (son) should be subject to the dominators (father), which is “the way of Heaven”. It was the very five elements’ operation principles that maintained a normal sequence and managed the world well. Thus, the world will be peaceful only if the order of five elements’ generation, inter-promotion and mutual-restriction are followed, otherwise it will
fall into chaos. It is clearly better to say that, for Dong, five elements are five independent but dependent powers than to say they are five materials. They follow each other in time and replace one another in content. It is the unity of time and extent and unity of content and form. It can make all things on the earth be “in their right places”. It also keeps everything working collaboratively so as to reach the maximum of stability.

What is worth noting is that five elements, in Dong’s view, were the standard, just as Yin-Yang, to categorize things and their different performances while they were regarded as the motivation and order of everything’s going and growth. For instance, “wood is the son of fire, nothing is more precious than earth in five elements... The righteousness of loyal subjects’ and actions of dutiful son are all dependent upon earth.” “Earth treats Heaven with the fullest loyalty. So, the operation rules of five elements are the guidelines of loyal subjects’ and dutiful sons’ actions...Therefore, nothing of saint’s behavior is more important that loyalty, which is alike to the virtue of earth”. This, in fact, categorically links Heaven, human and all the things on the earth together.

Both Heaven and human, seen from the perspectives of internal factors and property, have Yin and Yang and five elements, and they can “benefit or harm each other because they are the same kind”. So, linked with four seasons of nature, the function of human body and man’s emotion can find their own corresponding points and similarities whether from aspects of Yin and Yang or the order of five elements, which, thereby, established a theoretical framework in the levels of time and space for the theory that man is an integral part of nature.

It is rather easy to link up Heaven with human in terms of category and it has a wide inclusiveness, but it is not accurate enough. In order to compensate for the inadequacy of his theory, Dong also employed the method of matching with numbers (the law of Yin-Yang and five elements) and matching. Though he described it in details and with accuracy, Dong himself knew that Heaven is dimly discernible. So he sought the law of Heaven’s operation from the human. He said, “To study the subtle differences of the law of Heaven’s operation lies in the human. Human’s body has four limbs and each limb has three joints. In total, there are twelve joints which link together so as to make body stand. Heaven have four seasons and each season has three months. In sum, there are twelve months which go one after one to form a cycle of a year”. He said something more, “the conformation of Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang often reflect on people’s body. The body is like Heaven, whose numbers of components is the same, so they have the same destiny”. However, Dong did not stop seeking Heaven’s number of components from human, instead, he constantly insisted that the human will be submitted to the law of Heaven. Therefore, after deducing Heaven’s number of components based on human’s body and arousing people’s intimacy for Heaven, he, in turn, took human body to match and explain Heaven’s number of components. In his view, “Only people can match Heaven and Earth. Human body has three hundred and sixty joints, which match the number of days of a year. The bones and flesh of a body match the thickness of the Earth. The ear and eyes stand for the Sun
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and the Moon... Heaven matches human body with full number of days in a year, so human body has three hundred and sixty-six small joints but twelve big ones, the former matches the number of days while the latter matches the number of months of a year”. As long as the numbers in natural phenomena are same to those on human body or in social phenomena, Dong, without missing, linked them together so as to support his theological theory of interactions between human and Heaven and proceeded to lay the root for the system that emperor is granted by God (Heaven). When encountering the situation where the number cannot match each other, Dong asserted to match with category. He directly declared, “Once the numbers cannot be matched, categories can be”. Whether matching numbers or categories, they both aimed at matching Heaven. That is to say, Dong grasped the reasonable quantity and analogous quality of things and he had taken the methods of confirmation of category and match of numbers to establish the philosophical system that man is an integral part of nature which takes interaction between Heaven and human as its core. By saying that “good deeds attract the good while bad deeds attract the evil”, he advised emperors to make their policy decision, which is a strong proof for his philosophy of politics of benevolent governance.

In brief, Dong established the theory that man is an integral part of nature through merging the theories of Yin-Yang, five elements and four seasons, which is supplemented with the reasonable quantity and analogous quality of things. Theories of Yin-Yang and five elements are the basis for him to construct his theoretical framework and to heuristically analogize it, which is also the tool to establish his theory of interactions between Heaven and mankind.

Due to the establishment of a theory of interactions between Heaven and mankind, Heaven and human are connected. Thereafter, they influence each other, interact and interconvert so that the motion of a society cannot escape from the restraints of the will and operation of Heaven. Thus, Dong’s claim of grand unity, politics of benevolent governance with morality guiding and punishment supplementing and a series of relevant arguments about social system and ethic regulations not only found the internal basis and the social needs, but also the external support as well as the needs from nature (Heaven) that are built up through argumentation of tradition, history and natural science. Whereby, people gained a new inner sustenance for their will and spirit and the philosophy that human is an integral part of nature (Heaven) came to maturity.

III. The theory of the unity of nature and mankind with the ruler in the center

One of the critical factors of Dong Zhongshu’s argumentation about Heaven and human is that he furthered the Pre-Qin Confucian idea that the coherence goes between Heaven, Earth and human and brought the concept of centralized monarchy into it. Based on it, he skillfully replaced “human” in the claim that “the coherence goes between Heaven, Earth and human” with “emperor” in the center,
which, thereupon, extended the Confucian idea about Heaven and human and served for his desired political order that common people go after the emperor and emperor goes after Heaven.

In the pre-Qin dynasty, Master Xunzi was the first man who clearly parallelized human, Earth and Heaven, “Heaven has its own favorable time, Earth has its own right place and human has its own proper management, that is to say human can parallelize with Heaven and Earth”. “Life begins with Heaven and Earth; a peaceful world begins with righteousness; righteousness with superior man...So Heaven and Earth raise superior man while the latter governs the former. Superior man is the counselor of Heaven and Earth”.435 The argument that human parallelizes with Heaven and Earth complied with the historical trend, since during that time, the landlord class' military unity was about to accomplish and the unity of ideology was imperative at the end of the Warring State Period.

Right about the time from the Qin dynasty to the Han, the Book of Changes, while constructing new theory of cosmogony and new world outlook, further enhanced the Confucian theory that human is parallel to Heaven and Earth. It records that ancient holy kings must use the method: “looking up and contemplating the brilliant forms exhibited from Heaven, looking down and surveying the patterns shown on the earth...Near at hand, in one's own person, one found things for consideration, and the same at a distance, in things in general” in order to command the world. So they “devised the eight trigrams, to show fully the attributes of the spirit-like and intelligent (operations working secretly), and to classify the qualities of the myriads of things”.438 Based on this recognition, human takes Heaven and Earth as reference to thread nature and history together, “(thus) made an exhaustive discrimination of what was right, and effected the complete development of the nature, till they arrived (in the Yi) at what was appointed for it (by Heaven)”.439

Heaven, Earth and human become the “three powers” and each had its own way, “the way is of Heaven exhibited, 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”.439 All the creatures were originated from Heaven and Earth while human beings were originated from them both. However, human relations and political principles came from humans themselves. That is, “Heaven and Earth existing, all (material) things then got their existence. All things having existence, afterwards there came male and female. From the existence of male and female there came afterwards husband and wife. From husband and wife there came father and son. From father and son there came ruler
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and minister. From ruler and minister there came noble and humble. When the distinction of noble and humble had existence, afterwards came the arrangements of propriety and righteousness. Obviously, here we are talking about the Natural Generative Theory of the Universe, which neither has any tints of teleology, nor does it have any human relation.

For this reason, human can “parallelize with Heaven and Earth”, can be in harmony, in his attributes, with Heaven and Earth; in his brightness, with the sun and moon; in his orderly procedure, with the four seasons; and in his relation to what is fortunate and what is calamitous, in harmony with the spirit-like operations of Providence. He may precede Heaven, and Heaven will not act in opposition to him; he may follow Heaven, but will act only as Heaven at the time would do. Those discussions are consistent with the ideas of Confucius, Mencius and Master Xunzi in the pre-Qin dynasty that recognized the role of human initiation, which is a further development of rational spirit.

Concerning the methods of constructing its theoretical system, the Writings of Prince Huainan, a book taking shape in the time a little earlier than the time of Dong Zhongshu, took Heaven, Earth and human as cross-references in its thinking development so as to highlight the concept of entirety in macroscopic level with method of direct analogy. It maintained that “if you want to know the way of Heaven, you should investigate its numbers; if you want to know the law of Earth, you should observe trees on it; if you want to know the way of human, you should follow their desire”. Nothing but “governing a country according to the changes of four seasons of Heaven, making full use of Earth’s potential and man’s effort” can “make everything grow naturally and crops reproduce”. When talking about writing for renovating virtues and planning human’s affairs, it says that its own way of recording is to “investigate the ways up in Heavens, study everything down on the Earth and make out the principles of the world in the middle”. It also declares that five emperors and three kings looked up for learning from Heaven, for getting measures down from Earth and for laws from people in the middle.

All the above show that the author, Prince Huainan, took Heaven, Earth and human as references to investigate problems on the whole. From the argument above, we, combining with the idea reported in Spring and Autumn by Lü that a proper recognition must rely on “investigating the phenomena up in Heaven, studying everything down on Earth and examining human in the middle” and the main argument advocated by The Doctrine of the Mean that “people can parallelize with Heaven and Earth”, could confirm that “human is parallelized with Heaven and Earth” was one of the main ideas in Qin dynasty and Han dynasty.

Dong complied with the idea that human is parallelized with Heaven and Earth and used it to support his political ideal that “as soon as Heaven does not change, nor does the way”. Dong continued the idea of “three powers” in Book of Changes, he regarded Heaven, Earth and human as an integral entirety. He said, “What is origin? The answer is that Heaven, Earth and human are the origin of everything. Heaven produces it, Earth raises it and human makes it. Heaven produces it with filial piety, Earth raises it with food and cloth while the human makes it with rites
and ceremony. These three form an organic whole, and none of them can be dispensed with.446 And he said, “Heaven, Earth and human integrate together into morality”.447 “Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang, wood, fire, earth, gold and water, these nine elements plus human turn into ten in total, which are the whole numbers of Heaven”.448 All these show that Dong took the whole world as his object of observation and regarded Heaven, Earth and human as an organic system, in which Heaven and human were two chief references for each other.

Based on this, Dong still continued the rational spirit that “man can advance and enrich the way” 449 which was formed since pre-Qin. From the level of theory of universe system, he expounded the possibility and value of putting human and Heaven into one reference system. He emphasized time and again that “the greatness of emperor is due to the participation of Heaven and Earth”, “human beings can grow everything down on Earth and up surpass Heaven”, “human beings are more valuable than anything on the Earth”. Because human is the most valuable in the world and originates from Heaven, “human receives orders from Heaven and learns benevolence from Heaven, so they become benevolent people.

So, after having the honorable order from Heaven, there is kinship between brothers, father and son, the ideas of loyalty, honesty, kindness and virtuousness, the behaviors of rites, righteousness, honor and shame, the regulations of right or wrong and agreement or objection. The terms are clear and tolerant, knowledge is extensive and profound and only the ways of human beings can match the ways of Heaven”.450

Comparing previous theories about Heaven and human, ideas proposed by Dong put human into the chief position in the universe system and thought highly of human’s equal position to Heaven and Earth, which was quite progressive in terms of theoretical thinking. But, the question was that Dong’s idea that human parallelized with Heaven and Earth aimed at supporting his political proposition—despotism, and therefore, he would eventually bring the political spirit of absolute monarchy into his theoretical thinking so as to serve for the view that emperor was empowered by Heaven. The vital trick that Dong played is that he surreptitiously substituted “human” for “emperor”.

Dong held that “the emperor must be the master of a state”.451 “The ruler of a country is the foundation of the state. Nothing is more important than respecting the foundation to manage a country” “Wise emperors definitely approve the honesty, so, the three foundations—Heaven, Earth and human—must be treated seriously. Sacrifice stands for venerable service for ancestor temple; the dutiful sons must be recommended and rewarded, which is a behavior to respect the foundation, Heaven. They themselves cultivate land with farm tools and pluck mulberry leaves for raising silkworm; they open up virgin soil and have ample food and clothing by farming, which is a kind of respect for the foundation, Earth. Various schools are set up for learning filial piety, respect and comity, they are understood through teaching and they are spread through with rites and ceremony, which is a kind of respect for the foundation, human beings”.412 In such a way, Heaven, Earth and human, these “three foundations” all become the tools to protect the rule of a
feudal state. And, the emperor is the basis of a state; sacrificing to Heaven, opening up new land and setting up religion are all the duties of the emperor, who becomes the general representative of Heaven, Earth and human.

This, in fact, makes the emperor (one unique person) parallel with Heaven and Earth but not humans (common people). Dong declared that “Heaven’s order is the destiny which cannot be carried out without saints; plainness is the character, which cannot made without teaching; people’s lust is emotion, which cannot be controlled without regulation”\(^453\) This clearly owes the responsibility and competence for “parallelization with Heaven and Earth” to emperors. As the emperor, in Dong’s view, rules the country in the light of Heaven’s will, the duty to teach people should be shouldered by the emperor and all regulations must be made by the emperor. In this regard, Dong has his own clear explanation: “In the ancient time, the one who created the characters used one vertical line to connect three transverse lines though their middle part, which is called as Wang (王, emperor/king). These three transverse lines stand for Heaven, Earth and human while the vertical one is used for linking them together. The one who dares to link Heaven, Earth and human must be the emperor, whoever else can do this? Therefore, the emperor is assigned by Heaven, who follows four seasons of Heaven and followed the way of Heaven’s will to normalize human’s behaviors, and handle the affairs in the world after Heaven’s principles, govern the country with Heaven’s laws and turn human’s mind towards benevolence with Heaven’s thought.”\(^454\)

Dong’s thoughts discussed above were basically proposed to justify the emperor’s concentration of power and the great unity. However, for the theory of interactions between Heaven and mankind, Dong attempted to use disasters and punishment to restrain the emperor’s power; Insofar as the mutual-reference of Heaven, Earth and human, he also made efforts to stress the emperor’s position and rule, on the other, he skillfully asked the emperor to “remain neutral”. Dong claimed that emperor enforced justice on behalf of Heaven and govern the world by the will of Heaven. The will of Heaven is to love the benevolent but hate the evil, punish the criminal and unrighteous.

Hence, emperors must carry policy of benevolence out in time. The four policies—ceremony, reward, torture and punishment—must adapt to the order of four seasons, spring, summer, autumn and winter while these four emotions—happiness, anger, interest and evil—must be suitable for the four weather conditions, warmth, coolness, cold and hotness. Otherwise, it is a kind of defiance and injustice. “Injustice often causes troubled times”.\(^455\) *Spring and Autumn Studies* is filled with such discussions. Dong’s ultimate goal was to want emperor to have a “limit” for everything and remain neutral so as to maintain the rule of the landlord class and making sure it would “live forever”.\(^456\)

Dong’s theory about the reference of Heaven, Earth and human for each other was not only a political view of great unity but also a kind of integral and visual thinking mode taking human as core and Heaven and Earth as reference. It was also a kind of value orientation which stressed overall harmony and produced profound influence upon later feudal society after Han dynasty.
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Seeing from political point, the political structure of feudal society centered on and served for autocratic emperor. Everyone must obey the feudal society’s rule and absolutely meet the demands of officialdom. Old and young must lower their heads to government and submit to the core of political view, the great unity. The rulers ought to go all out to propose great unity by emphasizing the compatibility of the interests of the community in the whole world, protecting the existing situation of great unity or regaining the lost lands. Hence, the great unity is a natural development of history and “an experience that Heaven and Earth often meet from ancient times to the present”. Whether it was the intellectuals or common people, they would all take delight in great unity of world but feel depressed for national disruption. Keeping the great unity is for the interests of the whole nation while breaking up country becomes the national humiliation and people's depression. Thereupon, people will not hesitate a moment to donate their lives to their country for the great unity.

With regard to the ideal, the Confucianism-centered traditional ideas took maintaining social stability and group harmony as an ultimate mission. It regarded the overall group interest as reference and asked everyone in the society to improve their mental realm through moral cultivation so as to join the group. Thus, individual desires and personal values were dependent upon the desire and values of the group. Whether it was to take the service for the whole world as one's own duty, or to take a certain way to serve for emperor, in both of them one held the value-orientation of the whole people’s interest, which was again closely linked to the Confucian theory that man was an integral part of Heaven.

Because Confucians focused on the unity of human, nature and society, man’s value became one’s own morality to protect the group interest of the whole society, which encouraged human morality and personality. The mode of reflecting upon oneself like the typical thinking mode that “Every day I examine myself on three counts” was ascribed to a self-sublimation. The self-reflection and self-awareness were orientated at overall social interest, but not at individuals. Even if Legalists attached greater importance to the individual desires and admitted the rationality of conflicts about interests, they finally held that individuals must be subjective to group; Individuals must be right for the autocratic monarchy—the group structure who represented the whole landlord class’ interests.

With a historical view, it should be noted that the idea that the group must meet “one single person’s free and all-round development” should not be formed in the condition of a small peasant economy in a patriarchal clan system and one's individual creativity, independence and sense of self-respect could not be the subject of great value. The social psychology bred from traditional value orientation makes maintenance of the group interest and adjusting the interpersonal relationships individual and society become people’s focus of thinking. For individuals, only by controlling his desire but subjecting himself to the group, can he keep along well with the common. The group has powerful moral political right while individuals have only moral political duty, and the dissonance between right and duty finally ends in the restraints for one’s individual lust. Such a situation played a negative
role in the free development of individuals and the formation of such spiritual qualities as self-confidence, enthusiasm and aggressiveness, especially the formation of one's unique personality.

IV. The significance of Dong Zhongshu's theory of nature and mankind in cultural history

All in all, Dong's Heaven-human thought focuses on the combination of Heaven and human with interaction between them as core. From the aspect of Chinese culture history, Dong's Heaven-human thought has an important value in consciousness-orientation and great significance in theory construction.

We know that theory of interaction between Heaven and human “already existed” in Dong’s time. Generally, it began in the time of Western Zhou dynasty. They learned from the previous dynasty’s collapse, the rulers of Western Zhou dynasty used morality to explain the will of Heaven in order to justify that they had been assigned by Heaven’s will to be the emperor. They explained the transfer of Heaven’s will with morality. This is the earliest but the roughest presence of the idea of interaction between Heaven and human. In the end of Western Zhou dynasty, Bo Yangfu explained the cause of earthquake with disorder of Yin and Yang and related earthquake to a dynasty’s extinction. This is another kind embodiment of this idea.

The subsequent works such as The Book of Odes, The Zuo Commentary, The Book of Rites, Great Plan, Spring and Autumn by Lü and so forth use phenomena in nature to explain phenomena in society. They regard both of them as counterparts with emotional bonds of inner life. Favorable weather shows clean governance while frequent disasters show darkness. When phoenix flies or kylin (a kind of god animals in Chinese legends, like a unicorn) appears, it indicates good omen which means the country is prosperous and the people are at peace. Whereas, when rainstorm or hailstones pour down, it indicates boding of evil which stands for fatuous governance and political corruption.

Such kinds of interaction between Heaven and human as stated above has a long term-effect. In general, it is a kind correspondence between phenomena in nature and in society. Through comparison, its political view is elucidated. As a matter of fact, there still is not a prior “heart of Heaven” set to love all creatures, there is not a supreme and deific “Heaven”, being personified, to reward the emperor’s kindness but punish his evil. Mocius’ theory about “Heaven’s will” firstly put forward the idea that Heaven was a supreme god who had the heart to “love people” and the will to reward the good or punish the evil. He believed that people should not only comply with the emperor but also with Heaven, or “the natural disasters would come endlessly”. If the cold or the heat does not come on time, rain or dew appears not at their time, the corn will not mature. This is a kind of “Heaven’s punishment”. Moreover, Heaven love people, it produced the sun, the moon and
all stars; it also produces rain, dew, frost and snow in order to make people live their lives. It sends emperor, dukes, generals and ministers to manage the society for “rewarding the virtuous and punishing the evil”.\textsuperscript{459}

Compared with the views about interaction between Heaven and human above, Dong's view is more mature, closer and more delicate. This, firstly, shows that it extensively absorbed predecessors' ideas about interaction between Heaven and human. He not only followed the idea of the Western Zhou dynasty that the order of Heaven was explained with morality—the order of Heaven would transfer along with human's morality, but also continued the ideas of interaction between Heaven and human that nature was interpreted with theory of Yin-Yang while human affairs were explained with natural phenomenon by *The Commentary of Zuo*, *National Customs*, *The Book of Odes*, *Spring and Autumn* by Lüli and so on, even more, it developed Mocius' idea about Heaven's will to love people, reward the virtuous and punish the violent. This kind mental attitude and way to absorb all schools' ideas showed the compatibility of Dong's Confucianism, which, thereby, enriched the connotation of Chinese culture.

Second, Dong's idea of interaction between Heaven and human utilized the popular theories of Yin-Yang and five elements in Han dynasty to construct the theoretical principles of his theory structure, which surpassed the predecessors at the philosophical level. In addition, Dong's methodology focused on bringing Heaven, Earth and human into a dynamic universe system with force through confirmation of category and match of numbers in order to make interaction between Heaven and human run in a mutually complementary system so as to enforce the completeness of his philosophy.

About the theory that man is an integral part of Heaven, Dong also continued and transcended his predecessors' ideas. In the pre-Qin dynasty, Mencius did not have a definite concept that man is an integral part of Heaven. The first man to discuss this idea was Mencius. But, Mencius only emphasized propagating human subjectivity, to know man's personality and Heaven with one's whole heart, aiming at attaining honesty and carrying out benevolence through the development of one's moral state. His idea lacked external theoretical framework and rigorous argumentation. Although Master Zhuangzi's idea that man in an integral part of Heaven was rather different from that of Mencius', they were the same in cultivating mentality to reach inner cultivation.

Dong's idea continued Mencius' and Master Zhuangzi's ideas about one's inner subjective cultivation, and even surpassed them, which was mainly in placing the doctrine of inner cultivation into the pre-condition of submission to emperors and Heaven's will and connecting one's inner moral consciousness with the external principle that humans follow the emperor while the latter follows Heaven and that Heaven does not change, nor does the way. This imposed great feudal unity on the individual so as to turn inner cultivation into one's way of exterior action while admitting the individual effect and historical responsibility. Moreover, Dong's theory that man is an integral part of Heaven, takes interaction between Heaven and human as core, no matter whether the integrity of his theoretical framework or
the richness (perhaps complexity) of its content or even the creative methodology is unprecedented in history. All these above are all original contributions to Confucian culture even to the whole Chinese culture.

Dong's theory of mutual-reference of Heaven, Earth and human with emperor at the centre, was the first in history to confirm the emperor's supreme position in the universe. The emperor was regarded as the representative of rationality, justice and benevolence in the Heaven-human system. This, thereby, found a practical way to develop the ancient civilization. In a word, Dong's idea about Heaven and human played a specific historical significance in the aspects of rational thinking and culture evolution:

First of all, it played a great role in advancing the formation of Chinese culture's basic pattern. In the time of the Qin and Han dynasties, Chinese culture was forming. The economic system, bureaucratic political system, family structure, culture and education system and ethical norms formed, laying the foundation of Chinese culture. The systems of Qin and Han and their cultural characteristics became the model for later generations. In light of culture pattern, Chinese culture is an ethico-political culture seeking for kindness to govern the country. Dong's Heaven-human thought brings the ethical norms—the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues—into the system of Heaven and human in order to directly serve absolute monarchy, merging politics with ethics together. The family structure and political network were made into one, which politicized the family while domesticating politics. It turned one's inner cultivation into exterior social practice, to respect emperor and Heaven so that everyone upheld kindness but punished evils and spared no effort to serve the country. Hence, a powerful social mindset took shape, enriching the content of Chinese culture and developing its basic pattern.

Furthermore, it guided the later Heaven-human thought. Before, the idea that man is an integral part of Heaven did not hold a leading position in ideological culture or intellectual vision. After Dong, it became the focus of people's ideas, especially those of intellectuals. The development of the idea of interaction between Heaven and human consisted of two trends. One was that it produced less and less influence upon intellectuals, even when talking about the idea that man is an integral part of Heaven, it was unnecessary to argue with the theory of interaction between Heaven and human. Even later the topic of “mutual overtaking between Heaven and human” proposed by Liu Yuxi in the Tang dynasty came forth. The other is that the theory of interaction between Heaven and human was being strengthened day by day among the masses and became a deep cultural psychology which could not easily be changed. The idea that the emperor remains neutral while Heaven, Earth and the human refer to each other gradually permeated every facet of society and developed dynamically, by and large along with the ideological trends initiated by The Book of Changes. As an integral and visual thinking mode, it exerted a rather far-reaching influence upon the aspects of summarizing and insight into national thinking mode.

Again, it enriched the compatibility of Confucianism and even the whole Chinese culture. The pre-Qin thinkers all wished that their thought would be exclusive and
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have a supreme position but unfortunately, their ideas did not come out at the right time. Having support from the theories of Yin-Yang and five elements, Dong's Heaven-human thought could classify anything and absorb anything into its theoretical system, which, objectively, created a good condition for absorbing and reforming ideological culture. There was the Doctrine of the Mean, Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism, Legalism, Logicianism, Agriculturism and theory of Yin-Yang in Dong's theoretical system, which in itself is an embodiment of its compatibility. Later, Buddhism was introduced into China. Chinese local culture could coexist with it and mixed together at last. This could not have been achieved without the compatibility Han dynasty Confucianism dominated by Dong's Heaven-human thought.

Finally, Dong's theory, in word and deed, established the concept of great unity, which constructed Chinese culture into the deep layer of national psychology. The concept of great unity enforced the cohesion of the Chinese nation. In the pre-Qin dynasty, there was no concept of great unity in theory. Confucius' saying, “when the prince is prince, and the minister is minister; when the father is father, and the son is son” and the ideal in Spring and Autumn, “first month of the spring of first year, the emperor united country”, were noting but for arguing that the supreme position of emperor and the rule must not be disturbed, which was not the accurate concept of great unity of real unity of nation.

The traditional concept of great unity appeared after the Qin dynasty unified the whole ancient China. The unity achieved by Qin dynasty urgently and politically needed protecting the existing situation of unity. The experience from two opposite sides, the extinction of Qin dynasty and the prosperity during half a century from the early Han dynasty to the time of Emperor Wudi, forced thinkers to establish the ideological trend and social psychology from the level of cultural mentality. With regard to culture perspective, Dong's Heaven-human thought regarded Heaven, Earth and human as one integral entirety. He thought that individual, family and state constituted an organic structure which cannot be broken up, and it eventually belonged to the concept of great unity and the concept of great unity was used to solve problems and deal with quarrels. Dong Zhongshu specially promoted “the great unity in Spring and Autumn” and asked common people to follow their Emperor. What he had done was to build theory for the great unified society’s long-term stability. After the establishment of his theory and the practice during Emperor Wudi's reign, the concept of great unity became the main part of political culture then, and gradually turned into psychological consciousness from the deep layer of national culture. Consequently, it contributed a great deal to the lasting stability of Chinese feudal society and the growth of Chinese culture.
As a great master of Confucianism, Dong had a unique and relatively systematic way of thinking, and its main contents are: the integrated logical approach of analogy and alignment; the holistic, intuitive and experiential way of thinking; the reform principles of respecting Heaven and the practice of the ancient times. By these ways, Dong constructed the unprecedented theoretical system of interactions between Heaven and mankind for supporting his political ideal of great unity of Chinese nation and, in the aspects of ways of thinking produced a profound influence upon the establishment of Chinese traditional cultural value system.

I. The integrated logical approach of analogy and alignment

Analogy is a method that Dong used extensively. By this method, he argued his idea that interaction takes place between Heaven and human and all is one. Through integrating the relationship between Heaven, human and society, he served his political goal of aligned social order.

In comparison with the thinkers in the pre-Qin dynasty, Qin dynasty and Han dynasty, Dong had a set of his own unique, systematic and practical methods. The method of analogy which, taking the phenomenal similarity with interaction between Heaven and human as its core, maximizes the self-assembly effect of things in terms of their consistent and analogous quality through the linear or non-linear mutual-interaction between things. As a result, the system becomes orderly.

Dong started his approach by utilizing Yin-Yang and five elements to sort things and match everything in the universe according to their right class. At the same time, he used the principles of interaction between Heaven and human to connect things in accordance with the same quantity. In order to construct his theoretical system, Dong first divided all things in nature and society into different classes in light of Yin-Yang and then summarized and unified them according to Yin-Yang theory.

Dong improved the concept of Yin-Yang by eliminating its original meaning. He specifically interpreted it from the aspects of its functions and features so as to
construct a new ideological system. He not only used the natural philosophical meaning of Yin-Yang which started in the final days of the Western Zhou dynasty, but also, gave it historical and philosophical meaning. He combined Yin-Yang theory with nature and society and wanted them to have the same elements and functions. He repeatedly argued that “the law of Heaven’s way is Yin (negative force) while the other is Yang (positive force)". 460

This was his philosophy to which he always stuck. So to speak, it took over the topic that “Yin and Yang are the way of Heaven” advocated by the Book of Changes. However, Dong not only enriched and reformed the connotation of “way” but also adjusted and extended its denotation. The Yin-Yang theory discussed in Book of Changes mainly focuses on two different ways of two different things or in the same thing. It is a counter-balance relationship and the spiritual reflection of “way”. The concept of Yin-Yang here is just a kind of abstract perception. It means two types of things which differ from each other while relating to one another. The concept “way” here mainly stands for a certain objective inevitability.

However, Yin-Yang was not just a kind abstract concept in Dong’s theoretical system but a material object which could be confirmed and felt. It is a tool to classify things and coordinate the orders of nature and society. He thought that “two Qis (energy power) of Yin and Yang between Heaven and Earth gradually infiltrate people all the time just as water often soaks fish. What is different from water is that some can be found while some cannot… In this way, it seems to be unreal but eventually it is true. 461 He still held that “it is one when the Qis of Heaven and Earth merge together. But there are two—Yin Qi and Yang Qi—when they are apart, they are divided into four seasons and five elements”.462

That is, Yin and Yang fulfill Heaven and Earth and go through four seasons and five elements. One grows while the other declines, which makes clear to all that four seasons shift in turn. This combines Yin-Yang with nature together as well with human beings together. “Heaven has Yin and Yang, so does human”463 “Yin and Yang of Heaven and Earth are similar to woman and man, so to human beings.” In other words, Yin and Yang can be regarded as woman and man while the latter can also be called as Yin and Yang. 464 He even believed that “man has affection and temper just like Heaven has Yin and Yang”. 465 Even human’s temper and affection became the embodiment of Yin and Yang. The “principle of right and wrong” of human relationships between emperor and ministers, father and son and husband and wife as well as the ways of running a state, celebration, award and punishment are all from the distribution and position of Yin and Yang.

In this way, all things in nature including society, human’s affection and desires are divided into two categories, Yin and Yang. All things in the universe are different and complicated. They are classified according to the distribution of Yin and Yang. However, these different classes themselves potentially indicate the possibility to connect each other through breaking the limit of species. Heaven, human and society all coexist with Yin and Yang, they develop with the growth and decline of Yin and Yang. As two different kinds of elements, Yin and Yang are here
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and there; As two opposite powers, they complement each other and make one grow by declining the other; As two kinds of characteristics, there are always the primary and secondary points for them; As two types of properties, they have the differences of good and evil, senior and junior.

Such “all-around” Yin and Yang in Dong’s philosophy appears as the two former situations (elements and powers), they go through nature (including four seasons, spring, summer, cold and winter) and society (the human relationships between emperor and minister, father and son and husband and wife) as well as human personalities (affection and tempers), which belong to the inner construction. When the latter two situations function, warmth, heat, day, summer and man in nature belong to Yang while coolness, cold, night, winter and woman belong to Yin. In society, morality, rites and the emperor belong to Yang while punishment, power and ministers belong to Yin. For human body functions, happiness, kindness and temper belong to Yang while anger, voracity and affection belong to Yin. Dong’s view about Yin and Yang, which distributes everywhere in Heaven, human beings and society, laid a foundation for the connection of Heaven with the human. Moreover, because the principle of the senior of Yin and junior of Yang is made, the positions of things with different characteristics and behaviors with different results in the nature and society are logically defined at the same time. The roles, rights and obligations of each of them are defined and will never be changed. This restrained every elements of the universe to a certain position, which, therefore, grounded in theory for the long-lasting empire.

While dividing all things in accordance with theory of Yin-Yang, Dong also used it as a tool to categorize the five elements and things. Five elements—wood, fire, earth, gold and water—become the components of all things in the nature and the society, which are nothing but the outward manifestation of them in the universe, sometimes just their meaningful symbols. For instance, for seasons in the nature, spring, summer, late summer, autumn and winter are separately manifestations of five elements; About directions, east, south, center, west and north are also the spiritual embodiment of five elements. As regards to the official system in human society, these five official posts, Sinong (minister of agriculture), Sima (minister of national defense in ancient China), Junguan (minister of officials), Situ (minister over the masses) and Sikou (minister of justice) were nothing but external manifestation of five elements; As far as the regulations of individual behaviors are concerned, loyal ministers’ and dutiful sons’ words and behavior were all the concrete embodiment of the most respectable character of “earth”; When emperors take administration, it must be run in accordance with the order of five elements, or various drawbacks will appear and even lead to great chaos. From the perspective of the actual theory, these above all take theory of five elements as tool to category and make the order right.

It is rather easy to link Heaven with the human in terms of categories and it has a wide inclusiveness, but it is not accurate. To remedy this deficiency and better achieve the philosophical function of the idea that the human is an integral part of Heaven, Dong, when dividing things with theories of Yin-Yang and five elements
and regulating the relation between Heaven and human, again used the method of numbers to forcefully merge things with same quantity into one.

Though he described it in detail and accurately, Dong himself knew that Heaven is dimly discernible. So he sought Heaven's operation law from the human. He said, “To study the subtle differences of Heaven's operation law lies in the human. The human body has four limbs and each limb has three joints. In total, there are twelve joints which link together so as to make the body stand. Heaven have four seasons and each season has three months. In sum, there are twelve months which go one after one so that a year ends”. 467 He said something more, “the conformation of Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang often reflect on people's body. The body is like Heaven, whose numbers of quantity are the same, so they have the same destiny”.468

However, Dong did not stop seeking Heaven's number from the human, he constantly insisted on putting the human way down and keeping the human will submissive to Heaven's. Therefore, after deducing Heaven's will based on the human body and arousing people's intimacy for Heaven, he, in turn, took the human body to match and explain Heaven's will. In his view, “Only people match Heaven and Earth. The human body has three hundred and sixty joints, which match the number of days of a year. Shape, flesh and blood match the vast earth... The ear and eyes stand for the Sun and the Moon... Heaven matches the human body with full number of days in a year, so the human body has three hundred and sixty-six small joints but twelve big ones, the former matches the number of days while the latter matches the number of months of a year”.469 As soon as the numbers in natural phenomena are same to those on the human body or in social phenomena, Dong, without erring, linked them so as to support his theological theory of interactions between human and Heaven and proceeded to lay the root for the system that the Emperor's rule is granted by God (Heaven). Whatever is used, matching of numbers or categories, the aim is still the same— "the numbers are identical to these of Heaven, they are the same". 470

He grasped the reasonable quantity and analogous quality of taking confirmation of category and matching of numbers to establish the philosophical system that man is an integral part of nature, and taking interaction between Heaven and human as core. And he, with the saying that “good deeds attract the good while bad deeds the evil”, advised emperors to make their policy decision, which was strong proof of his political philosophy of benevolent governance. Clearly, confirmation of categories and matching of numbers were the logical starting point of Dong's idea system. Meanwhile, they were the necessary premises for his political goal.

This shows that confirmation of categories and matching of numbers, used by Dong taking the similarity of things as starting point and the confirmation of quantity and similarity of categories as foundation are the analogy methods to proceed from the one to the other. This method can be traced down to its historical origin and present reality.

In Dong's time, method of analogy “had already existed in the ancient time”. As two of six writing skills in *The Book of Songs*, simile and symbolization are actually
analogies. There is no need to say that simile must be based on the similarity of the categories. Symbolization refers to being moved by what one sees or to expressing emotions through describing concrete objects. When commenting “the fourth writing skill—symbolization” in Preface of Guanju, Zhouan, Book of Songs, Kong Yingda quoted Zheng Sinong’s words that “symbolization is to express emotions through describing concrete objects. Taking the similarity of the same kind to express one’s emotion. Only based on it can symbolization be reached”.

It is enough to make it clear that the foundation of symbolization is still analogy. According to The Mohist Canons, whether it was inductive method, deductive method or analogic method, they all follow the principle to “start in the same kind”. It proposed the methodological principle that “things of different kinds cannot be analogized”, which stressed that similarity of kind is the necessary premise for analogy. Master Xunzi held the position that categorical concepts should be used as the norm to measure the objects and category used to tell the differences of things. It is necessary to “adduce with analogies without going against logic”, to deduce according to the relationship between category and predictability. Book of Changes proposes that “the way (Tao) contains one Yin and one Yang”.472

Actually, it divides things into two categories, Yin and Yang. It holds that when things are observed from the perspective of the categories of Yin and Yang, “all things are not conformed but they all belong to two categories, Yin and Yang”.473 “To use the relation of categories to distinguish things” is a basic method in the Book of Changes in observing things and constructing its theoretical system. Springs and Autumns by Master Liu holds that only if the things belong to the same category, will they interact each other. “When the things in the same category, they will attract one another; when things have the same Qi (energy/power), they will draw close to each other, which can be adduced to everything”.474

This, in fact, compares and deduces them with the theory of five elements. Canons of medicine view the human body and natural phenomenon as five categories: gold, wood, water, fire and earth. Each of these five categories respectively is considered to contain two properties and functions of Yin and Yang. Using theories of Yin-Yang and five elements to normalize the phenomena of things and analyze problems, neither limited by method in the Mohist Canons to deduce according to the relation of categories, nor restrained by the inner logic—class, cause and reason—advocated by Master Xunzi. It can be rather free to reveal the effect of non-linear relationship between things. It must be told that this is a kind of method.

It will be seen from this that Dong used theories of Yin-Yang and five elements to categorized things and normalize complicated phenomena, he emphasized the importance of confirming category, number and function among things, and used this as a link between Heaven, human and society. Although there is little subjectivity or exegesis we still find out that his analogy of “listing relevant records together and putting the same content into the same category” was not like water without a source or a tree without roots.
We can not only trace historical origins, theoretical bases and elements of natural science in Dong’s analogical method, but also ponder on the methodology used by modern similarity theory and contemporary synergistic theory to construct their theoretical systems, also methods of analogy.

Similarity theory focuses on interpreting various similarities in the nature or projects. The “method of similarity”, according to similarity theory, is actually a scientific approach which can “generalize the research outcomes on one individual phenomenon to all similar phenomena”. All kinds of similarity basically involve three categories: general geometric similarity, dynamic similarity, kinematic similarity, and physical similarity of material and medium characteristics. The appearance of similarity theory and methods of similarity and their application to science make it easier for people to investigate the relations between things through their similarities.

Contemporary synergetics in recent decades, based on the analogy of similarity among things, mainly describes the common rule of changing various systems and movements from disorder into order. H. Haken, the founder of synergetics, pointed out that many things share surprising similarities when they transform from a disordered to an ordered state. There is similarity between different movements and systems, manifesting the material world’s unity. This is based on the discovery of “profound similarity between completely different systems”. Similarities and analogy are the main concepts of synergetics. The method of analogy is the prominent research method taken by synergetics while similarity is the basic precondition for analogy.

H. Haken thinks that “It is easy to see the advantages of analogy. Once a problem in a certain field is resolved; the result can be extended to another field. One system can be the analogue of a different system.” Synergetics took the method of analogy to study the shared characters of various subjects’ critical phenomena in cross section, making the old problems of many subjects simpler. Synergetics focuses on the research of structure. The stability of structure relies on the orderliness of a system whereas the latter is dependent upon the synergy of its components. As the basic concept of synergetics, synergy refers to the coordination and synchronization among one system’s components or its sub-systems. A system consisting of lots of sub-systems will be in a state of self-organization as the coordination between sub-systems takes effect. This means, macroscopically speaking, that it has a certain structure and function. Synergy can lead to the order. Generally speaking, each sub-system of a larger system not only has its own random independent movement, but also shares regular correlation. When the independent movement is leading the role, the whole system is in the disorder state while it is in ordered state and the correlation takes primary post. The synergetic action of a system is realized through the competition of things’ inner contradiction.

So, no matter the similarity theory or synergetics, their theories are all objectively based on similarity and take analogy as a primary research method, which is same to Dong’s. Thus it can be seen that it is through making use of theories of Yin-Yang and five elements that Dong linked Heaven and human up and connected man and man with the method of analogy. The methods of analogy and synergy keep human
society and nature running in terms of the principles of Yin-Yang and five elements (Yang’s priority to Yin and the inter-promotion and mutual-restriction relation among five elements). Consequently, they resulted in unification, all things were in order; everyone was in their right position and cooperated self-consciously. Thereby, they promoted the social order and ideology to develop towards an ordered state.

Well then, is Dong’s analogic method consistent with that of modern synergetics in nature? In our opinion, it is rather simple and ridiculous that the academic circle takes Dong’s method of analogy into account of superstition and replaces his concrete analysis of theoretical thinking with stereotypical politics. It is useless for us to correctly recognize the philosophy of ancient Chinese philosophers; Therefore, we cannot objectively judge its advantage or disadvantage. On account of this, we detail Dong’s method of analogy from the perspectives of a methodology and the establishment of modern scientific theory.

When using the methods built on scientific similarity theory and synergetics to investigate Dong’s method mixing science, superstition, truth and fallacy together, our analysis will be more profound and more comprehensive and our evaluation will be more practical.

In my view, Dong’s analogy is firstly a method, according to category, to make things develop from chaos towards an ordered state. On the basis of the summary of theories of Yin-Yang and five elements in Spring and Autumn by Master Lü, he took five elements of things and categories of Yin and Yang showing the properties and functions of things as the basic methods and tools of his theoretical framework. Further, he explicated theories of Yin-Yang and five elements with analogy as a basic method so as to build a new universal scheme. Heaven, human and society are similar in some aspects because they all have Yin and Yang and work in the same order according to the order of Yin-Yang and five elements. Thus each sub-system (Heaven, human, society and culture and education, economy and politics inside of the society) is in an ordered state. When the entire system runs in an ordered state and in the ideal mode of “integration of Heaven and human”, the function of Heaven-human philosophy is achieved.

Dong noted the similarities of the sub-systems. He analogized them by the simple similarity of Heaven’s four seasons, man’s four limbs and emperor’s four policies. Through such analogy, he connected the sub-systems (Heaven, human and society). On the strength of the function of theories of Yin-Yang and five elements, all sub-systems, in his theory, organize themselves in terms of category to work synchronously and responsibly. Sequentially, all the universe system is in a state of self-organization, the structure of “integration of Heaven and human” and its function is achieved, which takes into the effect of synergy. Of course, it is lack of scientific evidence that Dong combined theories Yin-Yang and five elements with everything in the universe and made each sub-system obey the same basic principle to work. It is a kind of subjectivity over objects. However, such method objectively functioned things to organize themselves and reach the effect of synergy. It can be argued theoretically and deduced logically. This shows that the speculation of Dong’s ideas were much better than that of his counterparts.
Dong's analogy is a method of revealing things' class and relationships. While building up synergetics, H. Haken, through experiment and analogy, could elaborate the macro ordered state with a few variables. Moreover, he thought the clear advantage of using analogy was that the research from one field could be spread to another. After connecting Heaven, human and society together in terms of their inner components in light of Yin-Yang and five elements, Dong found the similarities in things' presentation (each has the primary and the secondary, the outside and the inside), similarities in number (four seasons, four kinds of weather and four policies; twelve joints of human body, twelve months of a year...) similarities of materials (gold, wood, water, fire and earth), similarities of properties (Yin, Yang, running in light of inter-promotion and mutual-restriction of five elements) and so on. He deduced these by analogy from human to Heaven then to society. He “described the formless with form and elaborated the uncountable with the countable”.

From the perspective of methodology, it has some merits except for its absurdity and subjectivity.

Dong's analogy is still a kind empathetic method of explaining things' class through personification. Theorists of Yin-Yang and five elements think that all things can be divided into different classes according to the different organization. Things of same kind have the interaction that “When the things in the same category, they will attract one another; when things have same Qi (energy power), they will draw close to each other when their voices are in the same tune, they will respond each other”.

The Book of Changes holds that “heaven and Earth exert their influences, and there ensue the transformation and production of all things”. Dong took drums and psalteries as examples, “when a drum or psaltery sounds in the same pitch of another's, they will respond to each other”, to conclude that “things get together due to their classes”.

This sort of phenomena is explained by the analogic method. It is worth noting that analogy is also a kind empathetic method for Dong to personify natural objects. In his view, “Heaven as well possesses feelings like happiness, anger, sadness and joy, which is similar to human”. “To people, the energetic powers of Yin and Yang are hobby, hate, happiness and anger; to Heaven, they are warm, cool, cold and hot”. Spring, summer, autumn and winter become the manifestation of human's hobby, anger, sadness and joy, and Heaven becomes a “person” with feelings and wishes.

As we know, it is the “empathy” of aesthetics that it seems they might be equipped with human feeling, emotion, wishes and activities when we reflect on natural things without feeling into our subjective consciousness. The phenomenon of “empathy” is eventually a kind “personification” appearing in man's consciousness when natural objects are reported. It is a result from the interactions of emotion and association, and it is a special expressive form of association. What is closely related to empathy is association of similarities. Dong’s analogy is the cognitive skill
characterized by association of similarities. This cognitive skill, in the relationship between subjects and objects, plays the role of communicating the feelings of the same class and connecting man with objects by transforming emotion. Dong's stress on the similarities of things and use of this idea, especially his establishment of the theoretical system that “man is an integral part of Heaven” was based on his association of artistic conception about it.

The empathy to personify natural objects by analogy is a rather important method for Dong to construct his theoretical system, which is also a typical feature of his idea. Here is his difference from contemporaneous thinkers. His analogic method is also a kind of intuitive extrapolation built on experience. A reasonable extrapolation based on personal experience is the primary method for Confucianists to know the world. To extrapolate the family relation to the nation and the father-son relation to the emperor and ministers is an application of intuitive extrapolation into the ethical politics of a nation's unity. Dong continued and promoted this method and spread it to nature and society as well as various fields of both. The analogic method of “confirmation of categories and matching of numbers” built on the observation of daily life is a typical intuitive extrapolation. From the angle of such interrelation, confirmation of categories is the premise for matching of numbers while the latter supplements the former. They both benefit from each other. When this method combines with the concrete things and intuitive administrative means, it may rely on experience and be very emotional and acceptable. When it relates to the empty “Heaven”, experience would be useless and it would become a kind mysticism. From the perspective of Chinese traditional ideological culture and the history of Confucianism, Dong’s analogic method objectively and systematically set up the Confucian cognitive skill characterized by intuitive extrapolation.

It is obvious from above that Dong’s method of “listing relevant records together and putting same contents into the same category” is far from absurd or useless. It still has some merits. Nonetheless, the reasonableness in his method was covered over due to the prevailing idealism namely, theology, in his theoretical system. For he regarded analogy as a universal magical way and used it without restraint, which attached subjectivism. The utilitarianism and pragmatism in his ideas caused quite a few absurd results. Analogy itself has its probability of deduction. Dong did not avoid it carefully. In contrast, he spared no effort to make all use of it to serve his political goal. What is specially noted is that Dong’s analogy and the similarities in his theory were not equal to those in modern similarity theory and synergetics. The former is the construction tool to build up a rough theological system while the latter is a scientific method based on experiment. The former is just a simple measurement of things’ nature with clear subjectivity, whereas, the latter is a scientific achievement from accurate calculation, which can help build mathematical models to deduce things’ nature and quantity and set up relevant plans. All this cannot be mentioned in the same breath. The current study wants to declare that Dong’s philosophical methodology, as an important part of the history of Chinese traditional philosophy, cannot simply be denied. On the contrary, it is worthy of further investigation.
II. The holistic, intuitive and experiential way of thinking

As the thinking mode of a deep cultural structure, Dong’s thinking was characterized by wholeness and intuition and based on experience.

Since the end of the Warring States Period, the trend towards national unity and merger of nationalities, and cultural convergence had been increasingly obvious. The unification conducted by the Qin and Han dynasties turned this trend into the reality of politics and culture. Correspondingly, the knowledge that all things are the same reached unity and gradually transformed into mentality and behaviour. Dong’s logical consolidation using analogical deduction and his experiential thinking based on the classification by Yin-Yang and five elements were typical of the times. On the whole, Dong’s entire thought that all things are the same mainly consists of three parts:

First, the view that the universe is unified by the coherent-reference between Heaven, Earth and human. In the time of Qin and Han, the idea that “the coherence goes between Heaven, Earth and human” to recognize the objective natural rules as precondition and think highly of man’s subjectivity was the main stream of social current on which thinkers concentrated. The Book of Changes tells us “to find the changes through comparison(“槃”) of each other and repeated matches”. 485 Master Xunzi once argued that “Heaven has its own favorable time, Earth has its own right place and human has its own suitable management, that is to say human can parallelize with Heaven and Earth”.486 Han Feizi suggested that when judging whether a speech was right or wrong, it was necessary to “measure it according to the place and time, test it with physical methodology and analyze it with human conditions”.487 The Doctrine of the Mean emphasizes that man can “embarrass Heaven and Earth for gestation” and “can be compared with Heaven and Earth”. In Spring and Autumn by Master Lv, it is recorded that “a proposal should be measured to determine whether it conforms to Heaven’s way, whether it is practical or beneficial for human beings. Only in this way, can it be judged right or wrong”. 488 The way in Writings of Prince Huainan to set up its own theoretical system is to “observe the change rule of Heaven’s way, investigate into everything on the Earth and connect various principles”.489 It also declares that five emperors and three kings looked up for learning from Heaven, down for getting measures from Earth and middle for laws from people.490 All these discussions could be heard or read without end in the time of Qin and Han. They fully reflected the vigour and mood of the times.

Dong complied with this trend and made all effort to propagate his view of universal unity in which Heaven, Earth and human refer to one another. He said, “Down on earth, human raises everything while looking up to Heaven”.491 “Heaven creates all things, Earth raises them and human accomplishes them... These three form an organic whole, and not one of them can be dispensed with”.492 “The ways of Heaven, Earth and human can construct morality”.493 “Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang, wood, fire, earth, gold and water, these nine elements plus the human turning into ten in total, which are the whole numbers of Heaven”.494
These three lines stand for Heaven, Earth and human while the vertical is used for linking them together. The one who dares to link Heaven, Earth and human must be the emperor, whoever else can do this? Clearly, Dong's discussion takes the whole universe into account. In virtue of this thought, Heaven, Earth and human are an organic whole, which cannot be split. However, man is centered and all things have life and will in Dong's theoretical universe. When Heaven or Earth is apart from the human, they will lose their emotion and will. Heaven or Earth without emotion and will cannot cultivate benevolence. Heaven or Earth cannot exist when they lose emotion and will. Man must obey the natural laws of Heaven and Earth because that is where he lives. If man does not, his defiance against nature must be punished. So, people must comprehensively take every factor about Heaven, Earth and human into account when they act, but not fall into one-sidedness by considering factors of one only. These all reflect the characteristics of Dong's theory.

Second, the uniform political view of grand unity. According to Dong Zhongshu's view, the unity of China was a matter of course. From his whole theoretical system, no matter “the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues” of moralism, interaction and integrity of Heaven and human, the harmony of system or analogy and cooperation of methodology, all of their goals are the same: to convince the necessity, rationality and absolute superiority of grand unity. Describing in his own “classical words”, “the grand unity advocated by Spring and Autumn is the long convention, which is right for both the ancient society and the current”.

It was based on such knowledge that he put all his effort into creating a large and complete theoretical system, which gave a brand-new way of ideological control and political rule centering on Confucianism and co-coordinating other schools to the rulers so as to disorder: “people learn different theories and have different views, hundred schools have hundreds of ways for different pursuits... The legal system changes frequently.” In order to ease the way for rulers to conveniently control ministers and people and to stabilize the social unity, eliminating different political views to reach unity and highlighting norm rules and regulations to guide ordinary people's behaviors. The “emperor controls the whole world”. In other words, centralization characterized by the emperor's priority and by common people's humbleness.

After all, all the power and rights are centralized in the emperor's hands. This unity logically includes the identification of politics and power. Under these conditions then, this was objectively helpful for the nation's unity, spiritual cohesion, and community.

However, it lead inevitably to individual monocracy and the appearance of authoritarianism. From the angle of history, Dong must be held responsible for the decline of national culture and severe tyranny after the Han and Tang dynasties because of his one-sided unity view of politics, made for emperors.

What is to be pointed out is that there are three contents making up Dong's political view of grand unity in light of his theory's connotation and structure.
First, it is the ideological unity in the grand unity of the world. This was the starting point of his political view, as well the destination. Seeing from his works such as *Three Schemes about Heaven and Human* and *Spring and Autumn Studies*, all that Dong did, in the name of the history of Qin and Han dynasties’ ideology, aimed at reaching political unity through unifying ideology and then the unity of military force thus was reinforced.

Second, the grand unity means the unity of territory. Dong asked emperor to rule the country with “rectified mind” according to *The Gongyang Commentary*. “An emperor must rectify the court with rectified mind, thus rectified court can rectify all ministers, rectified ministers for people, rectified people for the entire world. So, once rectified world is achieved, whoever far and near all dare not to betray”.... The world would be rich because of emperor’s wise command, excellent generals and ministers across the nation would come for emperor’s grand morality. All of propitious things or auspicious sign would come.

Henceforth, the emperor’s benevolence would be achieved. 497 He still held that “The principle of *Spring and Autumn* is to determine the beginning of Heaven with primordial Qi, to determine the emperor’s governmental affairs with the starting of Heaven, to determine the duke’s accession to the throne with the emperor’s government affairs and to ensure governance with the duke’s accession to the throne. When accomplishing these five measures, emperors’ indoctrination could be spread to the whole world”.498

It is obvious that Dong’s theory about grand unity means to unify the territory. In addition, the grand unity is the unity of China. As has been noted, Dong’s theory of unity focuses on the unity of ideology. But, can the effect of ideological unity be got only after unifying the culture? As to unity of culture, one of its important contents was to distinguish Yi from Xia, and thus to change Yi with Xia. However, to stress the discussion between Yi and Xia first was not only the need to pure “Chinese culture”, but also the need to spread “Chinese culture” to the whole world, especially the places where the Yi and Di minority lived.

In the case of the views in *Spring and Autumn* advocated by Dong, as long as Yi and Di minorities handled matters in terms of “Chinese” culture, they would be treated with “Chinese” rites and brought into the “Chinese” cultural system. On the other hand, if someone in a “Chinese” region did not conduct themselves according to the rites, they would be thought of as enemies like the Yi and Di minorities. He said that “Spring and Autumn doesn’t have commonly used wording. The words change with time. Like Jin State has turned into Yi and Di, Chu State was changed into a state full of noblemen, so the wording must change to fit the memorandum”.499 The conducts of Jin State did not conform to the rites, so it was put into the opposite side of Yi and Di, even though it originally put rites into practice. The conduct of Chu State, which before belonged to Yi or Di and the like, answered to the rites, it was thus included in the class of “nobleman”, even though it did not know the rites hitherto. These classifications of China and foreign countries or Chinese nation and minorities are just for the purpose of grand unity, so it is one part of “grand unity of China”. It is a more profound and s more civilized unity than these two above.
Third, the unity view of culture containing same way and similar customs. On the level of cultural value, Dong's whole theory of all things the same is for the sake of establishing a criterion about value that can be identified by all people. The core of this criterion is the theory of “the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues” characterized by politicization, moralization and emotion, which takes politicized ethics as basic orientation and typically combines introspectiveness and external regulations of unity of Heaven with human together. Under the guidance of such basic cultural values, a series of corresponding theories about cultural unity appeared. As to the ideological culture, he strongly initiated the idea to “dismiss the hundred schools and revere only the Confucianism” and established the ideology theoretically based on the ideas of Yin-Yang and five elements, which is dominated by Confucianism but assisted by Legalism.

He proposed to take it as the leading idea of the nation's political life and the spiritual power of individual cultivation and political value orientation. Of which, the famous value of “the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues”, as his original creation appearing in the form of moralism, played a rather significant historical role in the establishment of whole nation’s common values. For the institutional culture, he strove to establish a new cultural and educational system while wholeheartedly planning to setting the system of civil servants. This plays a part of continuing the past and opening up the future in the unity of culture. In The Nature and the Form of Three dynasties' System Reformation of Spring and Autumn Studies, with the help of his explanation about “the first month of a new emperor's calendar”, he set forth his own wish for unifying the ceremonial system. He said, “when Spring and Autumn talks about the first month of a new emperor’s calendar… What is it? They say that an emperor must receive the order of Heaven first and then make the first month. An emperor must reform the calendar, change the colors of the robes and make rites and music in order to unify the whole country”.

It is nothing other than the measures such as adjusting the calendar and making rites and music and so forth that helped rulers make people have a sense of belonging. Thus the political situation of grand unity was consolidated. Of course, although the measures like changing colors of the robes and so on might take effect in unifying the ideas to identify the new imperial court by discarding the previous one, in the long run, they were essentially absurd and negative. Dong's idea to set up a unified ceremonial system was not only a self-conscious conclusion of “rites of Zhou dynasty” desired by Confucianists, but also a continuance and development of the ceremonial system which was actively set up by Confucians like Shu Suntong and so on since the starting of the Han dynasty. More importantly, it set up a model for the later rulers to establish a new system through “reformation”. As we said before, it played a role of continuing the past and opening up the future.

All Dong did was for the unity of ideology and regulation of the system so as to achieve the result that all people share the same moral principles and the whole country has common customs. As the core and ultimate value goal of his political ideals, the ideological implication of his theory of grand unity was rather inclusive.
Some scholars from Taiwan pointed out that the connotation of Dong's view about grand unity specifically includes four parts: beginning, namely that the emperor should amend and examine himself to be the model for people; conformity with natural laws; the right position; and unity of ideology.

In my opinion, this conclusion needs more investigation. Among these four points, only the last one, unity of ideology, is to the point. Among the rest, the beginning and the right position, after all, are approaches to achieve grand unity. The conformity with natural laws just explains the rationality and priority of grand unity. When we examine it from the Dong's whole ideological system, it is easy to find that his idea about grand unity includes not only the connotation of ideological unity, territory unity and nation unity talked above, but also the contents of system unity, culture unity and unity of Heaven with human, etc. It is because Dong's idea about grand unity contains a rather wide content, in addition to the complexity of the external world; he took advantage of the similarities of all things in the universe to simplify the complicated phenomena with an analogic method. Finally, he got the effect that all things worked in the same way and coordinated each other harmoniously. In the case of the classes of thinking method, this situation can be brought into the holistic thinking.

The premises and material foundation of such holistic thinking are everything in the universe consisting of Yin-Yang and five elements, etc. Additionally, they logically work in accordance with the laws of Yin-Yang and five elements. For this reason, all things in the universe work in a good order and in the same way. This holistic thinking that all things work in the same way usually takes view of connections to investigate certain issues. It emphasizes particularly on the function of an entire system, which comes into play through the connection and interaction of subsystems.

Therefore, it owns integrity and sequence. Due to the emphasis on the similarities and coordination of all things and the inter-conversion from one to another, various things from different fields can affect and interact with each other so as to make things go from chaos to an ordered state. In addition, even between the things from different classes and different fields, they can gradually develop from disorder to ordered state in the light of the shared principle of “unity of Heaven with human” in that they have the same components and operation rules—Yin, Yang and five elements.

Of course, Dong's holistic thought that everything runs in the same way, honestly speaking, is quite theoretically subjective, optional and mysterious. Furthermore, it takes serving for practical politics as its tenet and does not hesitate a moment to distort the principles of academic theory in order to play it up for the rulers. This shows a strong politics. All these are worthy of our concern and need more serious criticism. Nevertheless, we still have to admit that Dong's holistic thinking fitted the living conditions of agricultural society with religious elements and met the requirements of feudal despotism. As a result, it had a vitality. Dong's thought refined and developed both previous and current theoretical thinking. From a theoretical perspective, it set up the framework for a Chinese model of thinking. Seen from the objective conditions of social practice and the refined way of subjective theories, Dong's thinking is once again intuitive and based on experience.
This thinking mode firstly concerns various phenomena in daily life, and from this, derives a cognitive approach which leads on to theorizing. To know the laws of nature and define behavior in human society through the links between seasonality and the cyclic nature of agriculture is a cognitive source for Dong's mode of thought. As we know, sowing, harvest and store of produce are closely related to the seasons—spring, summer, autumn and winter. People learned from the practices of their ancestors that they must obey the seasons if they want to have a good harvest. If the farming season is disobeyed, people will harvest little.

However, the continuance of natural seasons—spring, summer, autumn and winter and the alternating cycle of day and night are objective phenomenon which are independent of man's will. When knowing things and dealing with problems, people must rely on long experience but must not overstep and set up another set of agricultural sequence based on thought. Dong rightly made use of people's experienced knowledge from life and work practice to construct his intuitive cognitive model of experience. In the *Three Schemes about Heaven and Human and Spring and Autumn Studies*, he often uses “the basic principle” that four seasons cannot be disobeyed and farming time cannot be missed to persuade rulers to administrate according to time but not to take administrations of summer in spring or declare orders of winter in autumn. This is clear evidence for the principle that administration is guided by intuitive experience.

With various phenomena of astronomy and geography got from perception and observation and under help of the idea of interaction between Heaven and human, Dong argued for his own political stand, which is another important resource and marked feature of his experienced thinking mode. Phenomena such as meteors, earthquakes, hail, flood and drought are originally the objective factors. They do nothing with administration of human society.

However, Dong demonstrated these natural phenomena without restraint and explained them as the presence of Heaven's will. He thought they were Heaven's award for the good or punishment for the bad in the human world. Coming in their time the wind and rain and running in order of the four seasons are the indication of cleanliness and justice. Drought, flood, earthquakes and landslips are the signs of political corruption. It is through experienced observation about various natural phenomena in daily life and subjective analogy that Dong brought his idea of interaction between Heaven and human into the human world. From this, he opened up the holistic thinking mode of unity of Heaven with man based on intuitive experience and taking subjective analogy as methodology.

The use of Chinese medicine's theory and practice to bring conformity of Heaven with human, unity of Heaven with human, and unity of universe is another resource and clear feature of Dong's experienced way of thinking. Theories of Chinese medicine represented by *Inner Canon of Huangdi* take ideas of Yin-Yang and five elements as a theoretical basis and think of the whole world as the big universe and the human body as the small. According to these theories, there is an inner compatibility between these two.
Medical men in the Qin and Han dynasties took “analogizing classes through observation about external phenomena” as their basic method. They brought the things and phenomena in daily life such as the five flavors, the five colors, the five Qis, the five directions and five seasons, etc. and man's five sense organs, five emotions, five body constituents, five internal organs and five hollow organs, etc. into the system of five elements, in light of their properties.

For instance, in *Inner Canon of Huangdi*, man's liver, heart, spleen, lung and kidney are respectively matched to the five elements, wood, fire, earth, gold and water, and they correspond to the five seasons—spring, summer, long summer, autumn and winter. And the five seasons to five colors: blue, yellow, red, white and black. All these are taken as the foundation to medical practice. In the work *Plain Questions*, the author, in the name of Huangdi, said that “all diseases should be treated based on careful observation of the patient's form, energy, look and the pulse-phase as well as the latest cause of the disease. Only in this way can the disease be cured. When the patient's form and energy match, the disease can be cured. So as to the disease when the patient's look is red or his pulse-phase is corresponding to the four seasons... When the patient's pulse-phase works against the four seasons, he will not be cured”.

Clearly, these theories are all from experience based on intuitive observation. Dong made use of the cognitive way of medicine in the Qin and Han dynasties, based on intuitive experience, people's knowledge about their own experiences of diseases and the notable intuitive observation method of theories and practice of Chinese medicine. He did so to boost his views about wholeness such as the ideas of interaction between Heaven and human, mutual-assistance of Heaven and human and integrity of Heaven and human.

The use of theories of Yin-Yang and five elements to link all things in the universe together is another important part and notable feature of Dong's experienced thinking mode. On the face of it, the theories of Yin-Yang and five elements are more abstracting than those contents above. Yet, from the aspects of the formation of theories of Yin-Yang and five elements, and their application by Dong, they are still very intuitive and experienced. There is no need to emphasize the fact that the original meaning of Yin-yang is from human observation about crops in agriculture. When they face to Yang (the sun), rich harvest will come. When they face to Yin (the shadow where sunlight cannot reach), poor harvest will. Even in later periods, this is rather intuitive for talking about Yin and Yang of two things with different properties or energies.

Yin and Yang, as abstract signs, are always used to refer to concrete objects, such as the sun, moon, man and woman. The basic connotations of five elements were five concrete things, namely wood, fire, earth, gold and water. Later they surpassed the primary meanings of visual objects and became the symbols of things or phenomena with different properties and from different classes. However, these symbols are still strongly intuitive and vivid. In fact, they are often used for referring to the concrete human or natural phenomena real life. The Yin and Yang in Dong's system stand for man and woman, emperor and ministers and the sun and the
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moon. Five elements are things like the five sensible seasons —spring, summer, long summer, autumn and winter, five sense organs and so forth, they represent the behaviors of loyal ministers and dutiful sons, they are the laws of five agricultural tasks, sowing, growing, cultivating, harvest and storage. All these typically show that Dong's theories of Yin-yang and five elements are not only abstract tenets, but also cognitive approaches clearly based on intuitive experience.

In a word, we can infer from the arguments above that Dong's thought is characterized by holistic intuition. The social foundation of this thought includes peasant's psychological characteristics built on small-scale farming economy and the cognitive features of intuition which are owned particularly by agricultural society. This mode focuses on the wholeness and observable aspects of things. It has the characteristics of vividness, geniality and impressiveness. At the same time, it emphasizes the connection between different things and the inseparability of the whole universe. It made a very important contribution to the formation of Chinese traditional thinking centering on wholeness, experience and relations. It also helped perfect the traditional wholeness-centered value orientation.

Nevertheless, it still has serious shortcomings. When emphasizing intuition, feelings and experience, the function of rationality and logic are unavoidably neglected. When wholeness is stressed and the point that all things in the universe work in the same way is highlighted, the political situation of grand unity must be fulfilled and order must be maintained. At the same time, parts must be belittled and individuals must be neglected so that their positivity is constrained. In addition, the vagueness of this thinking mode makes it difficult to precisely analyze things and establish a corresponding theoretical system. All conclusions always lack operability and it can neither be verified nor falsified. The existence of these defects made Chinese traditional thought neglect analysis, science and technology and be short on falsifiable theory. It caused problems for China's development of modern science.

III. The reform principles of respecting Heaven and the practice of the ancient times

Dong's thinking method inherited the ideological tradition of “believing in and loving old things” advocated by Confucianists in pre-Qin dynasty. The value standard of respecting Heaven for practical political need was also continued. He proposed the reform principles to respect Heaven and the practice of the ancient times.

In the pre-Qin dynasty, Confucians were in awe of Heaven. Confucius professed that a gentleman man respected three things: Heaven’s will, noblemen, and the words of saints”. Heaven’s will was one of the important factors in restraining behaviour. But, Confucius did not purely depend upon Heaven's will. That is, “the four seasons run their course thereby, the hundred creatures, each after its kind, are
between. Heaven does no speaking! This is typical evidence. Confucius' attitude towards Heaven is to keep a respectful distance. While continuing to develop Confucianism's subjective spirit, Mencius brought his thinking to the perfect "Heaven".

Mencius originally proposed his cognitive approach of "knowing man's personality and Heaven with one's whole heart" and practiced it personally. He attributed "the four origins"—kindness, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness—to the value principles gifted by Heaven. They all result from the respect of Heaven.

Master Xunzi, though, insisted on his glorious idea that "Heaven is separated from human and the latter must overcome the former", his whole system was permeated with the awesome. He attributed all niceness and good wishes to "Heaven" and named them "Heaven", for instance, Officer of Heaven, Emperor of Heaven and Administration of Heaven, etc. He called the necessity that manpower could not overcome, the "fate of Heaven". He yet praised the superstition of witchcraft that "good or ill luck is predicted according to Yin and Yang and the tortoise shell will be drilled to break for divination". All these reflect that Master Xunzi did not "make a complete break" with the traditional Confucian view of "Heaven's destiny".

Dong Zhongshu inherited Master Xunzi's idea of ideology. Combining with the time condition, he made an epochal development in Confucian ideas about Heaven and human. Among the mental space, up, down, back and forth (Heaven, human, today and ancient), Dong oriented at "up"(Heaven) and "back"(ancient). That is, facing with the choice between Heaven and human, he thought highly of Heaven, so as to the ancient when faced with the choice of the ancient and today. Therefore, he pushed "Heaven" to an unprecedented position by building up his theoretical system of unity of Heaven with the human.

Dong took the ideas of Yin-Yang and five elements as the theoretical framework and interaction between Heaven and human as the core of his theoretical system, which is actually a theological system. In this, Heaven has a supreme position. Heaven dominates everything and declares all orders. All things in the world should take the will of Heaven as their tenet. The emperor takes administration to answer Heaven's will. All praise or punishment is the manifestations of Heaven's emotions, happiness, anger, sadness or joy. The inheritance of dynasties and the change of emperors all follow the unavoidable rules through which the five elements work.

All in all, the way of Heaven makes the human way clear to all and the latter must comply with the former. From a practical point of view, the thought principle and value principle, "common people follow the emperor while the emperor follows Heaven" advocated by Dong are a typical manifestation that Heaven's way is superior to the human way and Heaven's will controls human will. The reasons why Dong did this are twofold: firstly, to maintain the political situation of grand unity through unifying the overall order and custom by establishing psychology, value and action laws beyond the human world. Of course, to some extent it was to limit
the emperor’s power (at least subjectively, objectively of course, it was a different story). Second, to support the rationality of the existing rule by arguing that the emperor’s right is appointed by Heaven and to emphasize that the existing political structure and its function result from “being accordant with the rhythm of nature”. The sovereign descends to the world, he inherits the great achievements of previous saints and kings. Of course, it conforms to the principles by which the five elements works. Hence, the ruler’s conduct is reasonable and holy because it issues from Heaven’s will and order. Of course, this became “the present emperor’s” best excuse.

Dong’s theory of “following Heaven’s will and receiving Heaven’s order” continued the idea of Heaven’s will which was a venerable Confucian tradition. It borrowed the Yin-Yang school’s theory that the inter-promotion and mutual restriction amongst five elements cause the change of dynasties. As it were, this is a combination of Confucianism with theories of the Yin-Yang School. In this sense, Dong’s theory of “following Heaven’s will and receiving Heaven’s order” not only continued Confucianism but also surpassed it. In the light of its function, this theory at first is a kind of political declaration arguing that “what exists is reasonable”. Second, it places stress on the legitimacy of the regime at hand and demonstrates the circulation of the “political system” one after another, which embodies that rulers’ consciousness of “imperial genealogy”. Again, it pivots the sanctity and supremacy of the existing dynasty, leading to social solidarity and terrorizing the “deviationists”.

Importantly, “following Heaven’s will and receiving Heaven’s order”, as a clear theoretical perspective, was not directly proposed by Dong Zhongshu. What he proposed directly is the proposal of “obeying nature and following the routines”. However, just as we learn above, there is a clear view of “all from Heaven’s blessings” in Dong’s theoretical system. It is unnecessary to say more about his ideas of following Heaven’s will. For his idea of “receiving Heaven’s order”, we relate it to his theories of Yin-Yang, especially of five elements and his views about “Three Unities” and “Three Beginnings”; it is as clear as daylight.

Dong’s idea was popular among the historical rulers in that it fitted the universal social psychology in a patriarchal clan system of feudal society to admit that one’s misfortune is predetermined by Heaven. After the Han dynasty, all rulers made all use of “following Heaven’s will and receiving Heaven’s order” to protect their profits and they even grasped this idea unconsciously, although some of them did not use the concept clearly. Zhu Yuanzhang, the first Emperor of the Ming dynasty, called himself the emperor following Heaven’s will and receiving Heaven’s order in the letters to confer titles of nobility on his ministers. Afterwards, “handing down” became a formulaic expression for rulers to confer titles of nobility on ministers. What is interesting and thoughtful is that the peasant uprisings after the Han dynasty also argued that they were the heroes to “enforce justice on behalf of Heaven” in the name of “following Heaven’s will and receiving Heaven’s order”. It is thus evident how impressive Dong’s ideas are!
The idea of “following Heaven’s will and receiving Heaven’s order”, as a kind of value orientation and way of thinking, has an obvious feature of “looking up to Heaven”, which shows its strong mentality of dependence. According to this theory, without “Heaven”, people will lose the place for their spirit and the hope of their happiness, all theories will lose their authority and everything at hand will not have a legal basis. Doubtless, this is an abnormal mentality, dependence, which has been unavoidably brought by Dong’s theological system of interaction between Heaven and human, which objectively constrains human initiative and creativity.

Combining the idea “to follow Heaven’s will and receive Heaven’s order” with “looking up to Heaven”, Dong was soft on the way of thinking to obey the nature and follow the routines of “looking back of history”.

As we know, Confucius is famous for his saying that he was: “A transmitter and not a maker, believing in and loving the ancients”. Confucius took old saints’ rights and wrongs as standard and yearned for the ancient “golden times”. He himself shouldered the restoration of ancient rites. Mencius did not only imitate Confucius to respect the ancients and have a bigoted belief in the ancients, but also was the first man to definitely peddle the slogan: “imitating the previous kings’ conducts”. He “always made laudatory reference to Emperors of Yao and Shun when speaking”. Mencius thought that “the political corruption and the loss of the state, at bottom, could be attributed to “the neglect of previous kings”. Frankly speaking, Confucius and Mencius’ Confucianism took the ways in ancient times as the first value orientation.

Dong Zhongshu kept consistency with these two noble men in the value orientation of his time. In King Chuzhuangwang, Spring and Autumn Studies, Dong put forward a Confucian principle: “the way in the Spring and Autumn period was to obey nature and follow the routines”. He compared it to the saying “Nothing can be accomplished without norms or standards and none of five notes can be defined without playing six pitches”. Based on it, he expounded the truth that “the country would not be managed well without learning the experience of previous kings”.

Thus, he highlighted that saints must often learn from and imitate the previous kings’ conduct. Under the guidance of this idea, Dong took a number of wise rulers as examples. He recklessly demonstrated the meaning of Spring and Autumn to insist on following wise rulers. This actually aims at drawing people close in the name of previous kings. So to speak, Dong’s respect for Heaven and routines and advocacy for previous Kings’ ways are really for adapting ancient forms to present-day use. In other words, he took Heaven to promote his theories and protect the present system.

Documents show that in the ancient time of low productivity, worship to god and former kings respectively had their own conditions of natural science and psychological basis of patriarchal clan system and bloodline. Worship to god, as an ideological form, was strong. It would not disappear along with the improvement in productivity. Science and technology developed more rapidly than before. The
formation of all discipline systems and the maturity of many technologies were the general features of science and technology at that time. Nonetheless, science and technology was still based on intuitive experience. However, the transcendent Heaven above human society remained intangible. And the view of worshipping god was also troubling human beings like a nightmare. It was in this point that Dong mystified Heaven in the name of respecting Heaven. Likewise, when people thought highly of filial piety based on the patriarchal clan system and blood relationship, worship to ancestors was rather popular.

The behaviours of ancient wise men were always regarded as the rule to measure people's morality and competency. In order to show filial piety for ancestors, each emperor scrupulously abided by the old doctrines and cautiously complied with the ancestors' system. The way of former kings became the best model for administration and cultivation. However, it had deep social roots. History shows that worship to god and former kings and views of Confucian orthodoxy were quite universal in the feudal society of the patriarchal clan system, or in the state of natural economy run by scattered individual farmers. Its impression ran deep into every corner of society and thus shaped a reasonable cultural mentality.

After being consciously accepted by the whole society, following routines such as worship for ancestors, especially a set of Confucian ethics propagating loyalty, filial piety, chastity and righteousness became the spiritual sustenance of people's emotion. Consequently, the idea of obeying nature and following the routines had got its natural economic basis. What is more important is that it had got the social psychological basis after treading on the former kings' teachings in the Qin dynasty and thinkers' efforts of restoration in the early Han dynasty. It needs to be pointed out that, in Lecture of Cultivation, Writings of Prince Huainan: “Common people tend to respect the ancient but belittle the current. So it is necessary for rulers to explain their ways with the stories of Emperor Huangdi and Shen Nung (legendary god of farming)”. Dong took a fancy to this social psychology and made use of it to make people have the same aim in the name of obeying nature and following the routines and in the exemplary ways of former kings. When looking into it from the angle of history, we should admit that here was Dong's ability to observe and contribute to constructing feudal cultural tradition.

Corresponding to the theories of obeying nature and following the routines and worship to former kings, Dong laid stress on the inheritance and importance of Confucian orthodoxy from the time of Yao and Shun to the time of Confucius and Mencius after Mencius' modeling of it. Accordingly, the orientation of obeying nature and following the routines, worship of former kings, and the Confucian orthodoxy is to restore ancient ways for reforming and serving real politics, as well as for the long-term interests of ruling class.

The position of the view to restore ancient ways, as an ideology, was politically positioned after Dong's strong promotion. This idea to think highly of the ancient ways, as to the role at that time, played a positive part in the unity of ideology. For its historical role later, it has a duality.
On the one hand, its own cohesive force and public appeal advanced the formation of the Chinese nation and enforced its solidarity and development. It also promoted the formation of common cultural psychology and behavioral modes. On the other hand, it was still a burden. The encumbrance of the Chinese nation does not just lie in loaded tradition but also in overstress of that tradition. From the state's political decision to individuals' peaceful life, they must get a logical proof from past history, or there would be lack of persuasiveness. This inertia confined by tradition is the very "inebriated burden" on the Chinese nation's shoulder, criticized repeatedly by numerous wise philosophers.

From the aspects of methodology and the practical political function, the idea of obeying nature and following the routines is a kind of gentle and gradual idea of reformism. After the establishment of feudal despotism, the emperors of despotism had supreme power, and the whole country was unified and ways and customs were the same. To maintain the political order and enforce despotism, and to make use of it in full measure were the unavoidable focus for thinkers at that time. In order to maintain the doctrine that “Heaven does not change, neither does the way”, Dong proposed the views of reformism to “reform by new rulers”, aiding each other of profit and loss and complementing each other of invariability and flexibility. In order to provide the theoretical foundation for this gradual reformation, Dong raised the traditional trump of obeying nature and following the routines.

With this, one cannot only consider himself to be the ruler in the name of Heaven's will, but also pride himself by continuing the Confucian orthodoxy. Even more, one cannot only persuade the emperor, but also teach the common people. Thereby, the society would walk forward step by step on the track set by the thinkers. That is to follow Heaven's will and receive Heaven's order; it is unnecessary to change the present unchangeable political situation. It needs to reform in the name of restoring ancient ways, rather than to defend to the last ancient way. It is necessary to spread new spiritual energy combined with local society so as to keep stable and harmonious social development. So, the establishment of gradual reformism became a sure matter, in accord with the traditional doctrines of the mean! It is those principles that the Constitutional Reform and Modernization launched by Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao et. al. took. The “historical story” of “Confucius reformation” invented by Kang Youwei in *A Study of Confucius’ Reformation*, Dong's Gong-Yang theory of three generations applied mechanically by him in *Dong Zhongshu's Studies of Spring and Autumn* and the idea advocated by him for society to “reform day by day” but not to “change it all of a sudden with force” are all modern reproductions of Dong Zhongshu’s gradual reformism of obeying nature and following the routines.
The Cultural Interpretation of Dong Zhongshu’s Ideal

With regard to the political theme of value in Dong Zhongshu’s theoretical system, the basic thoughts such as theory of Heaven and man, the theory of politics, the theory of value, the theory of system and the theory of methodology, etc. always center on one point—His theory of ideal. In a word, Dong’s theory of ideal concentrates on his grand wish of unification, harmonious but persistent pursuit and strategic blueprint for long-lasting political stability.

I. The great aspiration and noble ideal of the unity of the country

Dong Zhongshu was a famous scholar of the Gongyang School whose basic value was to propagate the political view of “the grand unification of Spring and Autumn” and promote the social practice of unification. Dong completely continued this idea of the Gongyang school and creatively developed it. This laid a solid theoretical foundation for the rulers to consolidate their rule in the Western Han dynasty.

As we know, advocating unity and giving counsels for it were the consistent practice of Confucianists’ in the Pre-Qin dynasty. Confucius rewarded the Zhou family. In order to protect the political order—emperors do their duties as emperors and ministers do their duties as ministers, so as to fathers and sons, he required that emperors must make rites, music and order of war. This is quite necessary for protecting the situation of unification. He praised Guanzhong, “Guan Zhong acted as prime minister to the duke Huan, which made him leader of all the princes and united and rectified the whole kingdom”.508 This shows his pursuit for unification.

Mencius shouted loudly that “the world must be unified”, Master Xunzi further confirmed the “unification” and hoped that “All the people of the world are like one family”. All these are the continuation and development of Confucianism. Among Confucian traditions, the most well known and most impressive view about “grand unity” is that of Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School.
Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School is also called The Biography of Gongyang School in Spring and Autumn or Biography of Gongyang School. It is a very important classical work of new text Confucianism. Gongyang School is a major school of Confucianism. It gives emphasis to “the sublime words with deep meaning” of The Spring and Autumn Annals and proposes the political ideal of “grand unity”. Recorded in The First Year of King Yingong, Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School, “First year, spring, emperor and first month. What is the year of Yuan? It is the first year of an emperor. What is spring? The beginning of one year. Who can be called as emperor? The Emperor Wenwang of Zhou dynasty deserves it. Why is the emperor discussed before the first month? Because the first month was from the calendar of Emperor Wenwang of Zhou dynasty. Why this calendar? For using a unified calendar in the world!”

This is the first time the concept of “grand unification”(or grand unity) was used. The Chinese character “大”(grand) can be regarded as a verb, meaning “think highly of” or “promote”; the characters “一統” are used as nouns, meaning “unity or unification”. “大一統”(grand unification) is to think highly and promote the business and situation of unification. Hexiu, a famous Gongyang scholar in the Han dynasty, explained “grand unification” like this: “the rulers are beginning. These are words of excuse. Emperors received Heaven's order to reform the system and take administration and teach for everything from mountains and valleys to grass and insects in nature. None of these is not related to the first month. So this is considered as the beginning of the administration and teaching”. Xu Yanshu in the Tang dynasty said, “An emperor, having Heaven's order, makes the first month to rule the world so as to keep all things in nature obeying it as the beginning. So, this can be called as grand unification. “In the views of Gongyang School, the arrangement of the four words—“spring, emperor, starting and month”—bears a deep intention demanding that everything be under emperor's control, which signifies “unification”. When importance is attached to the emperor's position and role, when it is acknowledged that the emperor is appointed by Heaven and when the emperor's managements and teaching way are “the same”, it must be “grand”.

Academic circles have various views about the author and the age of Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School. But, no matter how many differences there are between these views, they all, without previous arrangement, admit that Dong continued and developed the ideas in Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School and took them as the important content and method of his theory. So, it is of no great importance of textual research into the author and age of Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School to our investigation into Dong's elaboration about the concept of “grand unification” in this book.

In fact, whether the book was formed in the time of The Warring States or in the early Han dynasty, the idea of “grand unification” the book advocated reflects the historical trend of state unification and national amalgamation of ancient Chinese society from the time of The Warring States to the mid-term of the Western Han dynasty. It shows the spirit of the age at that time. According to history, the unification of Chinese society in that period takes three rather different forms with
different connotations for the military, politics and ideology. It underwent the gradual course of unification from military and politics to ideology. Although these three kinds of unification are different in content and form, their value orientations are the same. That is to create the situation of unification of China. Therefore, the theory of grand unification argued in detail in Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School shows the direction of historical development, which shows the national spirit of Chinese regarding unification.

Actually, not only Confucianists in the Pre-Qin dynasty insisted on unification of the country as stated above and took protecting unification as their duty, but also, the concept of “grand unification” was quite universal in the times of Qin and Han. The Biography of First Emperor of Qin, Records of Great Historian, has it: “now my Majesty has unified the country and carried out the system of prefectures and counties within the country. The laws and decrees were normalized. This had never been done by the five emperors since ancient times”.

The Biography of Wang Ji, Book of Han reads that “the reasons why the country was unified in the period of the Spring and Autumn Annals were that the entire country shares the same custom and regulations”. The idea of “grand unification” did not merely play an important part in unifying the country and the integration of culture in Qin and Han, but also enforced the national cohesion of Chinese people and consolidated their common dream in the long-term developmental process of the Chinese Nation, towards the spirit of unification.

Dong Zhongshu made full use of the theory of “grand unification” in Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School to support his own political ideal. He brought the “relationship among spring, emperor, beginning and month” written in The First Year of King Yingong, Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School into play so as to elaborate the idea of “grand unification”. The wording of the Spring and Autumn Annals places emperor between spring (春) and beginning (正), “isn’t it that the emperor takes administrations according to Heaven’s order to manage the people on the earth and thus becomes the king?” he asked.509 That means the Spring and Autumn Annals has rules and regulations in wording. The reason why “emperor” (王) is placed behind “spring” (春) but before “beginning” (正) is to declare Heaven’s will publicly so as to make the emperor take administration in accordance with Heaven’s will and lead people in Heaven’s way. Only in this way can the emperor be competent enough to be the sovereign.

When responding to Emperor Wudi’s inquiry, Dong once expressed similar ideas. He said, “I explore the best way of the benevolent governance in close accordance with the Spring and Autumn Annals. And I got it from beginning (正), Emperor(王) takes position before beginning while spring (春) before emperor. Spring is the result of Heaven’s conduct. It means that the emperor regulates his behavior the same as Heaven does. So, integrity is the beginning of benevolent governance.510 Su Yu, a scholar in the Qing dynasty, held the opinion in his work A Research into Spring and Autumn Studies that it is reasonable of “placing spring before emperor which means the Spring and Autumn Annals suggest that the emperor is subjected to Heaven’s will”.

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Dong made full use of the arrangement of words and developed the theory of “grand unification” based on it so as to support his lonely but great wish, grand unification of the country. He argued in Fengben, Spring and Autumn Studies, “the Spring and Autumn Annals records King Zhou’s conduct in terms of the rules of the State of Lu. In The Nature and the Form of Three dynasties’ System Reformation, Spring and Autumn Studies, he quoted the example of Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School that “the Spring and Autumn Annals records the emperor, beginning and month”. It records: “Who can be called as emperor? The Emperor Wenwang of Zhou dynasty can be. Why is the emperor discussed before the first month? Because the first month was from the calendar of Emperor Wenwang of Zhou dynasty. What is it? They say that “an emperor must receive the order of Heaven first and then make the first month”.

On these grounds, he proposed the cultural reformation for the sake of realizing the consolidation of grand unity. He said that: “An emperor must reform the calendar, change the colors of robes and make rites and music in order to unify the whole country... With Heaven’s order, one can become the emperor. So the making of the beginning month is the response to Heaven’s reformation. Thus, the laws and regulations are made for attending respectively to Heaven and Earth. Therefore, it is called as the beginning month of an emperor”.

He declared that making the title of a reigning dynasty, changing the place of palaces, changing the official titles, establishing rites and writing music were all inexorable demands and concrete manifestations. Hence, “the Spring and Autumn Annals, having Heaven’s order and recording the emperors’ conduct” became an unchangeable rule. When responding to Emperor Wudi’s question, he also did his best to advocate that it should act and reform according to Heaven’s will. This was so-called “reformation”. “Only under this reformation, can the country be managed well, and then the occurrence of disasters would decrease day by day. Finally, there would be more auspicious days”. The reformation mainly lies in system, culture and education, because “the system and the decoration of rich and bright colors of black and yellow are all for distinguishing the respect from the humble and advising others to be virtuous”.

So, with Heaven’s order, the Spring and Autumn Annals keeps records. And firstly, it changes the calendar and color of robes. According to the principle that emperors set up their ways by following the example of Heaven, Dong requested that “the emperor, on the one hand, should be obedient to Heaven and destiny; on the other, he should cultivate the people to have a good and stable temper; he should enact laws to keep order and prevent people from greediness”. Correspondingly, he built the imperial college, raised wise men and sought the talented, and he cultivated people with morality. He thoroughly corrected the erroneous Qin that unilaterally took Legalism to rule the country. Moreover, he proposed and interpreted the theory of “Three Unities and Three Beginnings” in the light of system establishment. All these above are theories or concrete measurements about country unification raised by Dong on the basis of theory about Heaven and human. They pay close attention to the establishment of system culture. They brought people’s behavioral norms, including emperors’,
The Cultural Interpretation of Dong Zhongshu’s ideal system so that they were helpful for the realization of the great ideal—grand unification.

It is also noted that the efforts on establishing system culture made by Dong were always confirmed with the ideological culture. He planned this establishment from the aspects of cultivating reasonable values and thinking mode. In turn, he would take advantage of this system culture to influence and promote the establishment of ideological culture. In responding to Emperor Wudi’s inquiry, he repeatedly emphasized the importance of ruling by morality and cultivation. Specifically, he advised Emperor Wudi to “modify” the “five virtues” such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness. For this clear proof, it is unnecessary to elaborate.

For demonstrating the necessity, sanctity and priority of a country’s unification, Dong paid much more attention to the establishment of ideological culture. The clearest typical example about this is his proposal to “oust the hundred schools, and only focus on Confucianism as the orthodoxy”. He recorded his great idea—“The unification of Spring and Autumn-Unity” is an unalterable principle, be it from Heaven to Earth or from ancient to the current”—in Biography of Dong Zhongshu, Book of Han.

“Nowadays, scholars hold different views. Ordinary people have various discussions, and all schools aim at different research points and get different meanings, so the emperor cannot have a unique standard to rule the country. Consequently, the laws and regulations change easily and people don’t know what to obey. I suggest that all those subjects and theories not belonging to six skills or Confucianism should be prohibited from developing. Only after these theories are exterminated and the laws and regulations are maintained through one thread, could people find what to follow”. In other words, if rulers want to have a lasting political stability and maintain unification, both system and ideology need to be unified in the same way. Hence, to oust the hundred schools but only focus on Confucianism is good for realizing the comprehensive unification of the country.

What needs to be pointed out is that Dong’s concept of unification is thorough and comprehensive. In fact, it is a grand unification of Heaven with the human. Yan Shigu noted Dong’s words: “Spring and Autumn-Unity is an unalterable principle, whether from Heaven to Earth or from ancient to the current”, “grand unification refers to all is one”, which is the clearest enunciation for this. Dong made another great contribution to the establishment of ideological culture. He set up the basic moral principles, “three cardinal guides and five constant virtues”.

Standing in the position of today, “three cardinal guides and five constant virtues”, as the moral principles of traditional society, surely have drawbacks. Especially for “three cardinal guides”, we need to clarify it with modern thinking. However, we should objectively admit that “three cardinal guides and five constant virtues”, as the basic moral standards from the Han dynasty down to the late Qing, played a rather significant role in social stability and spiritual cohesion.

From historical evidence, Dong’s great ideal of grand unification complied with the time trend and was confirmed by Emperor Wudi. Its various views and steps
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were also put into practice gradually. What is worthy of our attention is that the theory of grand unification elaborated by Dong according to *Spring and Autumn by Gongyong School* focused ultimately not only on the so-called political unity mentioned earlier or even ideological unity talked about in recent years, but also on the comprehensive unification of culture!

There is a widely accepted theory about culture, “culture consisting of three levels”. That is, the levels of material, system and ideology. Certainly, culture is a very wide conception. But it must be clear if we take this theory to look into grand unification as constructed by Dong, which organically combined with system culture and ideological culture. Thus, we can confirm that this is a kind of cultural unification.

Dong’s pursuit, of course, lies in his ideal—“Culture China”. But the underlying course is from the social conditions of his present. As we know, China was strong during the time of Emperor Wudi. Indeed, the unity of the military had been achieved. The unification of politics had also been reached. The central government controlled the situation and all the rites, music and war “were determined by the emperor (Heaven’s son)”. But over 70 years from the starting point of the Han dynasty to the time of Emperor Wudi, local separatists were active at times, particularly the rebellion of the seven states (Wu State, Chu State, Zhao State, Jiaodong State, Jiaoxi State, Jinan State and Zichuan State).

Moreover, powerful landlords “received favor from a superior and occupied the top position and they were rich in family because of high government pay. They seized the advantages of their position to struggle for fame and gain,” so that “the rich were extravagant and dissipated while the poor were in a mess of poverty and desperate anonymity”. People were forced by the harsh situation to risk threatening the existing rule. Correspondingly, because there was no complete or more practical system of cultural values after the fall of the Qin dynasty and rise of Han, people did not find the way to settle down calmly. An objective and new unification at a higher level was needed, namely the unification of culture. Dong’s conception of grand unification is about “culture’s grand unification”, which was a concentrated reflection of social tendency and a manifestation of the spirit of the time.

II. The pursuit of harmony and fairness

One of the most important parts of the Confucian political ideal and ideological tradition is the pursuit for fairness and harmony. Dong continued this tradition and directly applied it into ruling country and cultivation of social culture. Thereby, it became an important part of his theory. Roughly speaking, Dong’s idea about harmony and fairness can be divided into two parts, “to reach harmony through fairness” on the levels of thinking mode and social practice and “to correct prejudice with integrity” on the level of cultural values.
As the kernel of the harmony theory in Chinese cultural system, the conception of harmony and fairness had already appeared for a long time in Dong’s time.

As two independent concepts, fairness (ᇏ) is different from harmony (วล) in the connotation. Fairness, according to the explanation in Analytical Dictionary of Characters by Xu Shen in Eastern Han dynasty, means “inner”. Meanwhile, it means “fairness”. Duan Yucai, a scholar in the Qing dynasty further explained this in his Notes about Analytical Dictionary of Characters that “it is wrong to interpret it as harmony in loose copies. It should be understood as inner... fairness is a character differing from “outside” and “prejudice”. This character means appropriateness.514 That is, fairness cannot be simply interpreted as harmony but innerness; it is not only opposite to outside but also to prejudice. So it can be explained as upright (ᆞ), which means “suitableness”. In the Confucian classic The Doctrine of the Mean, there are the words “it can be regarded as fairness when one controls his/her own mood such as happiness, anger, sadness and pleasure”. This is a clear evidence for Xu Sheng and Duan Yucai’s interpretation for fairness. Zhu Xi, a famous Confucian in the Song dynasty, once said, “No prejudice means fairness”.

“วล” refers to harmony, consistency or coordination. In the end of the Western Zhou dynasty, Shi Bo put forward the philosophy that “Harmony actually fosters new things and similarity doesn’t sustain”.515 He pointed out that the conflicts can be balanced to unification and harmony only after the cooperation of various elements between things appears. When five flavors mix together, the food can be delicious; when six pitches cooperate with each other, the music can sound beautiful; when emperor is much of a listener to words of the pros and cons, the political situation can be harmonious and “consistent”. In the end of Spring and Autumn, Yan Yin from Qi State proposed the view of “both contradictory sides can assist each other”, which enriched the connotation of harmony. He emphasized that the emperor and his ministers formed two contradictory sides that should “assist one another”. When the emperor said “yes” to some policies, in fact they might have “negative effect”, “ministers should point the disadvantages out and provide better suggestions”.516 The situation that “both contradictory sides can assist each other” is harmony (วล). The comprehensive balance by “making up the shortage and dredging excessiveness” could make the emperor and ministers keep a harmonious and consistent relationship sustaining peaceful politics without mutual interference”. “The true gentleman is conciliatory but not accommodating. Common people are accommodating but not conciliatory”. said Confucius.517 This view verified the famous view of culture, “harmony in diversity”. You Ruo, a Confucian disciple, held that “harmony is the most precious”.518

The Book of Changes praised the idea of harmony and spared no effort in its promotion. It proposed an important point—“great harmony”. It reads, “the method of Qian is to change and transform, so that everything obtains its correct nature as appointed (by the mind of Heaven); and (thereafter the conditions of) great harmony are preserved in union. The result is ‘what is advantageous, and correct and firm’”.519 It regards “great harmony” as the supreme situation. The Doctrine of the Mean propagates the idea that “All things are nourished together without injuring one another. The courses of the seasons, and of the sun and moon,
are pursued without any collision among them”. Eventually, it aims at supporting the Confucian ideal of “great harmony”.

Dong inherited the ideological tradition of “fairness” and “harmony”. He specifically emphasized the role and importance of “fairness” in society and nature. He took “harmony” as the rule to measure affairs and the approach to reach a harmonious situation.

Dong made use of the theory of five elements to repeatedly argue for making sure of the supreme position of “fairness” in the theory. He pointed out that the inter-promotion and mutual-restriction relation of five elements promoted the movement of Yin-Yang and development of things. For the order, wood comes at the first, water at end while earth in the middle. This is “an order appointed by Heaven”; for the position, wood is on the left, gold right, fire in front, water behind and earth in center, this is an order of “father and son”; for the sequence of their appearance, wood, fire, earth, gold and water generate one by one.

It is just like the relationship between father and son (indeed it is the sequence of father and son); for their directions, wood, fire, earth, gold and water separately locate on east, south, center, west and north. Whether “the order appointed by Heaven” or “the order of father and son”, they are both objective laws which cannot be violated or changed. Among these five elements, the central earth has the most respectable position. For not only earth’s central position is “appointed by Heaven” as well as “the order of father and son”, but also earth itself has a noble “birth” and excellent quality. “Wood is the son of fire, nothing is more precious than earth in five elements”. The righteousness of loyal subjects’ and actions of a dutiful son are all dependent upon earth. Earth is the most respectable one in five elements, whose meaning cannot be added more”. He still said, “Earth locates in the center of five elements... Earth treats Heaven with its loyalty. So, the operation rules of five elements are the guidelines of loyal subjects’ and dutiful sons’ actions... The central position of earth is bounty given by Heaven. Earth is just like Heaven’s arms and legs. It has lots of good moral deeds which cannot be explained with things during one season. So there are five elements but four seasons. Earth owns all. Although gold, wood, water and fire have their own duties, the directions will not be set up without earth... Earth plays a dominant role in five elements... So, nothing in the conduct of saints is more precious than loyalty, which is the morality of earth”.521

Clearly, in Dong’s view, the supreme nobility of earth was due to its central position. Standing in the center, stability can be kept so as to coordinate various relations in society and nature, even the relationship between human, society and nature. Based on this, the whole system of Heaven and human can be maintained in harmony. Dong again suggested that the thing’s growth began with the center or fairness, which means the best thing in the world. He said in Follow the Way of Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies, “Heaven begins with “fairness” (ᇏ) and must end in fairness which is the result of Heaven down’s conduct.

No truth or principle is more upright than fairness, which is the most perfect truth in the world deserving saints’ maintenance and assistance”. Here, “fairness”
is the thought kernel from which all things in the world cannot diverge. It is the value standard for morality and the great principle all saints must “obey”. Therefore, insisting on supporting “fairness” and putting it into practice is a matter of course. By this means, Dong brought the five elements constructed in his theoretical system as pure theory into social life, political life and ethical life, even into the relationship between Heaven and human. At the same time, he linked up natural law with social law and made fairness, in terms of time order and directions, he develop into this fairness in light of social order and ideology. In addition, he made all things “follow their own order” through his confirmation and promotion of fairness. Finally, harmony is reached. This is a thought from “fairness” and “harmony”.

After confirming the supreme position and value of “fairness”, Dong connected it with harmony. He said, “All about fairness are for harmony. So harmony is prominent and fairness is the integrity of Heaven and balance of Yin and Yang”.

In other words, the practice of “fairness” must result in the expression of “harmony”. Thereby, “harmony” is the objective of “fairness”. As long as “harmony” is achieved, the integrity of Heaven and Earth will be gained.

“Fairness’ is the function of Heaven while ‘harmony’ is the achievement of Heaven. None of Heaven’s principles is better than harmony”. In Dong’s view, the emperor’s august morality, metaphysically, lies in Heaven’s will. “Heaven possesses the properties of harmony and mean. Sometimes he is gentle, sometimes he is imperious. He tends to help others and he masters the rules to take administration”. Spring represents the harmony of Heaven, summer for morality, autumn for gentleness and winter for dignity. “Thus, the mean of charity cannot take into effect, nor can the dignity of punishment when there is no harmony. Again, we found that morality is from harmony while dignity from mean. Without harmony, no morality; without mean, no dignity; this is the way of Heaven”.

To sum up in a word, “harmony” is the requirement and embodiment of the holy way of Heaven, the base for people to settle down and the principle for the emperor to take administration.

When Dong set forth the connotation of “fairness” and “harmony” separately as well as their contributions, he always linked them together. From this, we should note that these three points are closely related to each other in Dong’s theoretical system. “Fairness” serves “harmony” while the latter aims at protecting the former. They assist and supplement one another.

Dong used the theory about “fairness” and “harmony” to advise emperors to rule the country with theory. He quoted the words from Long-Lasting Flourish, Description about Shang dynasty, The Book of Songs: “the conduct of administration should be neither violent nor weak, but mild and tolerant” to support his theory. He thought that “the person who can manage the country with ‘fairness’ and ‘harmony’ must have a great morality”. Based on this theory, Dong put forward another new idea, “equalizing”. When replying to Emperor Wudi’s questions, he specifically demonstrated his own views.
He declared that “equalizing” the condition of the poor and the rich is “the natural law of Heaven”. “Heaven gives something to all creatures in the nature. When sharp teeth are equipped, horns would not be given. Only two claws are offered once there is a pair of wings. This tells us that once the more useful things are given, the secondary things will not be offered”. If the greedy authorities are allowed to have their own way, the rich will get richer while the poor will get poorer. Social conflicts will be more incisive day by day, which finally will threaten ruler’s profits. He said in The System, Spring and Autumn Studies, “if there are something real, there must be something void. When someone gets too rich, he must be conceited, when someone is too poor, he must be anxious”. “The noble standing high above the masses have got the disease of greed while the poor at the social bottom suffer from poverty all their life. So the poor usually break the laws, which cannot be stopped. This is why the world is so difficult to manage”. The fundamental solution to the problem that polarization between the rich and the poor gets excessive is the right adjustment. The standard to adjust is to make the rich more modest even though they are noble, to make the poor support themselves but not to worry too much. Obviously, the idea of adjustment has the limit.

Dong made use of the theory about “fairness” and “harmony” to advice people to preserve their health. He said that “those who can preserve their health by the ideas of ‘fairness’ and ‘harmony’ will live a long life”. He respectively elaborated from the aspects of temperament, residence and the sex between man and woman and so on. For the temperament, he suggested that man’s emotion and state of mind would be in a right situation when “mean and harmony” was achieved. Thus, man can keep healthy. Great reality, great void, excessive heat, excessive cold, excessive tiredness, excessive lasciviousness, anger, joy and fear are ten elements to hurt health. The cause is in lack of mean and harmony. When wanting to prevent or eliminate these ten elements, people must get back to the way of mean and harmony. “The reason why kind and upright men can live a long life is that they are not greedy and are quiet inside so that they don’t lose mean and harmony”.

For residence, Dong believed that people should choose the place where Yin and Yang, cold and heat, dry and wet keep balance. He said, “High platform is full of sunshine and large room has too much shadow, which are far from the harmony of Heaven and Earth. So people don’t often choose this kind. Mean place is the best choice”. Platform is a square, high and large building whose top is flat. The lighting on the high platform is too much so that the Yang Qi grows excessively. So it is not right to live there.

The front room is called the hall behind which there is a wall. The wall divides the hall into two parts. The part behind the wall is called the room where there is lack of lighting so that Yin Qi grows too much. Thus, it is not right to live here. Between Heaven and Earth; when Yin and Yang keep balance, this is called as harmony. Neither excessive Yin nor excessive Yang is harmonious situation. They both go against the “harmony between Heaven and Earth”. Hence, humans cannot do anything like this. Only the house with mean balanced Yin and Yang can be lived in.
For sex between man and woman, Dong thought that it needed to take the principle of Yin and Yang as the rule. He said that "the principle of sex is like that of Yin and Yang".\textsuperscript{532} When Yang Qi grows excessively to an extreme point, it must be right. So be like this in contrast. They will not be right for one another without excess. Wherefore, "If a man is not strong enough, he will not have family. When Yin Qi is too weak, the sex must be stopped. So one who has a strong body will have a long life, which is the natural law.\textsuperscript{533}"

Dong also said, "The ways of Yin and Yang are different. However, when they reach the maximum, they will stop at the mean, meanwhile they start from mean. Mean is the beginning of great Heaven and Earth. Notably, the “excess” or “great excess” repeatedly discussed by Dong doesn’t mean “over the limit” but rather “moderation”. The “great excess” of man or woman’s energy and the “great excess” of Yin or Yang all stand for the best condition during their process of development, which become the most perfect thing.

Dong put stress on this: “The key to keep healthy lies in protecting energy... Once the energy is enough, one has the key to keep healthy”. “Nothing is more important than nourishing spirit to keep healthy. Therefore, man and woman should have sex when the weather is best, their body odor can attract each other, the place is in harmony, they are not too tired, cold and heat are just right, feast or fast is not in excess, the actions follow nature, joy and anger can stop at mean and anxiety or fear go back to the point. This right adjustment often performs in one’s body, which can be understood as peace given by Heaven and Earth. Having peace offered by Heaven and Earth, their life must be prolonged; In turn, their life span will be damaged".\textsuperscript{534} In Dong's view, only the ways of “mean” and “harmony” are mastered, can the best healthcare be achieved? The process of putting the ways of “mean” and “harmony” itself is a process from “mean” to “harmony”.

When putting all his effort into advocating his thought and value to reach “harmony” through “mean”, Dong also paid much more attention to the adjustment of ideology and social order. His method is to correct mistakes.

Dong's idea was originated from Confucius. Confucius put specific stress on the emperor's exemplary rule in the management of a society. According to Yan Yuan, \textit{The Analects}, while responding to Ji Kangzi's questions about how to take administration, Confucius replied, “an administrator represents integrity; when leaders correctly run their power, who can dare to do something wrong?” In Duke Aigong's Questions, \textit{The Book of Rites}, The duke said, 'I venture to ask what is meant by the practice of government.’ Confucius replied, ‘Government is rectification. When the ruler corrects himself, all the people will follow his government. What the ruler does is what the people follow. How should they follow what he does not do?’ The specific requirements are ‘husband and wife have their separate functions; between father and son there should be affection; between ruler and minister there should be a strict adherence to their several parts”. Dong praised, “As writing the \textit{Spring and Autumn Annals}, Confucius recorded the emperor's conduct as the standard of integrity, then he took other things, which can be found in the article about King Suwang”.\textsuperscript{535}
Dong inherited Confucius’ idea of “taking integrity as government policy” and developed it with the theory of Gong Yang School in the time of Spring and Autumn. Gong Yang school thought highly of the root of things and particularly emphasized the conformity of human affairs with the way of Heaven. Dong discussed in the responses to Emperor Wudi’s questions: “I explore the best way of the benevolent governance in close accordance with the Spring and Autumn Annals. And I got it from the beginning. The emperor takes position before beginning while spring before emperor. Spring is arranged by Heaven; Integrity by the conduct of the emperor. It means that the emperor regulates his behavior in terms of Heaven’s law. So integrity is the beginning of benevolent governance”.

The beginning of benevolent governance is rooted in Heaven, “if the emperor wants to do something, he must seek for this beginning from Heaven. The greatest way of Heaven lies in Yin and Yang. Yang represents morality while Yin punishment; Punishment insists on eliminating lives while morality insists on helping lives... Emperors made use of moral education but not punishment in that they took Heaven’s order to do something”.

This, in fact, takes Heaven to regulate emperors who will advance and enrich benevolent governance. However, the emperor must be upright and fundamentally start with himself. When answering to Emperor Wudi, Dong said that “I carefully studied the meaning of first origin recorded in the Spring and Autumn Annals: One (一) refers to the beginning of everything in the universe; origin (元) stands for ‘great’ or ‘very’. When ‘一’ was replaced by ‘origin’, it could be regarded as the beginning of ‘great’ or ‘very’ which needed to rectify its origins. The Spring and Autumn Annals hammers away at exploring its origin; finally it found that it should start with noble people. For emperors, therefore, to rectify their minds signifies rectifying the court, once the court is rectified, officials of all ranks can be rectified, once they are rectified, people can be rectified. Based on this, the whole country can be rectified. When the whole country is rectified, nobody far or near does not dare to run after it.” As long as the administration is carried out in the way of Heaven, benevolent governance must be rectified, so to emperors and his country.

What Dong did was for the establishment of positive values. Provided that the “thing of rectification” is set up, “wrong things” would be avoided. In other words, only “right things” can correct “the wrong”. This idea to “correct the wrong with the right” reflects Dong's strategic perspective for the establishment of a cultural system and ideology. Dong’s ideas valuing the origin, beginning to correct the wrong with the right exerted a very deep influence on Gong Yang School. He Xiu, a famous scholar of Gong Yang School in Eastern Han dynasty was one typical representative. Recorded in The First Year of King Yingong, Spring and Autumn by Gongyang School, “nothing is more important than rectification for governance. That’s why the Spring and Autumn Annals rectified the beginning of Heaven with the origin, rectified the emperor's governance with the beginning of Heaven, rectified the dukes' position with governance and rectified the management inside the country with dukes' position. If the dukes don’t take King Zhou’s policy, they are not allowed to take their places. Therefore, “beginning month” is presented at
first and then “accession”. If the governance is not made by the emperor, it cannot be taken up. So “emperor” is talked ahead of “beginning month”; If the emperor doesn’t give order in light of Heaven’s way, there will be no laws, so ‘spring’ is talked before ‘emperor’; If the emperor does not rectify his origin spirit, he will not make some difference, so ‘origin’ is talked before ‘spring’. These five factors appear in the same day and mingle together in order. It is necessary to investigate them which are the great foundation of Heaven and human and the system all things belong to”. Obviously, He Xiu’s idea is same to that of Dong’s. Dong’s way to correct the wrong with the right reflects the main trend of culture establishment in the two Han dynasties.

Such ideas were also embodied in his development concept of changing system in light of Heaven and three unities and three beginnings. He believed that the calendars of Xia dynasty, Shang dynasty and Zhou dynasty were different. They were the calendar of people, the calendar of Earth and the calendar of Heaven. They were called three unities. These three unities advocated different colors. The three dynasties respectively advocated black, white and red. Three unities have different calendars, which separately were calendar of Xia dynasty, calendar of Yin dynasty and calendar of Zhou dynasty.

According to the view of Gong Yang School who attached importance to the origin and beginning, Dong stressed that a new dynasty must change the calendar to indicate he is the emperor appointed by Heaven’s order. In The Nature and the Form of Three dynasties’ System Reformation, Spring and Autumn Studies, he made use of the ideas about “spring, emperor, beginning and month” in Spring and Autumn by Gong Yang School to proclaim that emperor becomes the king with Heaven’s order so that he must “change the calendar and color of robe and make the rites and music so as to unify the world…. With Heaven’s order, one can become the emperor, so the making of the beginning month is the response to Heaven’s reformation. Thus, the laws and regulations are made for attending respectively upon to Heaven and Earth. Therefore, it is called as the beginning month of an emperor”. He also said “Governance (政) is straightening (正), Which brings Yin energy and Yang energy and all things are straightened. When the governance is led by integrity, all of the rest would be rectified. The key of one year lies in the first month of the lunar calendar. To follow the way of rectification is to rectify the foundation. Once the inside is rectified, the outside will follow. Any actions or behaviors would change after it. It can be regarded as that the laws or regulations are rectified”. It is obvious that Dong’s idea to change calendar to respond Heaven’s order was not only a reformation about form, but rather to establish a foundation which follows Heaven and human and set up a positive value which can be the standard for people. Evidently, this is the implementation of the idea to correct the wrong with the right.

Also, his idea was mirrored in theory about education. He clearly declared that “if education is not set up, all people cannot be rectified”. In his view, just as “floodwalls” built to protect us from flood, education can prevent people’s “inclination to interests”. Once an education system is set up, craftiness and evil
will be stopped, which means that the dam building is perfect. In contrast, craftiness and evil will be in vogue and cannot be prevented by punishment, which symbolizes that the dam has been damaged.

Thus, when the sovereign descends to the world, “there’s no one who doesn’t attach enough importance to education”. In this case, the emperor should “set up a state-run college in the capital and county-run schools in counties to teach people with benevolence, to influence them with justice and to control them with rites”. In this way, “even though the punishment is light, there will be nobody breaking the laws and regulations”. That is the reason why “the custom is good when education is put into practice”. Wise emperors in ancient time cultivated their people with good morality. After cultivation, none of the people was put into the jail. However, “Heaven’s order is the destiny which cannot be carried out without saints; plainness is the character which cannot be made without teaching; people's lust is emotion, which cannot be controlled without regulation. Therefore, each emperor abides by Heaven's will to educate people for a nice moral character and to rectify the right laws and regulations to prevent greed. As long as these three matters are well done, the state foundation will have been laid”. From the traditional angles of controlling destiny, nature and temper, all these above, based on education and cultivation, illustrate that the importance of ruling a country lies in developing basic things, only then are the right and justice promoted.

In a word, Dong paid attention to expounding his points from the aspect of establishment and solving the social problem from the standpoint of “building” but not “destroying”, which was suitable for the requirements of the age. So to speak, Dong’s great achievements in the establishment of a cultural system and ideology mainly lie in his thoughts based on “building”. On the whole, this, for the development of Chinese culture, is worthy of a serious conclusion and reasonable reference.

III. The strategic vision of long-term stability

As a great thinker of the Western Han dynasty, Dong had distinctive foresight and thought. For the sake of a ruler’s long-term interests and how to achieve long-term stability, Dong proposed the idea to maintain the achievements of predecessors and the value that does not change along with the changeable rulers.

One of the most important functions and the most distinctive features of Confucianism is to attach importance to the idea of safeguarding predecessors’ heritage. Dong’s political ideal of eternal unity embodied the conservative ideas of Confucianism.

The time when Dong made his way in politics and ideological culture was equal to the time when Emperor Wudi of Han, who was equipped with great talent and a bold vision, fulfilled his ambition. Emperor Wudi considered himself to be the ruler who inherited his father's highest revered position and best morality and he left no stone unturned to make it “pass along without end and practice it without limit”. He claimed that he always thought of the ways of everything and hoped to find “the essentials of the best way and ultimate truth in the universe” so as to grasp
According to Emperor Wudi’s requirements, Dong pointed out an ideological system which takes interactions between Heaven and mankind as its core, five elements of Yin-Yang as theoretical framework, education and cultivation as basic techniques and the moralism of “the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues” as primary content. He made great contribution to rulers’ vested interests.

At first, Dong recognized the importance of perceiving “Tao” and confirmed the value of the right way of man’s world. He explained that “the way stands for the right methods to rule a country, benevolence, justice, rites and music are all the tools”. By virtue of mastering “Tao”, the general program to rule a country, the stability of dynasty’s foundation cannot be affected and “the descendants would live peacefully for hundreds of years” even though the earlier holy emperor died. Of course, the function of rites and music’s enlightenment cannot be neglected. Through this enlightenment, people firstly recognized the Confucian truth that “Of all (creatures with their different) natures produced by Heaven and Earth, man is the noblest”. Furthermore, people can be taught to know benevolence, think highly of etiquette, settle for good ways and follow Heaven’s principle so as to be a noble man who knows the decree of Heaven.

If the right way is set up and the will of the people is regulated to maintain the rule, all the efforts cannot stop at the door of theoretical principle but must instead set up a practical value system. The value system should unify people in the light of ideological culture at a deep level so as to reach conservation.

Dong firstly brought five elements of Yin-Yang theory into the Confucian idea system and set up a new theoretical system. He placed Yin-Yang as the inner constituent of the whole universe. Through communicating the Yin-Yang of Heaven, Earth and human, he linked nature, society and human beings together and emphasized the similarities, analogy, communication and interaction between them. Thereby, he established the theoretical system of unity of Heaven and man, taking their interaction as its core. This provided an outside super-organic basis for all behaviors in man’s world and changed the “human way” of feudal rule into “Heaven’s way” so that the outside power of control was enhanced.

In the ideological framework of Yin-Yang and unity of Heaven and man, Dong absorbed the ideas of Legalism into the Confucian moral system and set up the basic moral principles—“the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues”. The “three cardinal guides”—ruler guides subject, father guides son and husband guides wife—stemmed from Han Fei, who was the idea collector of Legalism in Pre-Qin dynasty. The five constant virtues such as benevolence, justice, courtesy, wisdom and faith were the traditional ideas of Confucianism in the Pre-Qin dynasty. In the time of Emperor Wudi when military unity had already been done early, political unity was on the way to perfection and ideology was being formed, the unity of ideology was the main trend. Dong carried forward the spirit in Book of Changes, “all come to the same issue, though by different paths; there is one result, though there might be a hundred anxious schemes”.
He upgraded the content and quality of Confucianism by not only bringing five elements of Yin-yang but also by absorbing Legalism. He had opened up a new realm. The formation of the ethics of “three cardinal guides and five constant virtues” offered available behavioral norms and spiritual reference for unifying the values from different social classes and for people in agricultural society to settle down.

Besides, according to the practice of Heaven’s way to pay more attention to Yang (outside) than to Yin (inner side), Dong also demonstrated that it should take the mode of morality assisted by punishment in the way of rule. Yang is morality while Yin is punishment; Yang is primary while Yin is secondary; Yang is at outside while Yin on the inner-side. These were the regulations made by Dong when he argued his ideological system of interactions between Heaven and mankind. Wise emperors and holy kings often take benevolence and morality to govern their country. They take punishment as supplementary. It is the concrete embodiment of the idea of “importance attached to rites and laws” proposed by Master Xunzi after absorbing Legalism. Dong continued Master Xunzi’s idea and further made the primary and secondary clear with the theory of Yin-yang. Therefore, he provided a more systematic and more practical strategy for maintaining the existing social order.

For value orientation, Dong went a step further to develop the ideas of Confucius and Mencius and proposed the famous view about justice and interest under the banner of morality ideal. He objected to “cheating and violence” but strengthened benevolence. He never judged people with success or failure but with morality and justice. “Benevolent people pay most attention to their achievements but not to their interests and promotes their right way but doesn’t care for their contribution”. He valued morality and justice over utility. He was in opposition to the behavior discarding morality for interest. In this way, Dong definitely declared his attitude towards justice and interest.

For the advocacy of “right way” and its establishment, Dong also did something in the building of system culture. He actively encouraged and participated in government by civil administration. He suggested setting up the imperial college and finally made the Han dynasty “appoint officials based on their knowledge about rites and benevolence”. This radically changed the nature of military government since in the early Han dynasty, recommendation had become the basic content of the government-official-selecting system. The combination of education system and government-official-selecting system became the fundamental feature of Chinese system culture, which offered an institutional guarantee for the long-lasting rule of feudal society.

It is not hard to see that all original activities in ideological culture and system culture initiated by Dong were good for consolidating rulers’ vested interest or starting the situation in the future. For the culture of material, system and ideology, Dong paid most attention to the establishment of ideological culture. Meanwhile, he also took hold of the critical establishment of system culture and did lots of fundamental work. This fully reflected his farsightedness and distinctive talent. It should be pointed out that Dong did not look down upon the establishment of
material culture. The proposals put forward by him such as lowering tax rates, lightening the burden on financial resources of the people, adjusting the rich and the poor and leaving benefits to people and so on actually aimed at allowing social productive forces to develop normally so as to enrich material products and moderate social conflict, and further improve the material culture.

In a word, from the perspective of Dong's behavior, he did his best to establish a new culture from the levels of material, systems and ideology. He made a great contribution to the government of feudal society.

There is another important part to Dong's strategic concept for the long-lasting government of feudal society. That is the value set up according to the country but not rulers.

Doubtless, Dong consciously served Emperor Wudi and the stability of the foundation of Han and the Liu family. However, this is just one a minor aspect without fundamental value. Dong's genius contribution to the development of ancient Chinese society since the Qin dynasty's unity lies in his consideration for the overall feudal ruling class and the whole development of feudal society, but not for one person, one family or one dynasty. Precisely because of it, he proposed the value that the way did not change although the rulers changed.

Mencius' view about "the reformations of King Tang of Shang dynasty and King Wu of Zhou dynasty", was the source of the idea that value did not change even though the ruler changes. In the Warring States Period, King Xuanwang of Qi State thought that King Tang's exile of King Jie of the Xia dynasty and King Wu's forces against King Zhou of the Shang dynasty were that "the subjects killed their kings". For this, Mencius corrected, "He who outrages the benevolence proper to his nature, is called a robber; he who outrages righteousness, is called a ruffian. The robber and ruffian we call a mere fellow. I have heard of the cutting off of the fellow Zhou, but I have not heard of the putting a sovereign to death in his case". Here Mencius clearly distinguished the meaning of murder from that of killing in order to fully affirm the rightness of the behaviors of King Tang of the Shang dynasty and King Wu of the Zhou dynasty. Therefore, it had objectively provided a theoretical foundation and historical example for the idea of "serving one's emperor according to what is right". Such an idea was changed by Dong into one value—"the way did not change although the rulers changed", which was characterized by the idea that "justice has crusaded against injustice".

With the theory of Heaven and human, Dong affirmed the rightness of the Reformation of King Tang and King Wu in Not Arbitrary Demise of the Crown by Yao and Shun or Not Unreasonable Murder by Kings of Tang and Wu, Spring and Autumn Studies. And then, he put forward "the heavenly principle that justice crusades against injustice". He first pointed out that "they are the same rite for serving Heaven and father". According to the "three cardinal guides" proposed by Dong, that father guides son is an unchangeable rule, and Heaven guides man in the same way.

Whether it is the son who serves the father or the human who serves Heaven, they both share the same value principle and behavior regulation. People should
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conduct in light of Heaven’s will, or they will encounter difficulties and failures. Dong also believed that “Heaven produces humans not for the king, but makes a king for people. So, as long as one has morality which is good enough to settle human beings, he must be appointed by Heaven. In turn, Heaven would take his power back”. With morality to settle people, that is “the right way”. In contrast, there is a “cruel way”. “The right way” means handling affairs according to Heaven’s will while the “cruel way” goes against Heaven’s will. Heaven’s will takes “the right way” but crusades against “the cruel way”. Thereby, the Yin dynasty crusaded against the “cruel way” of the Xia dynasty, the Zhou dynasty to the Yin dynasty, Qin to Zhou, Han to Qin”. So, the truth that “justice attacks injustice” is simple but profound. Dong stressed the position and value of “way” (Tao) by taking the idea that “justice attacks injustice” as heavenly truth so as to make the value of Tao superior to that of the emperor, even to that of a dynasty. In this way, he theoretically and logically set up the value that the way cannot change even though the emperor or dynasty changes, which offered a theoretical guide and value standard or feudal rule.

Dong’s value also reflects the “perfection of the Tao”. In replying to Emperor Wudi, he clearly claimed that “once the emperor conducts the right way, the dynasty will continue one generation after another. In turn, the emperor doesn’t master the right way”. In other words, as long as the right way is perfect, there will be no problem forever; if something wrong happens, that is not the cause of Tao itself but the results from deviation against Tao. It further laid more stress on the paramount nature and perfection of Tao so that anything including people, affairs and objects was under control of Tao. It is because the dynasty continues “without any mistakes” that any king or emperor can change anything except the Tao when being appointed. “The king or emperor has the right to change the system, but not the ‘Tao’”. The reason is that “the Tao originated from Heaven”. Now that the Tao is from Heaven and perfect, and Heaven’s will cannot be betrayed, the conclusion is that “Heaven doesn’t change, neither does the Tao”. In this way, Dong promoted the Tao through protecting Heaven.

Actually, the permeating spiritual principle of Dong’s conservative conception about long-lasting unity is that perfect Tao, whose value and function are for maintaining the feudal reign. Hence, Dong’s conception about long-lasting unity and the value that doesn’t change along with the changeable rulers, both complement each other. Frankly speaking, he aimed at “promoting the morality of benevolence, making the emperor’s legal system clear and establishing a peaceful world”. All the strategic ideas above about a long period of stability proposed by Dong overcame the narrow and limited interest circle of one particular time, one person and one dynasty, concentrating on the whole long-term interest of the ruling class. It reflects this great thinker’s discriminating eye and profound consideration, the results of which were important in the enlightenment of Chinese culture through its long history.
The Confucian Orientation and Characteristics of the New School in Kang Youwei’s “On Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn”

As a great master of the Gongyang school and a prominent thinker and reformer of the Hundred Days’ Reform (1898) in the late Qing dynasty, Kang Youwei had a set of theoretical systems on Gongyang scholarship which mainly consisted of works such as *A Study of the Forged Traditional Chinese Classics*, *A Study of the Reforms of Confucius*, *A Study of Dong Zhongshu’s Spring-Autumn* and *A Study of Improvement of Sublime Words with Deep Meaning in Spring-Autumn* and others.

It is worth noting that the research of *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn* has not been considered important on the mainland since 1949. It was not even published before the 1980s. In contrast, *On Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn* and *A Study of the Reforms of Confucius* were sorted out and published as early as the 1950s. There is so much research on *A Study on the Forged Traditional Chinese Classics* and *A Study of the Reforms of Confucius*, while there is very little research on *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn*. It is interesting that Taiwanese scholars also rule out *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn* when they expound the theoretical system of Kang Youwei’s Gongyang scholarship.

As a matter of fact, *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn* plays an important role in Kang Youwei’s theoretical system of Gongyang scholarship. Kang Youwei respectfully regarded Confucius as the founder of a religion, and called Dong Zhongshu a master of Confucianism (during the 400 years of the Western Han and Eastern Han dynasties). He praised Dong Zhongshu’s *Spring and Autumn Studies*. In *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn*, he believed that the doctrine of Confucius was mainly expounded in *Six Classics*, and *Six Classics* was centralized in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the tenet of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* derived from the *Gongyang Commentary*, and nobody learned from the *Gongyang Commentary* except Dong Zhongshu. He was known as a great master
of Confucianism because he elucidated the profound meaning of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. The best way to know the tenet of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and Confucius' philosophy is to “understand the Gongyang scholarship of Dong Zhongshu firstly, then have a good understanding of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the *Six Classics* and the doctrines of Confucius”.553

In his opinion, the sublime and profound words of Dong Zhongshu’s *Spring and Autumn Studies* were handed down in the sayings of Confucius. Therefore, he excerpted and compiled the main contents of *Spring and Autumn Studies* according to special topics so as to elucidate the words in the *Gongyang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, and demonstrated the theory of restructuring advocated by Confucius, and then laid a foundation for his thought citing the “ancient sage” to prove the necessity and rationality of political restructuring.

In view of the important place of *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn* in Kang Youwei’s Gongyang scholarship, as well as the neglect for the significance of the book in Taiwan and on the mainland, the author attempts to make a preliminary study on several issues in *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn*, hoping to get advice and comments from those with mastery of the topic.

I. The structure of On Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn

The main body of *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn*, except “author’s preface”, consists of eight volumes, including *Tenet of the Spring and Autumn Annals, Examples in the Spring and Autumn Annals, Rites in the Spring and Autumn Annals, Oral Account of the Spring and Autumn Annals, Sublime Words with Profound Meaning of the Spring and Autumn Annals, Chart of Handing Down Confucians Classics, Dong Zhongshu’s Classics*. Among the eight volumes, the first six were chiefly extracted and compiled from Dong Zhongshu’s *Spring and Autumn Studies* by Kang Youwei.

He elucidated the great principles of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* with subheadings and appropriate comments added in accordance with the theme of each volume. Volume seven, “Chart of Handing Down *Confucian Classics*, Dong Zhongshu’s Classics”, was compiled by Kang Youwei’s disciple Wang Jueren on the basis of Kang Youwei’s view of academic values, and heritance of the Gongyang scholarship. Volume eight is about directions and interpretations to the relationship between Dong Zhongshu’s *Spring and Autumn Studies* and some classics such as *Six Classics* and *the Analects* (indicating provenance).

The first six volumes have introductions, and there are also notes under many entries; volume seven has an introduction without notes for the main body of the book; volume eight has no introduction, and the notes are very simple, just some explanations for some contents provenance of *Spring and Autumn studies*. Therefore, the key points of *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn* are in the first six volumes.
From a structural perspective, Kang You-wei took great pains to compile the book. Volume one is concerned with the tenets of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, volume two cites many examples in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, volume three is about rituals of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, and we can find the foundation of these in the existing literature. However, volume four is not based on classic literature, but it is believed the volume expresses the authentic spirit of Confucius and the cardinal principles of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.

Probably because it is an “oral account” without subheadings, it differs from volumes one, two, three, five and six. Since there are no subheadings, these seem the same as seven and eight in appearance, but actually they are fundamentally different in content and nature.

This volume (an “oral account”) is an important embodiment of Kang Youwei’s thought on Gongyang scholarship, and it has a lot of notes and “creative viewpoints”. Volume five is concerned with political restructuring, and six with sublime and profound words. Starting from tenets, examples, rituals and righteousness, then the “oral account” (in fact, the elucidation of words in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*), and then “institution restructuring”, finally ending up in the discussion with “sublime words with deep meaning”.

Afterwards, he highlights inheritance and pedigree of the Gongyang scholarship of Dong Zhongshu by drawing up the “Chart of Handing Down Confucian Classics”, which actually enhanced the authoritativeness of the book. In the end, he pointed out that citations of some literature in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* were derived from the *Six Classics* or other Confucian Classics, which not only manifested the classical authority of Dong Zhongshu’s Gongyang scholarship, but also showed Kang Youwei’s erudition and the substantial foundation of his thought. The whole train of thought of the book is distinctly logical to such an extent that one may well say it is progressive and interlocking.

Under the comprehensive table of contents of each volume, detailed catalogues were compiled. If taking each catalogue as an item, then the book has a total of 187 items (there are no detailed catalogues or items in Volume four, seven, or eight), in which 159 items were written by Kang Youwei.

Volume one has four items; volume two has eight; volume three has eleven; volume four has 45; volume five has ten; volume six has 74 (25 in the first part and 49 in the second part), volume seven has no items, introductions or editor’s notes; and volume eight has seven items but no notes, only briefly pointing out that some contents in *Spring and Autumn Studies* were derived from the *Six Classics* or some citation sources related to the Confucian classics, as well as the explanation of the words in *Spring and Autumn Studies* in the appendix.

Obviously, from the proportion of interpretation structure and details and omissions, we can see that Kang Youwei’s attention mainly focused on the two volumes, namely, *Oral Account in the Spring and Autumn Annals* and *Sublime Words with Deep Meaning in the Spring and Autumn Annals*. The number of notes in these two parts is 119 in total, which accounts for nearly 75% of the total 159 notes written by Kang Youwei. Kang Youwei’s intentions and emphasis speak for themselves.
II. The content and themes of “On Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn”

The main content of Kang You-wei’s *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring-Autumn* is undoubtedly the elucidation for Dong Zhongshu’s thought of the *Gongyang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*. We can get a general idea of it by reading the introduction and the content associated with the main body of the book.

In the *Preface*, Kang You-wei pointed out: “The philosophy of Confucius in the *Six Classics*, “Among the three Commentaries (*Zuo Zhuang* and *Guliang Zuan*, *Gongyang Zuan*) on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, only the *Gongyang Commentary* detailed the necessity of institution restructuring of the monarch, so the *Gongyang Commentary* was derived from the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. “Nobody else learned from the *Gongyang Commentary* except Dong Zhongshu”. Kang Youwei also pointed out that Dong Zhongshu understood the tenet of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* so he was known as a master of Confucianism. Without him, one could not have even a rough idea of the philosophy of Confucius! Even the great sages like Mencius and Xunzi did not have a good understanding of the profound meaning behind the sublime words in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, but Dong Zhongshu elucidated them better than the sages in his *Spring and Autumn Studies*, “if Dong Zhongshu is not erudite and informed, how could he accomplish this?” Therefore, “if one can understand the Gongyang scholarship of Dong Zhongshu, one can have a good knowledge of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the *Six Classics* and the philosophy of Confucius”.

Kang Youwei explicit that the philosophy of Confucius was mainly expounded in the *Six Classics*, and *Six Classics* was collected in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the tenet of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* derived from the *Gongyang Commentary*, and only Dong Zhongshu learned the quintessence of the *Gongyang Commentary*. Therefore, as long as one grasps the connotation of Dong Zhongshu’s *Gongyang* scholarship, he can comprehend the philosophy of Confucius and understand the significance of institutional restructuring. It should be said that what this preface reflected was the general principles of this book. Under the guidance of general principles, elucidated in the eight volumes from different perspectives.

In the introduction to volume one, Kang Youwei said, “the focus of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* is righteousness, not just culture and history. This kind of righteousness was passed down by ancient sages through oral accounts; only Dong Zhongshu and He Xiu grasped its essence, hence, he extracted and deduced more from Dong Zhongshu’s *Gongyang* scholarship so as to explore the essence of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. Kang You-wei’s intention was obviously to get away from the restrictions of the classics and to give himself an open space for interpretation. In this volume, he highlighted the idea of following the mandates of Heaven, pursuing good morals, respecting virtuous and talented persons, ever-changing issues, gregariousness, and the general meaning of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.557
In the introduction to volume two, Kang You-wei believed that if the people who studied the Spring and Autumn Annals were ignorant of their substance, such as reform legislation, five beginnings, the three stages of historical development, interior and exterior, details and omissions and so forth, it would be useless to study the Spring and Autumn Annals. He also said that cardinal principles embodied in the Spring and Autumn Annals could be truly comprehended only by learning the thought of Dong Zhushu’s Gongyang scholarship. In order to set up his image as a master of great learning and integrity and establish his status of Gongyang scholarship, Kang Dong even compared Zhongshu to Euclid, famous for the system of geometry. From this, we can see that he respected Dong Zhongshu greatly. This approach, of course, aimed at disseminating his thought on Gongyang scholarship and providing a theoretical argument for political reform. In the main body of the book, Kang Youwei elucidated his viewpoints for a series of issues such as five beginnings, three stages of human history, interior and exterior, details and omissions, lowliness and nobleness, ever-changing systems and so on.

In the introduction to volume three, Kang Youwei said, “the tenet of the Spring and Autumn Annals is concerned with institutional reform characterized by rituals and righteousness. The works of Confucius were inherited by Dong Zhongshu, so were the rituals and righteousness he emphasized. The theories of rituals put forward by Dong Zhongshu can be seen as the masterpiece of the Spring and Autumn Annals”. Therefore, Kang You-wei’s extraction on the rituals in Spring and Autumn studies further emphasized that the general idea of the Spring and Autumn Annals was institutional reform, and ritual was the key point. How to reform and what to reform should be based on Dong Zhongshu’s understanding of the essence of Confucian philosophy. Under these guidelines, Kang Youwei compiled a detailed catalogue including changing the title of the reign, issuing the official calendar, feudal land tax, systems, palaces, temperament, schools, elections, offering sacrifices, ancestral temple and penalty, and extracted some content about the ritual in the Spring and Autumn Studies and spoke highly of the value of the book.

In the introduction to volume four, Kang You-wei thought that the meaning of the Spring and Autumn Annals focused on an oral account, not on scriptures. Dong Zhongshu had a good knowledge of the tenets in the Spring and Autumn Annals, therefore his theory of Gongyang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals must be meticulously examined. It can be seen that Kang Youwei approved the historical rationality of his political reform and institutional restructuring from a new perspective.

In this volume, Kang Youwei added a large number of notes with the purpose of expounding that some content in Spring and Autumn Studies were the authentic texts of Confucius’ oral account. He paid special attention to argumentative foundation for the content which was not derived from the Gongyang Commentary in Spring and Autumn Studies. Most of his notes were either “the same as the Guliang Commentary”, “the same as the scholars’ view in the Han dynasty” and “the same as Liu Xiang” or “the same as He Xiu’s annotation”, or even “the same as He Xiu’s annotation, known as oral account”.

In the introduction to volume five, Kang Youwei severely criticized Liu Xin, a famous Confucian scholar in the late Han dynasty. He thought Liu Xin distorted the classics, which led to "the loss of a large number of sublime words". He also criticized Zhu Xi by saying that he was ignorant of the significance of political reform, and thus thought "the Spring and Autumn Annals was full of obscurities". He stressed that the Spring and Autumn Annals was produced for institutional reform, and Dong Zhongshu expounded its profound meaning in his theory, which was a clear interpretation of the Spring and Autumn Annals from the perspective of reform, and emphasized the significance of Dong Zhongshu's Gongyang scholarship. In Kang Youwei view, the gist of reform emphasized in the Spring and Autumn Annals was that Confucius was a spokesman of Heaven, and the monarch's reign was the Mandate of Heaven. The way of Heaven requires both substance and refinement, which gradually and mutually developed. The monarch must know the significance of reconciliation between ancient and present sources of political legitimacy and establish political systems. When all was said, the fact remained that institutional reform was obeying the will of Heaven.

In the introduction to the Spring and Autumn Annals, "Profound Meaning Behind Subtle Words", Kang You-Wei pointed out that some scholars thought sublime words with profound meaning had disappeared after Confucius and his 70 disciples passed away. This was incorrect. In fact, they were disseminated by thousands of his disciples, spreading out through oral account. Until the early Han dynasty, there were still teachers and scholars propagating them. The most extensive and profound work of Confucius was the Spring and Autumn Annals, and Dong Zhongshu had the best elucidation of these subtle words with profound meaning. His theory included the genesis of the world, vitality, Yin and Yang, Heaven and man, life, reconciliation between past and present sources of political legitimacy, the three cardinal principles, righteousness and morality and maintenance of health. Thus, from his theory, we can catch a glimpse of Confucius' profound meaning behind subtle words. The reason why Dong Zhongshu had a good knowledge of the Spring and Autumn Annals was that Confucius' thought was passed via word of mouth. This volume is divided into two parts with rich content and great length, and it shows that Kang Youwei highly valued the exploration of profound meaning.

From a utilitarian standpoint, he summed up the thoughts in Spring and Autumn studies such as the beginning of the world, Yin and Yang, yin-yang five elements, transition of Yin and Yang, Heaven, earth and human, learning from Heaven, respecting Heaven, obeying Heaven, destiny, the mandate of Heaven, nature, goodness of human nature, temper, benevolence, kindheartedness, justice, righteousness, justice and benefit, wisdom, rites, harmony, status, unification, three cardinal principles, loyalty and filial piety, men and women, the monarch, the monarch and his subjects, kingly way, monarchical way, power tactics of the monarch, healthcare, barbarians and so on. He made use of these subjects and elaborated his own thoughts of the Gongyang scholarship.

In the introduction to volume seven, Kang You-wei had his new elucidation. In his view, the ignorance of the Way of Heaven and the patriarchal clan system of the
later generation was caused by the destructive mistakes made by Han Yu, who believed that the development of Confucian orthodoxy could not be passed down after Mencius, thus discriminating against Dong Zhongshu who made great achievements in elucidating of Confucius' subtle words with profound meaning. Kang Youwei denounced him: "what an absurdity it is!"

Moreover, Kang Youwei cited historical facts to illustrate Dong Zhongshu's greatness and finally he concluded, "The main doctrine of Confucius is in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, the governance of the Western Han and Eastern Han dynasties depends on the principles in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. From the monarch and his subjects to the scholar-officials, they all regarded the *Gongyang Commentary* as the creed to deal with government affairs and issues of legislation; up to now, they still follow it!"\(^561\) Zhu Xi was the master of Confucianism since the Yuan and Ming dynasties, relatively speaking, “during the 400 years the opinions and strategies about governing the country were all from Dong Zhongshu, who was also famous as the founder of Confucius’ doctrine. Even Mencius and Xunzi cannot be compared with Dong Zhongshu in terms of their achievements”. “The profound and extensive theories of Dong Zhongshu derived from the great doctrines of Confucius and became the best among the various schools of thought. Indeed, he is the only one to make the contribution to propagating doctrines of the ancient sages after Confucius!”\(^562\) As a whole, the foothold and purport of volume seven was to praise Dong Zhongshu’s Gongyang school of thought.

From the above, we can see that *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn* aimed at establishing Confucius as the founder of Confucianism and Dong Zhongshu as the master of Confucianism (and the founder of Confucianism in the the Western and Eastern Han dynasties), regarding the *Gongyang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals* as the Bible and Confucius’ institutional reform as authentic teaching, highlighting the value of Dong Zhongshu’s Gongyang scholarship and laying down a foundation for his reform.

### III. “On Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn” and the Reformation Movement

With regard to Kang Youwei’s ideological system, and his theory of institutional reform by returning to the ancient in particular, *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn* is not an exception, but instead is interrelated and integrated with Kang Youwei’s other writings on political reform.

As mentioned above, the theoretical system of Kang Youwei’s Gongyang scholarship mainly consists of *A Study of the ‘New Text’ Forgeries*, *A Study of the Reforms of Confucius*, *A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn* and *A Study of Improvement of Sublime Words with Deep Meaning in the Spring-Autumn* and other works. In fact, *A Study of Improvement of Sublime Words with Deep Meaning in Spring-Autumn* is far behind the first three books in its influence and value. *A Study on the Forged Traditional Chinese Classics* was published as early as
1891. A Study of the Reforms of Confucius and A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn were by and large written and published simultaneously. According to the records of Kang Youwei’s own chronicle, from November to December of 1894, Kang Youwei lived in Guilin, Guangxi for 40 days, and the mountainous landscape was so wonderful that he was inspired to write A Study of the Reforms of Confucius and A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn.

In 1896, Kang Youwei gave lectures at Wanmu Humble Cottage in Guangzhou and continued writing A Study of the Reforms of Confucius, A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn and A Study of the Spring and Autumn Annals”. In the winter of 1897, his brother Kang Guangren printed the books A Study of the Reforms of Confucius, A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn and Japanese Booklists at Shanghai Datong Translation Publishing House.

He wrote and published these two books during the period when China was defeated in the First Sino-Japanese war and the Qing government surrendered the country’s sovereign rights under humiliating terms, ceded territory and paid indemnities. Kang Youwei led the famous “Gongche Shangshu Movement” and requested the Qing government to refuse reconciliation, to move the capital to another place and carry out constitutional reform, which showed the patriotic conscience of a righteous intellectual.

Kang Youwei wrote A Study of the Reforms of Confucius and A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn under these circumstances, the purpose and significance of which was to save the calamity-ridden Chinese nation by means of constitutional reform and modernization. This can be seen clearly from the content of the two books.

Through textual research of the authenticity of some traditional classics, A Study on the Forged Traditional Chinese Classics was written by means of taking destruction as the principle method to severely criticize the New Text advocated by Liu Xin and other scholars, who forged ancient scripts and falsified the doctrines of Confucius, so as to carve out a way to practicing Gongyang scholarship. A Study of the Reforms of Confucius was written by means of construction to elucidate his theory of political reform through textual research on reform systems in the Qin and Han dynasties, and the later great unity of Confucianism during the reign of Emperor Wu in the Han dynasty.

A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn was also written to state his theoretical views about the reforms of Confucius and the righteousness of the Gongyang Commentary in a positive way through compilation and quotation from Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn Studies as well as the notes therein. Therefore, A Study on the Forged Traditional Chinese Classics is destructive and negative, while A Study of the Reforms of Confucius and A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn are constructive and affirmative. Whether destruction or construction, negation or affirmation, they opposed each other and yet also complemented each other, they all served as ideological weapons for Kang You-wei’s political reform, and his intention to change the situation after the overthrow of Wang Mang’s Xin dynasty, such as discarding the doctrines of
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Confucius while building up the personality cult of the Duke of Zhou, seeing Confucius as a teacher of the older generation instead of a sage, abolishing the Gongyang scholarship, neglecting righteousness of institutional reform, the decline of the theories about the three stages of human history, no peace and tranquility and no great harmony.563

It is worth noting that Da Tongshu was another famous book written by Kang Youwei during that period. He began writing this book in 1884, but it was not published until 1913. If we study it from the viewpoint of the time when A Study of the Reforms of Confucius and A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn were written and published, as well as A Study on the Forged Traditional Chinese Classics, it is easy to find that the compilation and publication of A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn is not isolated, but one of the integral parts of Kang Youweii’s ideological system, characterized by saving China through reformation.

The core content and focus of Kang Youwei’s theory of reformation is the theory of “Three Stages of Human History”. He made the following annotation in volume two of the book A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn: “‘Three Stages’ is the cardinal principle of Confucius’ philosophy and developed in the Spring and Autumn Annals. The first stage is marked by political chaos and social anomie, the second stage is characterized by the reestablishment of legitimate political order, and the third stage emerges when the world as a whole experiences great harmony. In the first stage, there is obscure culture and education; in the second stage, culture and education gradually appear; in the third stage, there is a complete range of culture and education”.564 Kang Youwei’s “Three Stages” originated from the Gongyang Commentary of the Spring and Autumn Annals. Specifically, from the theory of “Three Stages” of Dong Zhongshu and He Xiu. In the Gongyang Commentary, the 12 stages during the 242 years of the Spring and Autumn Annals was divided into “three stages” with the birthday of Confucius as a criterion, namely, the stage that Confucius saw, the stage that he heard of, and the stage that other people saw. The stage that other people saw included the reign of the Dukes of Yin, Huan, Zhuang, Min and Xi. The stage he heard of included the reign of the Dukes of Wen, Xuan, Cheng and Xiang. The stage he saw included the reigns of Dukes of Zhao, Ding and Ai. In fact, Kang Youwei’s “Three Stages” theory is not merely derived from the Gongyang Commentary, it is also associated with the theory of great harmony and prosperous society recorded in the Book of Rites, as well as the inevitability of change and the evolution expounded in I Ching. It is an integration of a few theories and concentrated reflection on his ideas of reformation. There are complicated discussions of “Three Stages” in many of his works.565 Moreover, around the Hundred Days’ Reform, Kang Youwei had different interpretations for “Three Stages”.566

However, the basic idea of “Three Stages” is nothing more than a theory which advocates reform and believes society is the continuous evolution of events from chaos to governance, from well-being to great harmony. The doctrine of “Three Stages” in A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn is an ideological axis of Kang Youwei’s “Three Stages”, namely, the processes from “tumultuous times
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which obscure culture and education” to “peaceful times with increasing culture and education “, then to “great harmony with a complete range of culture and education”. As Liang Qichao once said in his Biography of Kang Youwei, “the teacher absorbed and developed the doctrine of “Three Stages” in the Spring and Autumn Annals, and thought that the world in the future would be more civilized and prosperous. He can be referred to as the first creative scholar in China”. This statement is a just and fair evaluation, which reveals the essence of Kang Youwei's “Three Stages”.

In the final analysis, the basic thought of Kang Youwei’s A Study on Dong Zhongshu's Spring and Autumn aims to establish Confucius as the founder of religion, to describe Dong Zhongshu as the master of Confucianism (and the founder of Confucianism during the Western Han and Eastern Han dynasties), to expound that the main idea of the Six Classics derives from the Gongyang Commentary, and that the cardinal principle of the Gongyang Commentary was grasped and inherited by Dong Zhongshu. Furthermore, he pointed out that the subtle words with profound meaning in the Gongyang Commentary advocated Confucius’ institutional reform in accordance with Heaven's will, while Confucius’s sacred mission was to carry out institutional reform by citing ancient example. In a word, he held the opinion that Dong Zhongshu inherited and carried forward the thought of Confucius and the Gongyang Commentary, so his Gongyang scholarship should be developed and put into the service of political reform and modernization.

IV. The Guangdong flavor of “On Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn”

Kang You-wei was born in Nanhai, Guangdong Province, and was immersed in Lingnan Culture for many years. Therefore, his acting and writing style inevitably had the characteristics of Guangdong.

In the Biography of Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao briefly expounded the status and influence which Yue people held in China and indicated the status of Kang Youwei south of the Five Ridges and throughout the country. He said: “Yue (another name for Guangdong Province) is located at the border of China, its culture and education often lags behind that of the Central Plains. The people in the land of the Yellow River basin and the Yangtze River Valley have been civilized for ages, and the number of outstanding people is far more than in Yue, where there has been nobody well-known for excellent academic contribution and great cause for thousands of years; what a big contrast! In that case, the teacher became the most influential scholar in China by opening up the way for reformation movement”. 567

Of course, he thought highly of the achievements of Kang Youwei. It is worth noting that Liang Qichao also pointed out that Kang You-wei was quite confident about what he was doing and never yielded to external force. Seen from the life of
Kang Youwei and his Gongyang study of Confucian classics, we should say that this evaluation is quite accurate. According to Liang Qichao’s evaluation, we can say that Kang Youwei was an outstanding scholar from Guangdong, and the most distinct characteristic was his Cantonese manner, namely, pragmatic spirit and eclectic style.

With regard to the peculiarity of the Lingnan Culture, there are discussions in the academic world, but different people have different views. However, a unanimous idea is that the Lingnan Culture is characterized by striving for practical work. We can see this from the arguments that Guangdong culture should expand towards the north. People thought Guangdong culture was a cultural desert, the Pearl River civilization was superior to the Yangtze River and the Yellow River civilization of the 1980s and 1990s. In recent years, the discussion about “Cantonese spirit”, “Shenzhen spirit”, “the spirit of people in Guangzhou” and the humanistic spirit of Foshan all formed a unanimous view, that is, Cantonese are pragmatic. Last year, through interaction among the civil society, the academic community and government, people have come to a preliminary consensus about the “Cantonese” spirit, namely, “pioneering, pragmatic, open and receptive, professional dedication”. 568

Of course, different people have different understandings for the connotation of Cantonese “pragmatism”. To put it simply, being pragmatic means dealing with something based on practical consideration, rather than theoretical frames. This thought is the same as “the Six Classics all have my footnotes” in essence. It is clear that Kang You-wei’s book (A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring-Autumn) has such a characteristic.

Like the book A Study of the Reforms of Confucius, Kang Youwei began writing A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn in Guilin, Guangxi in 1894, and it was completed at Wanmu Humble Cottage in Guangzhou in 1896 and published in Shanghai in 1897. The whole writing process of the book was started and completed in Lingnan, which reflected considerable regional characteristics. It is particularly important that the content and writing method, as well as the purpose of this book all contain the implication of “being practical”. In fact, from the middle to the late Qing dynasty, Kang Youwei was not the only one who annotated Dong Zhongshu’s Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals. There were other influential works such as Annotations for Spring and Autumn studies written by Ling Shu, Sublime Words and Profound Meaning in Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn written by Wei Yuan, Paraphrase of Spring and Autumn studies written by Su Yu and Kang Youwei’s A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn. Among them, Kang You-wei’s book was the most influential due to “being practical”.

With respect to the debate on Hua Yi, on the whole, Kang You-wei was opposed to narrowness of Huaxia centralism. But, in the book A Study of the Reforms of Confucius “Narration”, he severely criticized various phenomena of scorning ancient sages and teachings, in which he said, “under the influence of Liu Xin’s forgeries of Confucianism, there appeared miscellaneous teachings, prose and verses and religions in China, Di, Qiang, and Turkic and other minority nationalities were
against the righteousness that the Han people advocated, and China has been ruled by tyrannical emperors and barbarians for nearly 2000 years. It is indeed our nation’s grief.”569 This is a typical remark of defending and repelling ethnic minorities. It is interesting that he elucidated this differently in A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn. Under the item “ethnic minority” in volume six he made annotations to criticize Sun Mingfu and Hu Anguo (two Confucian scholars in the Song dynasties).

He thought they were ignorant of the righteousness advocated in the Spring and Autumn Annals and did not really understand the thought of the debate on Hua Yi, which caused serious consequences in reality; there was no crime greater than this!570 The viewpoint here was obviously opposite to the above-mentioned viewpoint in A Study of the Reforms of Confucius. However, this annotation was not written by Kang Youwei, but his disciple Xu Qin! Among all the notes in the book, only this one was not written by Kang Youwei. Is it really a coincidence! My view is that this is just a reflection of Kang You-wei’s “practicality”! Since there are various explanations for the sublime words in the Spring and Autumn Annals, Kang Youwei could, of course, explain the meaning of some words in different ways according to need!

Kang Youwei repeatedly illustrated his argument and commented on Zhongshu’s Gongyang Study, “The meaning of the Book of Song is just like divination in the I Ching and sublime words with profound meaning in the Spring and Autumn Annals, there are no immutable elucidations or interpretations”. No doubt, this in some degree was a comment on Dong Zhongshu’s Gongyang scholarship, but even more importantly, it was to provide argumentative foundation for his free interpretations. “Anyway, I annotated the texts of the Six Classics!”

Kang Youwei excerpted the word in Spring and Autumn studies, “Kingly Way” and put it under the item of “Ranks of the Emperor and Dukes and Princes under the Emperor” in volume one of A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn, but he did not write any notes there. In fact, Kang Youwei selectively excerpted this word which meant the Emperor could not appoint the relatives of the empress as officials. But Kang Youwei did not make any notes or complete annotations, we cannot guess the intentions of Kang Youwei, but can only say that there is profound meaning behind subtle words. Judging from the political situation at that time, such an arrangement was obviously “practical”!

On the whole, whether in terms of ways of thinking, value orientation or writing style, the book A Study on Dong Zhongshu’s Spring and Autumn indeed reflects the characteristics of New Text Confucianism and Cantonese. Therefore, when we study the Confucian classics of Guangdong, we should pay moderate attention to this relatively influential and unique regional and cultural phenomenon, thereby having a better grasp of the Confucian classics of Guangdong scholars in the Qing dynasty, and then, preferably, comprehend different qualities of the study of Confucian classics in different regions such as Changzhou, Guangdong and Hunan.
Challenges and Issues of Developing Contemporary Neo-Confucianism

Developments and prospects of contemporary Neo-Confucianism is not only the concern of Neo-Confucian scholars in Taiwan, Hong Kong and overseas, but also one of the focuses in academic circles at home. At the beginning of the 21st century, it will be helpful to discuss the challenges and issues of developing contemporary Neo-Confucianism, and it will also help develop contemporary Neo-Confucianism and promote the construction of the contemporary Chinese culture.

In my opinion, the issues of developing contemporary New Confucianism mainly include the followings: (i) the dilemma between openness and conservatism; (ii) The gap between the ambition of reviving Confucianism and the desolate reality of the Confucian school; (iii) the conflict between the traditional values and norms of “Back to the Basics” and modern concept of “openness”; (iv) the divorce between the spirit of criticism and the consciousness of self-reflection; (v) the paradox between the intentions of modernizing Confucianism and the reality of its marginalization; (vi) the total lack of an ideal carrier of the Confucian values and ideals. As space is limited, a brief exposition is as follows.

I. The dilemma between openness and conservatism

Traditional Confucianism, in essence, is a relatively open system with the consciousness of openness. “All things can develop without damage, all doctrines can exist together”, “Care about others, others will care about you, forgive others, others will forgive you”, “Don’t do unto others what you don’t want others to do unto you”, “People are my brothers and all things are my kind”, these are all reflections of openness of traditional Confucian scholars.

Contemporary Neo-Confucianism inherited and developed this openness. As early as the 1950s Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan, Zhang Junmai, Xu Fuguan published a famous “culture manifesto” with their signatures. In this manifesto, they advocated contemporary Neo-Confucianism and fully affirmed the spiritual life of Chinese history and culture. In the meantime, they explicitly proposed that Chinese
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culture and Western culture should earnestly learn from each other. They believed that the scientific spirit and democratic politics in Western culture had “its universal and eternal value,” which was worth learning by all nations; Chinese culture should absorb the spirit of “upright and acquired wisdom” in Western culture so as to enrich its “flexible and congenital wisdom”. Westerners should learn about the spirit of “laying down everything”, the wisdom of “flexibility and deity” and the feeling of “all under Heaven are of one family” in Chinese culture. It should be said that these ideas of contemporary Neo-Confucianism have the rationality of its era, and they are more different from the traditional Confucianism with the characteristics of broad horizons and great mind. The arrogant attitude of “assimilating barbarians” of traditional Confucianism was consciously transformed into the spirit of learning from Western culture to promote their own culture.

“Contemporary New Confucianism” refers to those scholars in Taiwan, Hong Kong, the United States and the mainland, who approve and practice Confucian values and ideals. Among them, Neo-Confucianism scholars in Taiwan are more active. For the past few years, Neo-Confucianism scholars have been struggling for their own cultural ideals. Inheriting tradition, global concentration, facing reality and striving for development are the mainstream of their ideology.

The Goose Lake, a monthly academic magazine of contemporary Neo-Confucianism in Taiwan, started publication in 1975. So far, it has published 330 issues and published a number of articles with explanatory notes of “Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming, Confucius, Mencius, Laozi and Zhuangzi” as their anchor point. In addition, they founded another magazine called the Goose Lake Journal. They hold international symposia on “contemporary Neo-Confucianism” (six sessions have already been held) biennially, academic conference (already eight sessions) every two years, a public lecture once a month, a reading club once a week and irregular forum or seminars three or four times every year. A large number of academic articles on contemporary Neo-Confucianism have been published in Goose Lake Publishing House, China’s Research Institute on Cultural Philosophy of Academia Sinica, the students’ Publishing House and Wenjin Publishing House. These colloquiums, seminars, and publications attract the participation of scholars with different academic ideas from different regions, countries, and races, including mainland scholars, which as a whole reflects the spirit of openness. However, here is the problem, because contemporary New Confucianism holds on to the cultural value of “back to the basics and make innovations” and maintains the consciousness of “clan system”, thus in many academic activities both at home and abroad, it overemphasized the supremacy and legitimacy of “Way”, which was not integrated with the thought of the non-contemporary New Confucianism scholars, and their positions were also misunderstood by the scholars on the mainland who insisted on Marxist doctrines.

Within the contemporary Neo-Confucianism camp, there even appeared a dispute between a “guardian of Neo-Confucianism” and a “critic of Neo-Confucianism”. The so-called “defenders of Neo-Confucianism” adhered to the
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value ideas of contemporary Neo-Confucianism and kept to the Way and preserved its tradition. For example, Li Minghui from China's Research Institute on Cultural Philosophy of Academia Sinica criticized Fang Keli from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Yang Zuhan from National Central University criticized Yu Ying-shih (A representative of third generation Neo-Confucianism), Feng Yaoming from Hong Kong University of Science and Technology responded to Yang Zebo from Fudan University, Cai Renhou adhered to his teacher Mou Zongsan's thought; all these reflect certain characteristics of “defenders of the Neo-Confucianism”.

However, the so-called “critics of Neo-Confucianism”, like Lin Anwu, Qiu Huanghai, Xie Daning, Zheng Zhiming and others, merely wanted to develop thought on the existing foundation. They called themselves “post Neo-Confucianism”, and put forward a number of thoughts different from “Neo-Confucianism”, but its basic academic and social philosophy was the same”.

I am afraid that the real difference might lie in the interpretation of “back to basics and make innovations” advocated by contemporary Neo-Confucianism. For example, Lin Anwu believed that issues of contemporary Neo-Confucianism was neither “back to basics and make innovations” nor abandoning the traditions while pursuing modernization, but to regulate people's realistic problems “in the process of learning modernization”, that is, transforming from “exterior action” to “inner cultivation”. Nevertheless, Lin Anwu did not transcend the Confucian thinking framework of “Saint” and “Emperor”. To a large extent, “post Neo-Confucianism” (”critic of Neo-Confucianism” – I tentatively borrow the term) also belongs to categories of conservatism. In addition, Cai Renhou, and Zhou Boyu announced that “Confucianism is a heavenly principle”, which, of course, cannot be simply seen in a kind of “arbitrary manner”, but we might as well say that they belong to extreme representatives. Thus, as you can see, contemporary Neo-Confucianism falls into the dilemma of openness and conservatism, in which the two sides are entangled, thereby becoming one of the issues in its development.

II. The gap between the ambition of reviving Confucianism and the desolate reality of the Confucian school

Contemporary Neo-Confucianism takes the revival of Confucianism as its lifework. Despite the euphemistic expression of “Phase III development of Confucianism”, the tenet of reviving the fundamental study traditional Confucian temperament and making innovations in modern science and democracy are also included in the revival of Confucianism. From the 1950s on, half a century has passed, yet the efforts of contemporary Neo-Confucianism eventually paid off. People in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and overseas pay far more attention to Contemporary Neo-Confucianism than previously.
Even more importantly, there appear to be some “bosom friends” who can understand Contemporary Neo-Confucianism in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and overseas, and it has been acknowledged more and more widely. Contemporary Neo-Confucianism is no longer a “falling petal” or “lost soul”; it has greater influence and has received more interest from people at home and abroad, indeed, it is no longer what it used to be.

However, let us look from a global perspective, and leave aside for the moment the arrogance of Western philosophers who ignore Chinese culture and Confucianism. Seeing how much influence Confucianism exercise upon overseas Chinese community, we cannot help pondering the question as to whether people can really rely on Confucianism to guide their lives and to settle their overseas spiritual lives? I am afraid that is still questionable. Even in Taiwan and Hong Kong, the charm of Confucian values is far less influential than Western values. Especially under today’s rule of the Democratic Progressive Party. For contemporary Neo-Confucianism in Taiwan, how to vigourously carry out activities and practice Confucian values in Taiwanese society is by no means a simple issue.

In mainland China, Confucianism in the “text” of Chinese culture is no longer the “grammar”, but an issue of “vocabulary”, and even one rarely in use. Therefore, we can see that “Reviving Confucianism” is not as easy as it sounds! Tu Weiming, a Neo-Confucianism scholar of the new generation who actively promoted the “Phase III development of Confucianism” and optimistically thought about the future of Confucianism, sighed with great emotion several times about “people's indifference to Confucianism” and criticized Chinese people by saying that: “they ignore valuable treasure in their own culture while blindly seek what they do not have”. From this we can see that, on one hand, Tu Weiming, called for Confucian revival and exploration of traditional resources. On the other hand, he also acknowledged the harsh reality of Confucianism.

In November, 2001, the “sixth International Symposium on Contemporary Neo-Confucianism” was held in Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei. Because it was a relatively remote site, the number of people participating was very small (forty or fifty people). The scholars from Hong Kong, the mainland and overseas participated throughout. However, quite a few Taiwanese scholars, for various reasons, attended the conference at the last moment when they had to give a speech or preside. Moreover, they left immediately after their tasks were completed. Back in the days, when the “International Symposium on Contemporary Neo-Confucianism” was held in Taipei Central Library located in the downtown area, hundreds of people came to attend while observers had to pay. Indeed, there was no comparison! This is exactly the loneliness and disconsolation of “Neo-Confucianism”. Therefore, contemporary Neo-Confucian scholars really need to think deeply about how to narrow the gap between the ambition of reviving Confucianism and the desolate reality of the Confucian school.
III. The conflict between the traditional values and norms of “Back to Basics” and the modern concept of openness

“Back to the basics and making innovations” is the value proposition of contemporary Neo-Confucianism. “Back to the basics” means reviving the essence of the study on temperament of Confucian school in the Song and Ming dynasties, and “making innovations” refers to opening a new situation of modern science and democracy on the basis of Confucian temperament. The problem is that traditional value criterions of temperament philosophy and modern consciousness of science and democracy belong to two different sets of value systems. What is common between the two? In other words, how can we join modern science and democracy and traditional Confucianism? Before today, contemporary Neo-Confucianism scholars have not given any convincing arguments. The “body” is enjoying modern material civilization and pursuing democratic politics in modern society; while the “mind” remains in traditional society and has to depend on the temperament philosophy to support the spiritual world and even influence the whole social value system. The ideal of reining the modern “body” with the traditional “heart” is truly wonderful, but what is its feasibility and operability? Whether we should observe, remodel and utilize the tradition to serve modern society and the “body and mind” of modern people or proceed from tradition and adapt to tradition with the “body and mind” of modern people, this conflict of “tradition and modernity” is still a “knot” for contemporary Neo-Confucianism scholars to untie.

IV. The divorce between the spirit of criticism and the consciousness of self-reflection

Contemporary Neo-Confucianism always has a critical spirit. Whether in the works of Qian Mu, Tang Junyi and Mou Zongsan, who are called the second generation of contemporary New Confucianism, or in the works of Liu Shuxian, Cai Renhou, Tu Weiming (including Yu Ying-shih), who are the third generation of Neo-Confucianism, or the books of Li Minghui, Lin Anwu and Yang Zuhan, we can see splendid sparks of thought and their criticism on society, life, and politics, even their mutual criticism (such as Yu Ying-shi defended for Yang Mu and thus incurred the criticism from Yang Zuhan, mutual criticism between Lin Anwu and Li Minghui and so forth).

It can be said that Confucians carry forward the spirit of criticism. However, seen from a broader perspective, it is not difficult for us to find that the consciousness of self-reflection of the contemporary Neo-Confucianism scholars falls behind its critical spirit. It is true that Neo-Confucian scholars are able to reflect on criticism from the outside world and their own weaknesses, yet, that is far from enough. On the contrary, they have a strong spirit of counter-criticism.
In recent years, contemporary Neo-Confucianism has been criticized by many scholars in Taiwan, Hang Kong and mainland China, such as Fang Keli\textsuperscript{578} and Zheng Jiadong\textsuperscript{579} from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Li Zonggui from Zhongshan University\textsuperscript{580}, Liu Qiliang from Xiangtan University\textsuperscript{581}, Feng Yaoming from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology\textsuperscript{582}, Zhai Zhicheng from the Academia Sinica\textsuperscript{583} and so on. For these criticisms, the scholars of contemporary Neo-Confucianism should keep a peaceful mind. They may as well argue with them in a positive way or just pay no attention, and it is not necessary to overreact. Otherwise, it can lead to people's misunderstanding of the cultural awareness of contemporary Neo-Confucianism. In short, the consciousness of self-reflection is weaker than the spirit of criticism, which is a practical problem that contemporary Neo-Confucianism should solve.

V. The paradox between the intentions of modernizing Confucianism and the reality of its marginalization

Whether we acknowledge it or not, the marginalization of Confucianism in today's world is a fact. In the light the contemporary Neo-Confucian vision, to rejuvenate and revive Confucianism, we must move it gradually from “marginalization” towards “the center”. To become a “center”, we should advance with the times instead of defending old traditions, allow Confucianism to have modern characteristics. Contemporary Neo-Confucianism always advocates and actively practices modernization. Therefore, Neo-Confucianism scholars are doing everything they can do to achieve the modernization of Confucianism. The trouble is that they are eager to modernize Confucianism and integrate it into modern society, endowing Confucianism with modern characteristics, but in fact they become more alien to traditional Confucianism.

Does modern Confucianism with a scientific and democratic spirit, awareness of competition, consciousness of efficiency and contractual relations still have positive characteristics? Furthermore, if it needs to adapt to modernization, it must first modernize itself, thus, the traditional features and unique tastes of Confucianism will be reduced or perhaps even lost. To keep its unique characteristics, the only practice is to adhere to the principle of “back to the basics”, that is, to take the Confucian learning as a fundamental principle. But if they consider Confucian learning as the basis, it is hard to achieve modernization and become the center of modern society. However, modernization will inevitably occur if it wants to attain the center. As a result, it is not “seeing marginalization as center” like Tu Weiming and other scholars wished, but hoping to become the center and to modernize itself, finally losing itself. In summary, the conflict between modernization and marginalization in Confucianism is a major problem to solve in developing contemporary Neo-Confucianism.\textsuperscript{584}
VI. The total lack of an ideal carrier of Confucian values and ideals

In order to further develop contemporary Neo-Confucianism, we must find a holistic carrier for its values and ideals. Any kind of value or ideal needs a carrier. In traditional China, it was the whole bureaucratic administration system, government officials at different levels and scholar-officials, in other words, people similar to civil servants and intellectuals today, who carried the values and ideals of traditional Confucianism. In society, the common people usually took the code of ethics of three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues as the norms of their life. Even for commendation of martyrs and virtuous women, Confucian values were used as a standard.

In short, in traditional China, bureaucratic hierarchy and intellectual class mainly served as the holistic carrier. By contrast, in today’s China (China in a sense of “cultural China” – a Chinese society in which Chinese culture is recognized both at home and abroad), no civil service or intellectual class as a whole can consciously carry the values and ideals of Confucianism in any region. It is a shame that some scholars admit that they are engaged in Neo-Confucian studies and they belong to the category of contemporary Neo-Confucianism. But if we call them “contemporary Neo-Confucians”, they may not acknowledge it. They even say that they prefer to do research work on Confucianism rather than join the circle of contemporary Neo-Confucianism. As you see, the total lack of a carrier for Confucian values and ideals is another major problem of contemporary Neo-Confucianism. How to solve this problem, I am afraid, is beyond the power of the contemporary Neo-Confucianism scholar.

In conclusion, there are a number of challenges and issues in developing contemporary Neo-Confucianism. To solve these problems, the teachers and friends of contemporary Neo-Confucianism need to make great efforts, put the ideal of “cultural China” into practice and do some self-reflection for improvement of modern characteristics. As an academic friend of contemporary Neo-Confucianism, I would like to be a sincere friend of theirs. Therefore, I ventured to present these issues (only problems without solutions) for my peers at home and abroad to discuss and criticize.
The 20th century has been the portal to the new century which has already opened\textsuperscript{585}. At such a time of eliminating the old to make way for the new, a retrospective look at the rough course of the past, the success and failure Chinese philosophical research in the 20th century, and a prospective look at that of the new century are of great significance to the improvement of our theoretical thinking, acquiring a broader spiritual outlook of value, as well as promoting the modern transformation of Chinese culture and Chinese philosophy.

We can roughly divide the study of Chinese philosophy of the 20th century into two major phases by taking the year of 1949 as the dividing line. The latter stage can be divided into the first 30 years and the later 20 years with the year of 1979 as the dividing line. Throughout the 100 years of the 20th century, as an independent discipline category of modern knowledge area, Chinese philosophical research has undergone an arduous and tortuous process from formation stage, through the shaping stage and ultimately to its maturity. In the meantime, there are not only remarkable academic achievements and social contributions, but also painful political lessons to be told.

I. The first half of the twentieth century

The modern study of Chinese philosophy originated from \textit{Outline of the History of Chinese Philosophy} (Volume 1) written by Hu Shi.\textsuperscript{586} Prior to the publication of this book, \textit{The History of Chinese Philosophy} of Xie Wuliang, written even earlier and published by Zhonghua Book Company in 1916. The book expounded the history of Chinese philosophy in the Pre-Qin Period, Han and Tang dynasties, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, in three parts and was concerned with the philosophy of
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various schools of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, as well as philosophical thought of the important philosophers at different historical stages. Today, though it seems that the book of Xie Wuliang is insubstantial in contents and coarse in quality, and research methods old-fashioned and traditional, yet it is a pioneering work which is worthy of “the first history of Chinese philosophy”.

However, before Xie Wuliang published his book, The History of Chinese Ethics written by Cai Yuanpei had been published by the Shanghai Commercial Press in 1910, with the signature Cai Zhen on the first edition. It was also the first book that Chinese scholars who adopted the Western academic research approach used to study the history of Chinese ethics. In the book, the history of Chinese ethics was divided into three parts, namely the founding age of the Pre-Qin period, the developmental age of the Han and Tang dynasties and the era of Neo-Confucianism of the Song and Ming dynasties. The book expounded the ethical thought of a total of 28 representative figures from Confucius to Wang Yangming, and discussed the thought of Dai Zhen, Huang Zongxi and other people in the appendix of the book, which had a significant influence on the academic world of that time. Of course, this book is not really an exemplary work of Chinese philosophy research, but its methods, style and contents undoubtedly fell within the category of the history of Chinese philosophy. Especially after the 1980s, many works on the general history of Chinese philosophy or the dynastic history of Chinese philosophy expounded the ethical thought of ideologists or various schools, then it is not an exaggeration if we say this book was a pioneering work in the study of Chinese philosophy.

After the publication of Hu Shi’s Outline of the History of Chinese Philosophy (volume I), a variety of works on Chinese philosophy were published successively. In the 1920s, there was Liang Shuming’s Culture and Philosophy of East and West,587 Liang Qichao’s History of Political Thought in the Pre-Qin Period,588 Tan Jiefu’s Profound Meaning of Form and Name589, Xiong Shili’s Outline of Idealism.

In the 1930s590, there was Feng Youlan’s History of Chinese Philosophy,591 Fang Shouchu’s Origin and Development of Mohist Theory592, Li Shicen’s Ten Lectures on Chinese Philosophy593, Fan Shoukang’s General History of Chinese Philosophy594, Liang Qichao’s Chinese Academic History in the Past 300 Years595, Qian Mu’s Chinese Academic History in the Past 300 Years596 and The Scholars in the Pre-Qin Period597, Lv Zhenyu’s History of Chinese Political Thoughts598, Tang Yongtong’s Buddhism History of the Han, Wei, Western Jin, Eastern Jin, Southern and Northern dynasties599, Rong Zhaozu’s Naturalism of Wei and Jin dynasties600, Critical Biography of Li Zhuowu601. In the 1940s, there were mainly Zhang Dainian’s Outline of Chinese Philosophy602, Du Guoxiang’s Critique of the Pre-Qin Scholars603, Guo Moruo’s Ten Critiques604, Yang Rongguo’s Thoughts of Confucius and Mo ZI605, The History of Chinese Ancient Thoughts606, Zhao Jibin’s Critique of Ancient Chinese Confucianism607, Xiong Shili’s New Theory of Idealism608, Hou Wailu’s History of Ideological Thoughts in Modern China609, History of Thoughts and Doctrines in Ancient China610, The General History of Chinese Thoughts (volume 1) written by Hou Wailu, Zhao Jibin and Du Guoxiang611, Liang Shuming’s
The above-mentioned achievements had their own features and contributions, but the works that really had far-reaching influence on Chinese philosophical research were Hushi's *Outline of Chinese Philosophy (Volume I)*, Feng Youlan's *History of Chinese Philosophy*, Liang Shu-ming's *Cultures and Philosophy of East and West, The Main Idea of Chinese Culture*, Zhang Dainian's *Outline of Chinese Philosophy*, and Yang Rongguo's *History of Chinese Ancient Thought* and so on. However, the works of Liang Shuming and Zhang Dainian did not exert significant influence and did not receive a general concern in academic circle until the rise of cultural discussion in the 1980s.

*The Outline of the History of Chinese Philosophy (Volume I)* written by Hu Shi was the first monograph which interpreted Chinese philosophy by using Western philosophical theories and constructed Chinese philosophical systems by using modern methods. The author attached great importance to the research methodology in the book. In his opinion, the history of philosophy was characterized by various research methods and solutions. He advocated historical exploration according to Darwin’s theory of evolution. He also thought “the important task of the history of philosophy was to inform scholars of the development of ancient and modern thought”, and that “the history of philosophy is a history in progress and development”. In addition, he advocated adopting the style and model of Western philosophy in order to construct the system of the history of Chinese philosophy.

In the book *The History of Chinese Philosophy*, Feng Youlan claimed that the purpose of studying the history of philosophy was “to find out its substantive system from unsystematic philosophy”, and it is important to explore the main concepts of philosophers and their hierarchical structure, as well as the rise and fall of various schools and the evolution of ideological trends.

In his book *The Outline of Chinese Philosophy*, Zhang Dainian divided the history of Chinese philosophy into several parts such as cosmology, ideals of life and epistemology and so forth, and each part was further divided into sections exploring some questions and categories (the subtitle of the book is “The History of Chinese Philosophical Questions”). The book focused on reorganizing inherent categories and concepts of Chinese philosophy and exploring its historical development and characteristics. This book is of pioneering significance for the study of Chinese philosophy and its writing style. Later, *The History of the Development of Ancient Chinese Philosophy* (Volume one and Volume two) written by Fang Litian was published in the 1990s, which was the inheritance and development of the earlier work.

When talking about the research achievements of Chinese philosophy in the first half of the 20th century, we should also mention *Six Books of Zheng and Yuan*, a series of books written by Feng Youlan during the Anti-Japanese War. The books reflected an inherent awareness of hardship and suffering among traditional Chinese intellectuals and the traditional spiritual life of the Chinese nation. At that time, the vagrant life, the rise and fall as well as the historical changes of the Chinese nation
inspired and motivated him. Therefore, he successively completed the following six books including A New Philosophy of Principle, New Discourses on Events, New Social Admonitions, A New Treatise on the Nature of Man, A New Treatise on the Nature of Tao, and A New Understanding of Words, which constituted Feng Youlan’s theory of “New Rational Philosophy”.

According to Feng Youlan, “New Rationalist Philosophy” was a continuation of “a Confucian school of philosophy from the Song dynasty”. When Six Books of Zhen and Yuan were published, they were radically criticized by many progressive scholars. Today, from the perspectives of theoretical construction and methodology, the books obviously had a positive meaning, that is, marking the formation of Feng Youlan’s philosophical theory, and breakthrough in content and methods that Chinese philosophers made in terms of traditional Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy. It also indicates an approach to the modernization of traditional philosophy and localization of Western philosophy. It was the formation and dissemination of “New Rationalist Philosophy” that made Feng Youlan the most influential and the greatest philosopher during the Anti-Japanese War. Even today, Six Books of Zhen and Yuan is used as an indispensable reference book by those who study Chinese philosophy.

If we make a comprehensive review of the studies of Chinese philosophy from the first 50 years of the 20th century, we can say that the scholars not only paid attention to the issues of methodology, but also placed emphasis on the interpretation of intrinsic concepts, sorting out the developmental thread of Chinese philosophy and revealing its characteristics. Furthermore, the most important is that the authors all learned from, adopted and accepted the methods of theoretical analysis and system construction of Western philosophy. In addition, the researchers had a profound awareness of unexpected development, so they all tried hard to contribute to the revival of the Chinese nation and civilization.

The combination of research into the history of Chinese philosophy and a sense of historical responsibility and mission was also one of the characteristics of Chinese philosophy during this period. It can be said that the most important feature was “the emphasis on scientific principle and law” in the study of Chinese philosophy. During this period, it was widely acknowledged that the history of philosophy referred to the development of thought, the development of Chinese philosophy had its own rules and characteristics and Chinese philosophy had its own unique categories and concepts.

At the same time, along with the modern transformation of Chinese society and Chinese culture, Chinese philosophy was in the transitional process from traditional philosophy to the modern study of it. During this period, the academic world reached a preliminary consensus that the history of Chinese philosophy should be seen as a specialized form of knowledge and a modern discipline. However, due to practical limitations and the influence of historical tradition, the object and scope of Chinese philosophy were still indefinite, and the research methods of traditional academic history and the history of Confucian classics was mixed with the thoughts of cultural history, intellectual history, the history of political thought and
philosophy in the ancient and modern times, and they were independent and coexistent on their own, giving rise to a prosperous and miscellaneous complexion. The contents, methods and value orientation of the above-mentioned representative achievements were significant proofs.

II. The second half of the twentieth century

In the half-century from 1949 to 2000, Chinese philosophical research fell into two stages, namely the first 30 years from 1949 to 1978 and the last 20 years from 1979 to 2000. In these two stages, Chinese society had quite a different political climate and academic atmosphere, the study of Chinese philosophy also had a rather different research direction and academic achievement.

(i) A first stage of 30 years (1949-1978)

After 1949, with the changes of political climate in mainland China, studies of Chinese philosophy went through a rough phase. It was influenced by the “Soviet model”, especially by the overwhelming trend of “only political thinking” from the 1950s to the 1970s, during which everything served the political needs and everything was melted in politics. This led the research of Chinese philosophy towards politicization, simplification and vulgarization, and this trend was typically represented by simplifying the history of Chinese philosophy to the struggle between “materialism and idealism, dialectics and metaphysics”, analyzing problems from the level of political struggle, considering “materialism to be progressive, idealism to be reactionary” and advocating “studying the history of Chinese philosophy by taking class struggle as a guideline”.

Thereby, all the above made research dull and dreary, and there even appeared many mournful tragedies and embarrassing farces, Such as “Confucius was a restoration tool of the reactionary class”; “Confucius was a counterrevolutionary double-dealer”; “The history of Chinese philosophy was the struggle history of Confucianism and legalism” and so on. Obviously, studies of Chinese philosophy during this period went against the rules of academic research itself on the whole, and ran counter to the historical reality of Chinese philosophy, thereby leading to a distressing situation. However, thanks to the efforts and struggles of a large number of researchers, studies of Chinese philosophy in this period still achieved much.

_The General History of Chinese Thought_ written by Hou Wailu and his coauthors constituted five volumes and six books, regarded as a significant achievement during the first 30 years after the foundation of the PRC. It was the first general history of Chinese Marxist thought after the founding of New China, and also a systematic work which focused on sorting out and summarizing traditional Chinese thought. The author made comprehensive research into philosophical thought, logical thought and social thought, then stressed the economic base, super structure and ideological thought, and integrated the study of Chinese social history and intellectual history.
Moreover, the book made Marxist interpretations of traditional Chinese thought and of some important philosophers. It also proposed a series of brand-new points of view. The authors explored a number of thinkers who were ignored by previous researchers, including Ji Kang, Liu Zhijie, Liu Yuxi and Liu Zongyuan, Wang Anshi, Wang Gen, He Xinyin, Fang Yizhi, etc. These people who were referred to as heretical thinkers by Hou Wailu et al were given much importance in the study of Chinese philosophy during the last 20 years in the 20th century, and they were chosen as the objects of textbooks of Chinese philosophy in some universities, some even became objects of study for master's degree theses. *The General History of Chinese Thought* remains an important reference for researchers of Chinese philosophy, and it was also used by masters and doctoral students as a subject of study.

During this period, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* compiled by Ren Jiyu also had a great influence. This book constitutes four volumes according to historic stages of social development. The first was the volume of the Pre-Qin Period, the second volume was from the Han dynasty to the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern dynasties, the third volume was from the Sui and Tang dynasties to the Ming dynasty, the fourth volume was from the Qing dynasty to the May Fourth Movement. The first three volumes were published before the “Cultural Revolution”, the fourth was published in 1979. The series of books focused on the consistency of history and logic, the relationship between social and economic development, class struggle and ideological struggle, the relationship between materialism and idealism, dialectics and metaphysics. As the textbook of national institutions of higher learning, the book had an extensive and profound influence. The book was reprinted continuously by the People’s Publishing House until the 1990s.

It is noteworthy that Ren Jiyu proposed the question of philosophical thought of ethnic minorities in this book as early as the 1960s. He pointed that “with regard to the philosophical thought of ethnic minorities in our country, we only have a little study, and there are no relevant discussions in this aspect”. Not until recently was this problem solved to a certain extent. For instance, a number of academic conferences on the philosophy of ethnic minorities were held and some monographs were published, from which we can see that Mr. Ren and his coauthors studied the problems with great ingenuity. In the 1970s, on the basis of textbooks, the book was rewritten as *A Compendium of the History of Chinese Philosophy* and a large number of copies were printed. The book played a positive role in disseminating Chinese philosophy.

During the first stage of 30 years, Ren Jinyu’s *A History of Chinese Philosophy* and Feng Youlan’s *A New History of Chinese Philosophy* were almost published at the same time. Feng Youlan was treated as a bourgeois intellectual after liberation. He strived to “use the Marxist standpoint, viewpoints and methods to rewrite *The History of Chinese Philosophy*” after his self-criticism, and the first two volumes of *The New History of Chinese Philosophy* were published by the People’s Publishing House in June, 1964. Both books received the attention of academic circles. In addition, Feng Youlan published the groundbreaking work *The Science of Historical Data of the History of Chinese Philosophy*, and then published
At this stage, there was still an impressive person who once enjoyed great popularity and was known as a communist expert and was famous for his research, that is Yang Rongguo. Although *The History of Ancient Chinese Thought* of Yang Rongguo was written before the founding of the PRC, it was not published by People's Publishing House until 1954. In 1962, China Youth Publishing House published *A Concise History of Chinese Thoughts* compiled by Yang Rongguo (editor-in-chief), Chen Yusen, Li Jinquan and Wu Xizhao. In 1973, the People's Publishing House published *A Concise History of Chinese philosophy* compiled by Yang Rongguo (editor-in-chief), Li Jinquan and Wu Xizhao. In 1975, the People's Publishing House published the “revised edition” of this book. *The History of Ancient Chinese Thought* of Yang Rongguo published in the 1950s, and showed his unique academic viewpoints. The book was published in large quantities in the 1970s due to the political situation, but the content remained unchanged.

The book also played a positive role in disseminating and studying the history of Chinese philosophy. Until the trend of cultural discussion in the 1980s, many researchers still gained knowledge and wisdom from it. *A Concise History of Chinese Thoughts* compiled by Yang Rongguo in the early 1960s also played an active role in disseminating Chinese ideological history. *A Concise History of Chinese Philosophy* published in 1973 was also printed and distributed in great numbers and had a great influence due to the political situation. No one raised their doubts about the content of this book until the new period of reform and opening up.

However, the “revised edition” of the book published in 1975 was based on the so-called “struggle between Confucianism and Legalism” propagated by Jiang Qing and the like. Therefore, “the revised edition” naturally received radical criticism in the academic world after the overthrow of the Gang of Four. It is thought-provoking that Yang Rongguo, known as a communist expert, kept pushing himself and took pride in being trusted by Mao Zedong, while Feng Youlan was regarded as “teaching material by negative example” and a bourgeois intellectual, who was trying to reform himself by using Marxism so as to get a “new life”. They were both widely divergent in terms of political position and academic viewpoint. However, both of them had the same academic experiences after the founding of the PRC, and both were utilized by the authorities to express opinions against their will under political pressure. Yang Rongguo died in misery after fierce political criticism and academic criticism in 1978, and Feng Youlan passed away peacefully in 1990 after completing the draft of *A New History of Chinese Philosophy*. Their political and academic tragedies reflected the rough process of the study of Chinese philosophy in the first 30 years after the founding of the PRC.

Information on the studies of Chinese philosophy was also published. *Selected Works of Chinese Philosophy through the Ages* was co-authored by the Institute of Chinese Philosophy of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Philosophy
Teaching and Research Office of Beijing University. The book was published in 1962 by Zhonghua Book Company. The series of works were divided into four volumes including the Pre-Qin Period, the Western and Eastern Han and Sui and Tang dynasties (two volumes), volumes on the Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties and a volume on the Qing dynasty. In 1973, to adapt to the need of “learning some history of Chinese philosophy” advocated by Mao Zedong, the works were renamed as Compendium of Information on the History of Chinese Philosophy by Zhonghua Book Company and reprinted.

During this stage, other important works included Metaphysics in the Wei-Jin Period written by Tang Yongtong, Zhang Dainian’s Outline of China Philosophy, Xiong Shili’s Origins of Confucianism, On Original Reality and Function, Illuminating the Mind, Ren Jiyu’s Collection of Buddhist Thinking during the Han and Tang dynasties. In addition, reprinted were Guo Moruo’s The Age of Bronze and Ten Critique Books, Du Guoxiang’s Study of Pre-Qin Philosophers, Tang Yongtong’s Buddhist history of Han, Wei, the Western Jin and Eastern Jin, Southern-Northern dynasties and books were reprinted and republished.

During the study of Chinese philosophy in the first 30 years, there were also a number of heated academic discussions. They mainly constituted discussions on the methodology of the history of Chinese philosophy, the Book of Changes, the thought of Laozi, Confucius, Zhuangzi and Dong Zhongshu and so on. Among them, the study on the Confucianism of Feng Youlan, Jin Jingfang, Cai Shangsi, the study on Buddhist philosophy in the Han and Tang dynasties, Ren Jiyu and Guan Feng’s research on the Pre-Qin philosophy with Zhuangzi as the core of studies got wide attention in the academic world.

On the whole, during the first 30 years after the founding of new China, the study of Chinese philosophy made remarkable achievements. Chinese scholars have made great and arduous efforts in terms of training, research development, seeking scientific research methods and constructing independent disciplines and other fields. Therefore, we cannot say that there is nothing to speak of about the study of Chinese philosophy in the last 30 years.

However, it should be honestly acknowledged that the first 30 years indeed had bias and error. In the process of learning and using Marxism to study Chinese philosophy, although there appeared some valuable works with new views, methods and contents, yet, due to the influence of the ultra-left trend of thought and intervention of deformed politics, Chinese philosophical research once deviated from the right path. The typical example was the proposition of opposing revisionism in the work of philosophy history in the late 1950s. Different academic thoughts were criticized, and some even led to political critique. The viewpoints about class struggle became a standard to interpret the history of Chinese philosophy and the study of Chinese philosophical history. It was absurd to the highest degree when it ran to the campaign of “condemning Lin Biao and Confucius”, and “appraising Legalism and criticizing Confucianism” during the “Cultural Revolution”. The study of Chinese philosophy became a tool for political struggle
within the party and a tool for some people to chase undeserved fame. The definition of the history of philosophy put forward by Andrei Zhdannov of the Soviet Union was regarded as a rigid and rough dogma, which made Chinese philosophical research simply determine the nature of philosophers and philosophy categories just by judging if they belonged to materialism or idealism. The aspiration of all schools contending for attention vanished like soap bubbles, and the study of Chinese philosophy suffered serious setbacks.

(II) The stage of the next 20 years (1979–2000)

The last 20 years of the 20th century was a period of flourishing and renewal for the study of Chinese philosophy, and it was also a period with the most fruitful achievements of the 20th century.

1. A breakthrough of methodology in philosophy history

In the 1980s, with the end of political turmoil and the beginning of reform and opening up, the study of Chinese philosophy opened up a new situation. The prelude to this new situation was the establishment of the “Society for the History of Chinese Philosophy” in Taiyuan, Shanxi province in 1979. At the founding conference, a lively discussion on the “methodology of Chinese philosophy history” was held. After the conference, *Proceedings on the Discussion of Methodology of Chinese Philosophy History* was published. Thereafter, a series of reflective articles concerning research methodology were published in newspapers. By breaking the limitation of Zhdannov’s “definition of the history of philosophy”, the academic circles focused on issues such as the definition, object, scope, and purpose of the history of philosophy, inheritance of philosophy heritage, historical evaluation of philosophical idealism, relationships between philosophy and politics and so forth, and each aired their own views by arguing and refuting each other.

First of all, scholars took a retrospective look at the “two pairs of antithetical theories” (including materialism against idealism, dialectics against metaphysics) which had prevailed for nearly 30 years. After the discussion, they reached a preliminary consensus: the history of Chinese philosophy was not just the history of two antithetical armies of materialism and idealism, dialectics and metaphysics; “the two pairs of antithetical theories” could not generalize the reality of the history of Chinese philosophical history. And then, some scholars published articles to expound the positive roles of idealism under certain conditions, and gave positive evaluations to the “idealism” schools and the “idealism” philosophers in history.

In the heated discussions on methodology, some scholars put forward the “circle theory” in order to direct against the “theory of two antithetical armies”. Those who believed “the circle theory” argued that the history of philosophy was the history of human knowledge, and the philosophical understanding of the human was full of contradictions and twists and turns in each developmental stage. They
believed that the philosophical movement of each stage generally had a starting point and an ending point, forming a logical process with beginning and end corresponding to each other. This logical process went through twists and turns over and over again, from affirmation to negation, prejudice to comprehensiveness, from inferiority to superiority, which “is similar to the curve of the spiral and resembling a large circle composed of a string of circles”. Therefore, the study of the history of Chinese philosophy should make efforts to explore the inherent “circle” in the historical development of Chinese philosophy. The best known works of “the circle theory” was *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (two volumes) compiled by Xiao Shafu and Li Jinquan which had printed more than 100,000 copies. Today, people may not entirely accept “the circle theory”, but the proposition and practice of “the circle theory” undoubtedly rectified the “theory of class struggle” and the “two antithetical armies” at the time, and it was also an indispensable part in the process of studying the history of Chinese philosophy.

From the exploration of theoretical thinking and research approaches, we can say that the study of Chinese philosophical history after the “Cultural Revolution” was based on a discussion of methodology and then made a breakthrough. The main achievements of this discussion not only included the above-mentioned conference in Taiyuan, the collection of methodology essays on the history of Chinese philosophy, published papers in various newspapers and periodicals, but also *Introduction to Methodology of Chinese Philosophy History* written by Professor Zhang Dainian from Beijing University. This book is the only systematic monograph about the methodology of Chinese philosophy history so far. The author put forward his unique viewpoints on philosophy and the history of philosophy, class analysis of philosophical thought, theoretical analytic methods, the unity of history and logic, the method of critique and inheritance, methods of sorting historical data and so on.

In addition, there was also a collection of theses compiled by Xiao Shafu and Chen Xiuzhai *On Methodology of the History of Philosophy* and other achievements. In the meantime, some people reassessed and affirmed Feng Youlan's “abstract inheritance method” which suffered political critique in the 1950s, some even gave very high appraisal. In the late 1990s, there were an increasing number of scholars who gave positive evaluation to Feng Youlan’s “abstract inheritance method”.

It is worth noting that with Western academic thought introduced to China in the mid-1980s and the demand of “methods renewal” or “ideology renewal” increasingly growing in the field of academic research, Chinese researchers attempted to study Chinese philosophy by using the methods of Western academic research. Among them, the representative papers included *The Ideologies of the Qin and Han dynasties* authored by Li Zehou who adopted the methods of system theory to, *Similarity Theory, Synergetics and Philosophical Method of Dong Zhongshu* authored by a younger generation who attempted to use synergetics, receiving great attention in the academic world.
In general, since the mid-1980s, studying the history of Chinese philosophy by using Marxist methods, methods of Western philosophy, methods of natural science (system theory, cybernetics, information theory, synergetics, mutation theory, deconstruction theory, etc.), cultural anthropology, textual criticism and other methods can carry on at the same time without conflict.

2. Development and deepening of the study of Chinese philosophy categories

After the breakthrough of the “Soviet mode” represented by Zhdannov’s “definition of the history of philosophy”, further exploration on how to research was carried out.

First of all, it was the study of Chinese philosophy categories. Some academics published articles to initiate the research on Chinese philosophy categories and important concepts. The Issues on the Category System of Traditional Chinese Philosophy written by Tang Yijie from Peking University gave rise to widespread attention in the academic world. The editorial department of Chinese Social Science in which Tang Yijie’s thesis was published once held a related seminar to promote the study of Chinese philosophy categories. “A National Symposium on Chinese Philosophy Categories” held in November 1983 in Xi’an showed that category research gained universal recognition and concentrated reflection in the academic world. The people who attended the symposium included Zhang Dainian, Wang Ming, Feng Qi, Tang Yijie, Fang Litian, Fang Keli, some graduate students from key universities, Professor Du Weiming from Harvard University and another 70 people. Collected papers of Chinese Philosophy Category were published after the symposium, and the statements of Zhang Dainian, Feng Qi, Tang Yijie, Wang Ming, Du Weiming at the symposium were published in the magazine Quest in Hunan province with the title of Study of Category on the History of Chinese Philosophy. Later, Zhang Liwen published two monographs on study of Chinese philosophy categories, Development History of Chinese Philosophy Category (the Tao of Heaven), and Development History of Chinese Philosophy Category (the Tao of Humanity). Ge Rongjin published The History of Chinese philosophical Category, Zhang Dainian published The Theory of Conceptual Category of Chinese Classical Philosophy, Meng Peiyuan published The Category System of Neo-Confucianism, Zhang Liwen also published The Theory of Logical Structure of Chinese Philosophy, all of which could be seen as an extension of category research. In general, the research of Chinese philosophy categories broadened the outlook of academia, expanded the research area, deepened the research outcome and objectively consolidated the break from the “Soviet mode”.

More importantly, the beginning of the research on Chinese philosophy categories was actually to clean up, both the confusion of academics and politics since the 1950s and political thinking characterized by replacing academics with politics. It
was also an important manifestation of awakening the subject consciousness of philosophy researchers, and setting the wrong academic research thought right. In the meantime, it deepened the research methodology of the history of Chinese philosophy and the logical outcome of the discussions of methodology. However, an obvious weakness of the category studies was that some scholars regarded category as an isolated and rigid concept that could be separated from history, thereby stifling its vitality. Moreover, quite a few commentators thought that all ancient Chinese philosophy categories had attained perfection. This weakness was pointed out by Zhang Dainian in Chinese “Philosophy Category Symposium” which was held in 1983 in Xi’an.

3. “Purification” and “generalization” of the study of philosophy history

With further discussion on the scope of the study of Chinese philosophy, the discrimination about the relationship between the history of Chinese philosophy and intellectual history, specifically speaking, the discussion of “purification” and “generalization” has become the necessary element of the philosophy history. The 1st National Symposium on Chinese Intellectual History was held in Xi’an in November of 1983. A key topic of the symposium was the relationship between philosophical history and intellectual history. Meanwhile, after this discussion, some related articles were published in the 10th issue of *Philosophical Investigation* in 1983. Tang Yijie, Zhang Qizhi, Zhou Jizhi all elucidated their viewpoints. At the closing ceremony of the conference, Li Jinquan gave a report on *The Relationship and Distinction between the Philosophy History and the Intellectual History*, and the thesis was published in the 4th issue of *Philosophical Investigation* (Beijing) in 1984.

The main point of the article was that the object and key points of the study of intellectual history focused on the historical development of different schools of thought. The object and key points of the history of philosophy focused on internal logic in the development of theoretical thinking. The symposium generally reached the following conclusion: the history of philosophy, intellectual history and cultural history were three interrelated concepts and fields. With regard to the scope, cultural history was the largest, followed by intellectual history and the history of philosophy. The discussions had a positive meaning for the “purification” of the study of Chinese philosophy. A batch of works on the characteristics of theoretical thinking of Chinese philosophy, the development of Chinese philosophy, the philosophized course of Chinese philosophy, the system of Chinese philosophy and other books came out, enriching the contents of Chinese philosophy research, breaking “the Soviet mode” and further cleaning up the impact of the “ultra-left” trend.

Among them, the multivolume works *The Development of Chinese Philosophy* written by Ren Jiyu and *The Logical Process of Ancient Chinese Philosophy* written
by Feng Qi manifested the “purification” of the history of philosophical study; the example of “generalization” in the study of philosophy history was *New History of Chinese Philosophy* written by Feng Youlan.673 After the study of Chinese philosophy categories, “study on trends of thought” became the new research direction. Tang Yijie, a professor from Beijing University, took the lead in studying the trends of philosophical thought, and his representative work was *Guo Xiang and Metaphysics in the Wei and Jin dynasties*674. The book focused on the relationships between philosophers and social ideological trends, academic ideological trends and made careful explanations of the interaction between philosophers and academic trends of thought. Subsequently, Yang Guorong published *General Theory on Learning of Wang Yangming*,675 Xiao Shafu and Xu Sumin published *Enlightenment of Academic Evolution in the Ming and Qing dynasties*, they all made further exploration on the intrinsic relations between academic trends of thought, social trends of thought and the development of philosophy from different perspectives and different historical periods. We can say that this situation should be seen as the manifestation of “generalization” in the study of philosophy history.

4. The study of traditional Chinese culture

It is interesting that when scholars studied the history of philosophy and conducted self-reflection, and even deliberately created “philosophy”, the rise of “culture debate” all over China had an impact on the “purification” activities such as category research, logical structure research, system research and so on. The force and focus of Chinese philosophical research shifted largely to cultural study. Professor Tang Yijie and other scholars from Peking University founded the Academy of Chinese Culture, offered multiple nationwide workshops, published several sets of large-scale academic series and academic works such as *Collected Works of Liang Shuming* and the like. Since then, the Academy of Chinese Culture has not only become a center of Chinese philosophical research but also a training base for Chinese philosophical researchers and one of the bridges linking cultures at home and abroad and their philosophy.

The cultural debate rising and flourishing in the mid-1980s injected new vigour into the study of Chinese philosophy. The exploration of the spirit of traditional Chinese culture, values, ways of thinking, ideal personality, aesthetic taste, national character, ethical ideas, particularly the discussion of advantages and disadvantages of Chinese and Western cultures became the focus of people from all walks of life, with reflection on Chinese modernization process as the core.

Although in the cultural debate of the late 1980s and the early 1990s, especially in the early stage of the 1990s, some people probed into material culture and system culture, even commercial culture, tourism culture, cooking culture, sports culture, political culture, legal culture, mystery culture and sex culture and so forth, people
always focused on ideology and culture which was also called “culture with deep structure” by many scholars.

Moreover, it is acknowledged that philosophy was the center of culture and values were essential issues of culture. Therefore, Chinese philosophical researchers naturally took the lead in the culture debate. Regardless of the similarity or difference of their positions or viewpoints, Zhang Dainian, Ren Jiyu, Cai Shangsi, Pang Pu, Tang Yijie, Li Zehou, Wang Yuanhua, Xiao Shaful, Li Jinquan, Ding Weizhi, Ding Shouhe, Feng Tianyu, Zhang Liwen, and Fang Keli, as well as Gan Yang, Liu Xiaobo and the author of *River Elegy*, all paid close attention to ideology and culture and the essence and future trends of Chinese philosophy.

Due to the extensive issues involved in the modernization of China, Chinese philosophical research in the cultural debate did not realize “purification”, on the contrary, it was greatly “generalized”. This kind of “generalization” did not push the study of Chinese philosophy from the normal pathway, instead, it was this “generalization” that expanded a new area and opened up a new direction for the research of Chinese philosophy, thereby making research possess a splendid vision. In the course of this debate, both sides explored the way out of Chinese culture. Their representative views included “complete construction”, “wholesale Westernization”, “Learning from the West with traditional Chinese culture as the fundamental”, “revival of Confucianism”, “integrated innovation” and so on. The contending of these different views was of positive significance for deepening the study of culture and solving problems fundamentally. Meanwhile, it had significant theoretical value for expanding the field of Chinese philosophy study, gradually forming Chinese philosophical research with Chinese style and Chinese manners, as well as creating a modern philosophy which could not only adapt to the trends in the world but also maintain the fine tradition of the Chinese nation.

Since the 1990s, as the voice of “carrying forward the national culture” grew louder, the mainstream of Chinese philosophy studies has remained cultural studies. The study of ancient Chinese civilization was one of the most important. Valuing and studying ancient Chinese civilization, criticizing studies of ancient Chinese civilization scientifically and transforming it creatively were the wishes of some scholars who placed emphasis on classical aspects in such disciplines as literature, history, philosophy and so on. One of the manifestations was the interpretation and categorization of studies on ancient Chinese civilization. The significant work was Zhang Dainian’s *Series of Studies of Chinese Ancient Civilization*, and the authors of the series were all experts in their fields of studies. The published works included *Viewpoints on studies of Chinese Ancient Civilization*, *Brief Introduction to Chinese Characters*, *Confucianism in the Pre-Qin dynasty*, *The Theory of Divination Combined with Mystical Confucian Belief*, *Metaphysics in the Wei and Jin dynasties*, *Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasties*, *The Genuine Meaning of Heaven Study*, *Medical Knowledge of Qi Huang*, *General Theory of Taoist Scripture*, *Enlightenment of Academic Evolution in the Ming and Qing dynasties* and so on.
The publication of the books was greatly welcomed by social scientists, and the book even obtained the honor of the China Book Award. The series which was supplementary was the *The Digested Publications of Chinese Culture of the 20th Century* compiled by Tang Yijie. The series already published included *New Knowledge of National Culture Heritage*, *Works of the Xue Heng School Culture*, *Out of the East*, *Cultural Publications of Chen Xujing*, *Wave of the Age*, *Cultural Books of Strategies of the Warring States*, *Knowledge and Culture*, and *Cultural Books of Zhang Dongsun*. If we say that the series of Zhang Dainian was characterized by in-depth study and unique insight, the series of Tang Yijie featured accurate and representative information.

In addition, there was *the History of Chinese Culture* written by Feng Tianyu and other related series, monographs, dynastic cultural history, collected papers and so forth. The contents of studies on ancient Chinese civilization were very extensive, but the focus was on how to understand, elucidate and carry forward the outstanding and traditional culture of the Chinese nation, in particular, how to find the bonding point of traditional culture and modernization so as to achieve the revival of Chinese culture.

Therefore, no matter which fields the researchers were occupied with, their perspective would be found at the fundamental level of “ideological culture”. It should be said that studies of ancient Chinese civilization since the 1990s had important value in terms of data accumulation and innovative thinking. As for the individual cases wherein some people held the banner of the study of ancient Chinese civilization to pursue political interests, we should absolutely reject them.

An important trend in the study of traditional Chinese culture was the large-scale compilation and publication of academic culture series. In addition to the above-mentioned series compiled by Zhang Dainian, there was also *The Series of Critical Biography of Chinese Ideologists* written by Kuang Yaming published by Nanjing University Press. A total of 200 books were expected to be published in the whole series, and more than 100 books have already been published. More than 269 ideologists in over 2,500 years from Confucius to Dr. Sun Yat-Sen were described in the series. The contents covered philosophy, politics, economy, ethics, literature, religion, military affairs, science and technology among other fields.

Some published series had considerable public reaction, and made significant contributions to reorganizing the heritage of traditional Chinese culture. However, as the series was too extensive in scope and covered too many persons, people in academic circles doubted whether they were true “ideologists” or not. For example, some people pointed out that they could say Tang Xianzu, Ji Xiaolan, Xu Heng, Li Shizhen and the like had their own thoughts, but they may not be justifiably called “ideologists”.

Besides *The Series of Critical Biography of Chinese Ideologists*, Li Zonggui also compiled *The Series of Great Ideologists and Chinese Culture*, which was published by Guizhou People's Publishing House and was placed on the key publication lists of national Eighth and Ninth Five-Year Plans. The series selected 19 great thinkers who exerted important influence on the development of national culture in Chinese
history, and published 17 monographs which focused on the analysis of the relationship between their thought and the development of traditional Chinese culture, revealing the characteristics and developmental pattern of traditional Chinese culture.

These books also explained the roles and status of these great thinkers in the development of traditional Chinese culture. All these provided conditions for the academic circle to write the history of Chinese culture more scientifically and supply a reasonable evaluation basis for modernization from traditional Chinese culture. These “great thinkers” included Confucius, Lao Zi, Mencius, Zhuang Zi, Mo Zi, Xun Zi, Han Fei, Dong Zhongshu, Wang Chong, Wang Bi, Hui Neng, Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi (in one volume), Zhu Xi and Lu Jiuyuan and Wang Yangming (in one volume), Wang Fuzhi, Dai Zhen and Huang Zongxi. Each book was titled with “Great Thinkers and Chinese culture”. In addition to this, there was also The Series of Great Chinese Philosophers published by the People’s Publishing House. The selected major philosophers included Chuang Tzu, Mencius, Wang Chong, Wang Yangming, etc.

On the whole, though there was plenty of outstanding achievements in cultural study, there were also lots of problems. There is no hiding that politicization was an issue, hollowness and emotion within the cultural debate of the 1980s affected the objectivity and scientific nature of cultural studies. The most serious was that driven by a utilitarian attitude, the cultural debate became a tool used by someone chasing after fame and fortune, rather than a pathway to promoting the modernization of national culture.

However, the special significance of this debate still remained. This cultural debate was consistent with the historical process of China’s social and cultural modernization. Its main value was to promote the construction of a modern cultural system. It reflected the problems of the modernization drive at a deep level of the national cultural structure instead of remaining superficial. This was really an enlightenment of the national cultural transformation, and it aimed to improve the quality of national culture from the height of cultural modernization. In fact, in the cultural debate, the rational voice of carrying forward tradition and surpassing tradition was the consensus of the overwhelming majority of debaters. Pang Pu proposed “carrying forward the spirit of the May 4th Movement, surpassing the May 4th Movement”; Tang Yijie advocated “letting Chinese culture head to China and the world culture head to China”; Zhang Dainian proposed “comprehensive innovation”; all of these reflected the rational spirit in the cultural debate. Of course, for various reasons, such as lack of cultural theory and the influences of some non-academic factors, this debate did not achieve the hoped-for outcomes.

From the 1980s on, cultural studies can generally be divided into two stages. The first stage was the 1980s themselves, in which the discussions centered on the relationship between traditional Chinese culture and modernization, and the focus was whether traditional Chinese culture adapted to the need of the modernization and whether traditional culture was of value today.
In the discussion, there were more people who made critical and negative comments on traditional culture. In particular, Western academic thought was widely introduced into China, and some rushed to find the way for Chinese society and the modernization of Chinese culture, mistakenly believing modernization was Westernization, and thus their “Westernization” tone was overwhelming. But in the late 1980s, there appeared dispassionate explorations of “from Westernization to modernization” represented by Luo Rongqu, a Professor at Beijing University.

The second stage was the 1990s. At this stage, the key points primarily focused on the exploration of the essence of traditional culture and the interpretation of the classics in traditional culture, and “studies of ancient Chinese civilization” became the first priority. In recent years, due to the negative effects of the market economy, as well as the special situation of the transformation period, a variety of social problems occurred on the Chinese mainland. In order to deal with social ills, quite a few Chinese researchers put forward their own proposals. Scholars reached a common understanding of exploring the essence of traditional Chinese culture.

Meanwhile, the thought of Confucianism and Taoism became the focus. Although different scholars had different opinions on the modern value of traditional ideology and cultural resources, it was already an indisputable fact that there were reasonable and positive elements in traditional resources which could adapt to and support modernization. Compared to the kind of nihilistic attitude which totally repudiated traditional national culture before, there was an immeasurably vast difference. In general, positive views on traditional culture were growing. However, under the abstract slogan of “carrying forward traditional culture”, good and evil mixed together in cultural studies. Most scholars regarded traditional culture as a resource of the national cultural construction, examined it and explored it with a modern consciousness, in an attempt to engender “creative transformation”.

But some scholars also treated traditional culture as stereotypical and perfect, and they advocated returning to tradition. What is more, they proposed the revival of Confucianism, and thought that traditional culture was a direct source of a new cultural value system in contemporary China, and that they can rule the world merely by reading half of *The Analects of Confucius*. The majority of the publishing houses in different areas and different levels published all kinds of traditional Confucian classics continuously, without thinking, and a great variety of Confucian classics emerged, such as writings in the vernacular, in classical Chinese and the vernacular, full translation, chapter translations, annotated editions, annotated and translated versions, photocopies and compact editions, etc. All kinds of traditional culture, wearing the guise of “mysterious culture”, “national culture” and even “excellent culture”, got onto the stage of the market economy.

This situation did not lead to the modernization of traditional culture. Instead, it made traditional culture “become modernized”. Nevertheless, the mainstream of cultural studies was still healthy. The significant manifestation was that quite a few scholars started to study traditional culture in a down-to-earth manner on the basis of summarizing the lessons learned in the cultural study of the 1980s. The big, false and hollow propositions of the past were gradually abandoned, and empty and...
shallow academic studies were set right. Scholars gradually wove an in-depth discussion around the theme of “peace and development”, focusing on cultural development in the market economy, the fusion of ancient and modern, Chinese culture and Western culture, character study, research on trends of thought, on general history, on the division of history into periods, the study on various schools of thought, monograph studies, books and studies, comparative studies, and so on. As far as the research field, their global perspective and awareness gradually increased. Seen from a research perspective, macro examination, medium-examination and micro examination could go forward together; medium-examination and micro-research was on the rise; and in particular, the achievements of the projects of macro examination and micro examination, medium-examination and micro examination accounted for a larger proportion than ever before.

5. The study of cultural philosophy

In the late 1980s, there appeared some comprehensive works expounding traditional Chinese culture. These works were seen as the category of the study of cultural philosophy by the academic community, because they focused on Chinese philosophy and explored culture from an ideological perspective.

From the historical perspective, there were many works which centered on interpretation of traditional Chinese culture from a theoretical perspective. Among them, Li Zonggui’s *A Brief Introduction to Chinese Culture* was representative. This book was the first systematic study of Chinese culture on the Chinese mainland after 1949, and also the first college textbook on a concise introduction to Chinese culture from a macroscopic and general view. The book made a systematic description and analysis of the evolution and the periods of Chinese culture, the special development of Chinese civilization, basic features of economic structure and political structure in Chinese feudal society, as well as the main content, core, types, characteristics, ideal personality, values, ways of thinking, social psychology and fundamental spirit of traditional Chinese culture. The book has been reprinted many times and published more than 60,000. It drew great attention and enjoyed a good reputation both at home and abroad. It was published in traditional Chinese characters in Taiwan and in Korean in Korea.

The book won the China Book Award, Nationwide Excellent Book Award, and the Ministry of Education Prize for Excellent Textbook. In the 1990s, *An Introduction to Chinese Culture* was published under the general editorship of Zhang Dainian and Fang Keli, and many young scholars from national key Universities such as Ge Jianxiong, Guo Qiyong, Li Zonggui, Yang Guorong, Lai Yonghai, Fan Heping, Mo Lifeng, Zhang Fa, Fang Delin and so on participated in its compilation. The book made a detailed elaboration of historical and geographical conditions, economic base and social and political structure, developmental course, multi-cultural integration, language and ancient books and records, ancient science
and technology, ancient education, ancient literature, ancient art, ancient history, traditional ethics and morality, ancient religion and ancient Chinese philosophy. It also interpreted types, features, basic spirit, and value systems of traditional Chinese culture, the transformation of traditional Chinese culture and other issues, and eventually highlighted the issue of “construction of a new socialist culture”.

The authors of each chapter were experts in that particular field, so they had a considerable and profound study. But because it was written and compiled by so many people the book lacked a consistent narrative style. As a textbook of general institutes of higher education, the content was relatively difficult. After the book was published, it received great attention from the academic world and society, so it was repeatedly reprinted. The book won the First Prize of the Ministry of Education for an Excellent Textbook. Similar books included Lü Xichen’s The Philosophy of Modern Chinese Culture, The Spirit of Chinese Classic Culture written by Feng Tianyu, and A Brief Introduction to the Chinese Culture written by Li Zhonghua.

From a theoretical level, researchers began to pay more attention to the relationship between culture and philosophy, culture and values and culture and practice, and they have achieved considerable success. The most representative works were The Philosophy of Culture written by Xu Sumin, The Philosophy of Cultural Value written by Sima Yunjie and Philosophy and Culture edited by Chen Jun Quan and Liu Ben. The publication of these works played a key role in facilitating the establishment of cultural theory and deepening the study of Chinese philosophy. Meanwhile, they corrected the deviation which depended solely on the theory of foreign cultural anthropology to establish theoretical frameworks of cultural theory and cultural history.

6. The study of modern Neo-Confucianism

The study of modern Neo-Confucianism (in Hong Kong, Taiwan and overseas, known as “modern New Confucianism”) was an important part of the study of Chinese philosophy in the last 20 years of the 20th century. From the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s, Fang Keli (former Professor in Nankai University, Dean of graduate school of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) and Li Jinquan (Professor in Zhongshan University, Guangzhou) led the research group called “modern Neo-Confucianism studies”, and their painstaking efforts made modern new Confucianism widely known in the academic world on the mainland and become one of the important schools of academic research.

The members of the research group contained young and middle-aged scholars from nearly twenty national key universities and research institutes. The achievements of that research group mainly included Learning Case of Modern Neo-Confucianism (3 volumes), Thesis Collections of Modern Neo-Confucianism (2 volumes), Series of Modern Neo-Confucianism Studies, Series of Modern Neo-Confucianism
Between Tradition and Modernity

Digest

699 and Fang Keli’s collected papers called Modern Neo-Confucianism and China’s Modernization. The publication of these works and other academic activities enhanced academic contacts with Taiwan, the mainland and Hong Kong, promoted mutual understanding and friendship among the scholars and enriched the research achievements of Chinese philosophy.

It is worth noting that in the upsurge of modern new Confucianism studies, there appeared three research ideas with different orientations. The first was analyzing and studying modern new Confucianism from the perspective of cleaning up academic thought and exploring academic achievements objectively by regarding academic discussion as a priority. The second was to follow modern new Confucianism blindly, knowing little about the general trend of academic development in modern times and modern new Confucianism, but claiming how well they understood the theory of modern new Confucianism and regarding themselves as modern Neo-Confucians. The third was blindly criticizing modern new Confucians and modern new Confucianism thought. For the academic of modern times, they merely understood it from the level of politics, not knowing much about modern Neo-Confucian works, they had discussions and drew conclusions only through political intuition. Even worse, they described the scholars studying modern Neo-Confucianism on the mainland as modern Neo-Confucians. The latter two kinds of research direction and thought were actually very subjective. This suggests that for certain people in academic circles, it will take quite a long time to make academic research truly scientific, and it should not become a tool of emotional outrage or a means of chasing political or economic interests.

7. The study of the Chinese humanistic spirit

In recent years, with the increasingly severe moral problems and the rise of anomie, corruption and degeneration, drug taking and drug trafficking, prostitution, robbery and fraud and the like, the academic circle strongly appealed for “reconstruction of the humanistic spirit of Chinese culture” and carried out discussions on the humanistic spirit. Although the scholars participating in the discussion were not all professional researchers of Chinese philosophy, yet they all focused on the fundamental spirit and modern value of Chinese philosophy.

Up to now, the published books included The Reconstruction of Chinese Humanistic Spirit written by Guo Can, The Inheritance and Reconstruction of Humanistic Spirit written by Li Jinquan, Tradition Culture and Humanistic Spirit written by Li Zonggui, Wang Xiaoming’s collection The Reflection of Humanistic Spirit and so on.

As for ongoing study on the humanistic spirit, there are also quite a large number of publications. In the programme guideline of the Ninth Five-year Humanistic and Social Sciences Research in Nationwide Colleges and Universities, there were scholars in many universities making further and profound research into The
Humanistic Spirit of Traditional Chinese Philosophy, and some have already achieved a number of preliminary results. With regard to the construction of humanistic spirit, in fact, it is a reflection on the reality of Chinese philosophy research.

It has two orientations, one is the re-examination and modern exploration of the spirit of traditional philosophy, the other is the spiritual uplift and rational guidance given by the modern world. This suggests that the study of Chinese philosophy has become more and more important on the mainland. It is noteworthy that in this discussion of the humanistic spirit, some scholars believe that there was no humanistic spirit in traditional Chinese culture. Now that they denied its existence, how could they “reconstruct” it? Some believed that the humanistic spirit should have value distinctions, and “the best of the humanistic spirit” should be promoted and built. These arguments, especially the “brilliant view” about whether the humanistic spirit is “excellent” or not, is really worth thinking about and responding to for those scholars studying the construction of the humanistic spirit.

As to Chinese philosophical researchers showing concern to “spiritual civilization”, with the exception of those “vulgar Confucians” who loved catering to the low tastes and producing cultural rubbish, the rest all basically expounded with the aim of establishing a new value system, and they also attempted to seek ways of living in peace for people from different classes. It is important to emphasize that many researchers paid attention to the construction of spiritual civilization and they often consciously or unconsciously extended their thinking to traditional Chinese culture and pursued dynamic integration of “traditional Chinese culture and modern civilization”. This reflects the modern light in traditional ideology and culture. It is worth noting that some researchers tried to find ready answers from contemporary spiritual civilization from traditional Chinese morality, some even equated traditional morality with modern civilization.

8. The study of general history and dynastic history of Chinese philosophy

In addition to the above achievements, on the whole, with regard to Chinese philosophical research in the last twenty years of the 20th century, there were still studies of general history, dynastic history, special topics, special persons and books, data arrangement, ancient books compilations and others.

As for the Study of the general history of Chinese philosophy, the representative works included Feng Youlan’s A New History of Chinese Philosophy705, Ren Jiyu’s The History of Chinese Philosophy706 and The Development History of Chinese Philosophy707, Feng Qi’s Logic Development of Ancient Chinese Philosophy708 and The History of Chinese Philosophy edited by Xiao Shafu and Li Jinquan709. These works all represent painstaking research and played an important role in disseminating and popularizing the study of Chinese philosophy, cultivating more talented people and expounding and promoting the spirit of Chinese philosophy.
In the 1990s, Feng Youlan’s *A New History of Chinese Philosophy* (including 7 volumes) were all published. The first six volumes were published by People’s Publishing House, the seventh was published by Zhonghua Book Company in Hong Kong in 1992 with the title of *A History of Modern Chinese Philosophy*. Later, it was republished by Guangdong People’s Publishing House in 1999, also with the title of *A History of Modern Chinese Philosophy*. The book, according to Cai Zhongde, was the product of Mr. Feng’s aspiration to be himself in his later years.

After the publication of *A New History of Chinese Philosophy*, it attracted worldwide attention in the academic world at home and abroad. Meanwhile, it got both praise and blame. “In the face of vicissitudes of academic thought, I felt so helpless and doleful”; “the Doctrine of the Mean is the highest standard of Confucianism which I will pursue all my life, developing socialist modernization by referring to traditional Chinese culture is my ambition”. These familiar words could reflect Feng Youlan’s heartfelt wishes. It is difficult to give Feng Youlan an objective evaluation, but in any case, we can say that he made positive contributions to the nationalization and modernization of Chinese philosophy in the last twenty years of the 20th century.

*The Development History of Chinese Philosophy* compiled by Ren Jiyu focused on description and elaboration of the development of Chinese philosophy by regarding the history of Chinese philosophy as the history of Chinese thought. It also placed emphasis on the logic development of Chinese philosophy and elucidated a number of original ideas. The published four volumes (volumes of the Pre-Qin Period, Qin and Han dynasties, the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern dynasties, Sui, Tang and the Five dynasties) were of great value to the study of Chinese philosophy.

*The Logical Development of Ancient Chinese Philosophy* of Feng Qi was not only used as a college textbooks but also an academic monograph full of innovative spirit. The book demonstrated research methods about philosophy history and logical evolution of the development of ancient Chinese philosophical thinking, which was quite refreshing. One important feature of the book was the intellectual and deep exploration of traditional Chinese philosophy. The point of view advocated by Feng Qi “philosophy is the summary of the history of philosophy, and the history of philosophy is the development of philosophy” was vividly reflected in the book.

As for the study of dynastic history of philosophy, the representative works included *Confucianism in the Pre-Qin Period* written by Qian Xun, *The Intellectual History in the Han dynasty* written by Jin Chunfeng, *Metaphysics in the Wei and Jin dynasties* written by Kong Fan, *The History of Neo-Confucian School of the Song and Ming dynasties* compiled by Hou Wailu and other scholars, Zhang Liwen’s *The Study of Neo-Confucian School of the Song and Ming dynasties*, *The Evolution of Neo-Confucianism* and *Category System of Neo-Confucianism* written by Meng Peiyuan, Chen Lai’s *Neo-Confucian School of the Song and Ming dynasties*, *Chinese Philosophy in the Song dynasty* written by Shi Xun et al., *The Philosophy in the Qing dynasty* written by Jiang
Guobao, The Evolution Process of Modern Chinese Philosophy written by Feng Qi, The History of Modern Chinese Philosophy written by Lv Xichen. The publication of all these works deepened the study on the general history of Chinese philosophy and on the figures in the history of Chinese philosophy.

9. Monographs, important philosophers, philosophical books and comprehensive discussion

Monographs increased in number. The representative works included Chinese Intellectual History on Confucianism compiled by Zhang Qizhi, The History of Chinese Confucianism compiled by Zhao Jihui and other people, Chinese Confucianism compiled by Fang Pu, The History of Chinese Taoism compiled by Xiong Tieji and other people, The Theory of Knowing and Doing in the History of Chinese Philosophy compiled by Fang Keli, The History of Philosophy Problems in Ancient Chinese Philosophy compiled by Fang Litian, The Main Thinking Mode of Chinese Philosophy compiled by Meng Peiyuan, Intellectual History of Chinese Epistemology written by Xia Zeng Tao, Between Chinese Culture and Western Culture compiled by Ding Weizhi and Chen Song, Ancient Religion and Ethics-Roots of Confucianism written by Chen Lai, The Elaboration of the Source of Qi Theory in Ancient China compiled by Li Cunshan, Qi Theory and traditional Chinese Way of Thinking written by Li Zhilin, Taoist Culture and Science written by Zhu Yaping. In addition, there also appeared monographs that focused on exploring the nature and temperament of Confucianism, the ontology of Chinese philosophy, the theory of human nature in the history of Chinese philosophy and so on.

With regard to the studies of important philosophers, there were even greater achievements. Besides the above-mentioned works such as A Critical Biography of Chinese Thinkers, Great Thinkers and Chinese Culture, the main representative works include A Critical Biography of the Famous Philosophers in Ancient China, A Critical Biography of the Famous Philosophers in Ancient China (sequel) and A Critical Biography of the Famous Philosophers in Modern China compiled by Xin Guanjie and Meng Dengjin and compiled cooperatively by other people; A Critical Biography of Confucius compiled by Kuang Yaming, The Ideological System of Confucius written by Cai Shangsi, The Study of Mencius' Theory of Original Goodness of Human Nature written by Yang Zebo, Philosophy of Zhuangzi and its Evolution written by Liu Xiaogan, The Philosophy Research of Zhuangzi written by Cui Dahua, The Differentiation between False and True—the Tenet of the Philosophy of Wang Chong written by Zhou Guidian, The Study of Zhu Xi's Philosophy written by Chen Lai, The Biography of Zhu Xi written by Shu Jingnan, The Spirit of Wang Yangming's Philosophy of Chen Lai, The Way to the Mind of Philosophy—the Footprint of Lu Xiangshan's Thought written by Zhang Liwen, The Research on Xiong Shili's...
Thought written by Guo Qiyong\textsuperscript{751}. Generally speaking, the studies on these important philosophers had distinct personality characteristics and were the achievements of long-term study, even though some of them had historical limitations and preliminary conditions in the early 1980s.

In terms of the philosophical monographs, there were also some remarkable achievements. The representative works included A Brief Introduction to the Variorum of the Four Books written by Qiu Hansheng\textsuperscript{752}, Anonymous Comments on Classics of Philosophy in Ancient China compiled by Xin Guanjie et al and written by many people collaboratively\textsuperscript{753}, Studies on Liu’s Spring and Autumn Annals and Huai Nan Zi written by Mou Zhongjian, The General Theory of Zhouli, Yili and Liji written by Qian Xuan\textsuperscript{754} and so on.

In addition, there were works on comprehensive discussions such as A Study on Intellectual History in Ancient China, A Study on Intellectual History in Recent China, A Study on Modern Chinese Intellectual History written by Li Zehou\textsuperscript{755}. There were quite different opinions on Li Zehou’s academic viewpoints, but it should be acknowledged that his three books had a significant impact on the academic circle at home and abroad and promoted studies of Chinese philosophy in the last twenty years of the 20th century. Among the comprehensive works, An Introduction to the Theory of Harmony written by Zhang Liwen\textsuperscript{756} had a far-reaching influence on the academic circle at home and abroad. In the book, the author held the view that harmony was the quintessence and primary value of the humanistic spirit of Chinese culture. The authors integrated philosophy with the history of philosophy, regarded Chinese philosophy as the promotion of the history of Chinese philosophy and regarded the history of Chinese philosophy as the extension of Chinese philosophy. The author put forward particular development strategies of Chinese culture in order to build a new system of Chinese philosophy, as a response to the challenges in modern Chinese culture and to achieve the modernization of Chinese culture.

The study of The Book of Changes is particularly worthy of mentioning here. The rise of the study of The Book of Changes originated from the cultural study in the 1980s, and reached a peak in the 1990s. As the first classic in the traditional “Thirteen Confucian Classics”, The Book of Changes was paid more attention at the beginning of the cultural debate. In 1984, “The Symposium on Chinese Zhouyi (The Book of Changes)” hosted by Wuhan University, Hubei Provincial Academy of Social Sciences and other universities was held at Wuhan University, and more than two hundred scholars from over 10 countries attended the conference.

Later, the international symposiums, national and provincial academic conferences and even regional conferences on Zhouyi were held one after another. It can be said that in the field of the history of Chinese philosophy, no other topics or book can be compared with the study of Zhouyi which can draw such great attention, attract a large number of researchers and exert significant social influence. If we say that the study of Zhouyi in the 1980s belonged to the phase of comparative rationality, then the study in the 1990s fell into a rather confused phase. Some people who were totally puzzled over the differences between I Ching and Yi Zhuan went so far as to
impudently talk about the study of *Zhouyi*. What is more, some of them waved the banner of science and academic research so as to seek personal profit. A variety of ridiculous doctrines such as *Zhouyi* and divination, *Zhouyi* and fortunetelling, *Zhou Yi* and Feng Shui flooded the society and had a very bad effect on the reputation of the study of the history of Chinese philosophy. Of course, there were also quite a number of scholars doing serious and objective academic research indeed and who made great achievements. For instance, Gao Heng, a famous expert studying *Zhouyi* and Professor at Shandong University wrote *Modern Annotation to the Da Zhuan of Zhouyi*\(^{67}\) and *Modern Annotations to Ancient Classics of Zhouyi*\(^{68}\), Professor Zhu Bokun from Peking University wrote *The History of I Ching Philosophy*\(^{69}\) history under, Professors Jin Jingfang and Lu Shaogang from Jilin University wrote the *CompleteAnnotations of Zhouyi*\(^{70}\), Professor Zhang liwen from Renmin University of China wrote *Study on the Thought of Zhouyi*\(^{71}\) and *Annotations on Silk Manuscripts of Zhouyi*\(^{72}\), Professor Liu Dajun from Shandong University wrote *The Important Writings of Zhouyi*\(^{73}\), Professor Xiao Hanming from Wuhan University wrote *The Essence of Medical Science and I Ching*\(^{74}\), Professor Luo Chi from Hubei university wrote *An Introduction to Traditional Chinese I Ching Culture*\(^{75}\) and so on, which were all characteristic and precise writings. According to the situation over the years, generally speaking, an academic orientation and development trend of the research on *Zhouyi* was to carry on further research from the perspectives of traditional cultural study and modern cultural construction.

10. Data compilation and lexicographical terminology

Insofar as data compilation was concerned, compared with the situation before the “Cultural Revolution”, there were also considerable achievements. *Reference for Teaching of the History of Chinese Philosophy* (Volume 1-2)\(^{76}\) was compiled by the Teaching and Research Section of Philosophy Department of Beijing University, Fang Keli et al compiled the *Treatises Index of Chinese Philosophy History*\(^{77}\), Fang Keli and Wang Qishui compiled *Chinese Philosophy in the 20th Century*\(^{78}\) Editorial Board of Contemporary Philosophy Series compiled *Chinese Philosophy Today*\(^{79}\) *Almanac of Chinese Philosophy* was compiled and published by *Institute of Philosophy*\(^{80}\) of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. From 1982 until now, the book has been published each year.

As for lexicographical studies, there were great achievements including Zhang Dainian’s *The History of Chinese Philosophy*,\(^{81}\) which was an entry in *Encyclopedia of China* and *A Dictionary of Confucius*, Feng Qi’s *A Big dictionary of Chinese Philosophy-the volume of Chinese Philosophy History*,\(^{82}\) *A Big Dictionary of Chinese Philosophy* compiled by Fang Keli,\(^{83}\) *The Encyclopedia of Confucianism in China* compiled by China Confucius Foundation,\(^{84}\) Zhao Jihui’s *A Dictionary of Confucianism in China*\(^{85}\), Huang Kaiguo’s *A Dictionary of Confucian Classics*\(^{86}\)
and so forth. All these have become powerful and useful tools for learning and studying the history of Chinese philosophy.

On the aspect of discipline construction, the science of historical data and methodology began to occupy an important position. Followed by the First Draft of the Science of Historical Data of Chinese Philosophy published by Feng Youlan, Zhang Dainian published the Science of Historical Data of the History of Chinese Philosophy, Liu Jianguo published An Introduction to the Science of Historical Data of the History of Chinese Philosophy. The above-mentioned An Introduction to Methodology of the History Chinese Philosophy written by Zhang Dainian was also a significant achievement in discipline construction. In addition, almost all the universities on the mainland which had an enrollment of postgraduates and doctoral students majoring in Chinese philosophy offered courses on methodology and the science of historical data. In recent years, a “system improvement of science of the historical data of the history of Chinese philosophy” has been proposed, which provides a more solid basis for scientific discipline construction for the history of Chinese philosophy.

11. The research on religion

It should be pointed out that although through the discipline classification operating in mainland China, Buddhism and Taoism which were included in Chinese philosophy have been classified into the discipline of “religion” in parallel to “philosophy”, but given that they belonged to the discipline of “Chinese philosophy” for quite a long time, it is still necessary to introduce it briefly. Achievements included the Dictionary of Religion and Chinese Buddhism History compiled by Ren Jiyu, Buddhist Philosophy and Buddhism and Traditional Chinese Culture of Fang Litian, The General Theory of Religion Studies edited by Lv Daji, On Chinese Buddha Nature edited by Lai Yonghai, Chinese Buddhism in the Han, Wei, Western and Eastern Jin dynasties, Buddhism in the Sui and Tang dynasties and Buddhism in the Ming and Qing dynasties compiled by Guo Peng, Data Collection of Chinese Buddhism Thought compiled by Shi Jun, Lou Yulie and Fang Litian. The works on Taoism included the History of Chinese Taoism compiled by Ren Jiuyi, The History of Chinese Taoism and Taoism and Traditional Chinese Culture compiled by Qing Xitai, The General Theory of Taoism and Taoist Doctrine edited by Mou Zhongjian and others, Immortal Taoism in the Wei and Jin dynasties edited by Hu Fuchen and so on.

12. The philosophical research of ethnic minorities

In the past, there was little research on the study of philosophy of ethnic minorities, yet, in the last twenty years of the 20th century, we have made a lot of achievements
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in this field. The representative works included *The History of the Philosophy of Chinese Ethnic Minorities*, *Analects of the Intellectual History of Philosophy of the Yi Nationality*, and *Analects of the Intellectual History of Philosophy of the Naxi Nationality* and others compiled by Wu Xiongwu et al. The philosophy studies of ethnic minorities expanded the study field of traditional Chinese philosophy, helped people gain a better understanding of traditional Chinese philosophy and enriched its achievements.

13. The study of the relationship between Chinese philosophy and natural science


The publication of these works had a very positive meaning for the development and the exploration of the research of traditional Chinese philosophy and Chinese culture.

All in all, studies of Chinese philosophy in the last twenty years far exceeded the first eighty years, with its open-minded ideology, a great variety of methods and outstanding achievements.

Of course, there were also some obvious deficiencies:

First, a one-sided cognition of the function of Chinese philosophy. It was treated either as a simple training tool of theoretical thinking or as practical means of developing social culture and ethnics, or as a shield against Western culture. Worse still, as a means to covet fame and compliment.

Second, there is a lack of science. Between the history of philosophy, intellectual history, cultural history and academic history, there were no scientifically recognized dividing lines (which can also be seen from the research listed above). The scope and object of Chinese philosophy were sorted out superficially, but in fact remain quite vague.

Third, original work, and original thought, is still lacking. There were more reviews, commentaries and descriptive works than works that could honestly study
Chinese philosophy and comprehend and promote the theory of philosophy from the perspective of Chinese philosophic history.

Fourth, the cultivation of Chinese philosophers did not receive much attention. There were only rare people who could be known as both philosophers and historians of philosophy. This have yet to be improved in the research practice of the new century.

III. Achievements and shortcomings in the century

It can be said that the study of Chinese philosophy in the 20th century was full of twists, turns, and tribulation, but thanks to the painstaking work and arduous effort of researchers, significant achievements have yet been made, playing a very important role in the world.

The study of Chinese philosophy in the 20th century was consistent with the transition of Chinese society and Chinese culture from traditional to modern. In other words, the study of Chinese philosophy was also consistent with the modernization of Chinese society and Chinese culture. Therefore, we achieved the following enormous accomplishments.

First, these studies were a break from the traditional Chinese academic concept of historical studies and the limitations of methodology and they opened up a brand-new situation for studying Chinese philosophy through modern academic attitudes and norms. In the first half-century, the research represented by Hu Shi and Feng Youlan not only enabled Western pragmatism and realism to take root in traditional academic research in China, but also enabled Chinese academia to see the value of Western philosophical theories and methods, thereby promoting traditional academic renewal and the transition of traditional research methods.

The scholars represented by Hou Wailu, Guo Moruo, Du Guoxiang, Yang Rongguo, Cai Shangsi, Zhang Daimian, Ren Jiyu, Feng Qi and so forth studied Chinese philosophy by adopting Marxism and created a new situation for academic research. They were different from those scholars who adopted concepts and methods of Western philosophy in their research, and they drew a clear line of demarcation with Confucian classics worship, saint worship and book-centered thinking by means of criticizing historical idealism in traditional academic fields and Confucian orthodoxy. In this way, they founded the framework of Chinese philosophical research under the guidance of Marxism, creating the conditions for modernization of Chinese philosophy and Chinese culture.

Second, through long-term and practical research, the research ideas that aimed to provide thinking resources, spiritual power and intellectual support for the modernization of Chinese society and Chinese culture under the guidance of Marxism and the interaction of Chinese philosophy, Western philosophy and Marxist philosophy were formed, creating favorable conditions for research into Chinese philosophy in the new century and sound philosophical development.
Third, a large number of incomparable results have been achieved. During this century, researchers carefully checked philosophers, schools, works on Chinese philosophy, and even terminologies of conceptual categories from the Pre-Qin dynasty to modern times and the contemporary era, they made great efforts to find its characteristics, laws, historical function, limitations and its modern significance. Moreover, whether in terms of methods, opinions or contents and values, these achievements were unparalleled.

Fourth, the discipline of modern Chinese philosophy has been founded. Through long and arduous effort and lessons learned, the status of Chinese philosophy, as an independent discipline and branch of modern knowledge, was finally established. From Hu Shi, Feng Youlan, Zhang Dainian and Ren Jiyu to the graduate students in the doctoral or masters degree programs of Chinese philosophy in recent years; they each made contributions.

Fifth, the special value and spiritual resources of Chinese philosophy and the Chinese nation were explored, which made Chinese philosophy acknowledged in the world and contributed much to the independence of the Chinese nation and the revival of the great Chinese civilization.

Needless to say, there still exist shortcomings and weaknesses. They can be summarized as follows:

First, Chinese philosophical studies tended to blindly follow the theories and methods of Western philosophy. They adopted the value standard of Western philosophy to construct and deconstruct so that they broke away from the historical reality and practical conditions of Chinese philosophy. As a result, various maladies such as nihilism and mystery appeared from one concept to another, from one theory to another. The crucial reason of these maladies was that they paid attention to worldwide and universal culture but neglected national and epochal character.

Second, they had a rigid and dogmatic understanding of Marxism, regarded Marxism as a political label and a weapon. Thus was cut out a lively and intelligent part of Chinese philosophy regardless of reality. Furthermore, they denied the national and epochal character of Chinese philosophy, and negated its significance for the world.

Third, the inaccurate understanding of the relationship between academic learning and politics led to many tragedies. It is true that academic research cannot be divorced from reality and separated from politics. However, how to keep a clear-minded head and adhere to the critical spirit while participating in and remaining concerned with life is worth considering. The tragedies of Feng Youlan, Yang Rongguo and others should be learned and borne in mind.

Fourth, the system of disciplines and their characteristics were unscientific and indistinct. Although Chinese philosophy, as an independent discipline, was established, it still needed further improvement from the perspective of scientific rigour. Chinese philosophy and the history of Chinese philosophy are actually two concepts at different levels, but in recent years, many people often confuse them. The meaning of “Chinese philosophy” was actually an indistinct concept. In addition, in practical research, it is worth making further studies and explorations.
on how to achieve “generalization” instead of “diversity” and “purification” rather than “generalization”, and upgrading philosophical thought in “generalization” and displaying a humanistic spirit and sublimating theoretical thinking into “purification”.

Fifth, during the century, we can see few true masters in the field of Chinese philosophy studies, and rare scholars who could be both a philosopher and a historian of philosophy due to the interference of various factors and an unsatisfactory academic environment, which caused a huge gap between the historical and cultural traditions of our nation and the efforts and aspirations of reviving great Chinese civilization.

Sixth, the humanistic environment was not good enough. Chinese philosophy placed emphasis on improving mental outlook and creating a humanistic environment. It also stressed setting the mind for Heaven and earth, establishing the standard of value for people, inheriting outstanding knowledge of ancestors and opening up a new prospect for future generations. According to this criterion, the researchers of Chinese philosophy should have had a realm of lofty thought.

However, due to negative factors caused by the market economy and the impact of traditional culture, there was a lack of such an atmosphere inside Chinese philosophy. Some scholars focused on setting up factions instead of schools of thought, uniting those with the same views and alienating those with different views and seeking nothing but profit by any means; all these were similar to those who had neither learning nor skill. This general phenomenon affected the unity and the image of Chinese philosophy, thus impeding the emergence of outstanding achievements.

These deficiencies or drawbacks need to be solved gradually in the practical research of the new century by applying the fine tradition of Chinese traditional philosophy.

IV. A look into the new century

In the 21st century, the study of Chinese philosophy will have a new prospect.

First of all, as an independent discipline, the system of Chinese philosophy will be gradually improved and become more rigorous, and its discipline characteristics will be more distinct. More people will know what “Chinese philosophy” really is. The two concepts, that is, Chinese philosophy and the history of Chinese philosophy, will have subconscious distinctions at least in the minds of professional researchers, and there is no need to discriminate and remind them constantly. The relationship between the study of Chinese philosophy and the development of the history of Chinese philosophy will be discriminated and analyzed more clearly, and then become collective consciousness and individual rationality of all Chinese philosophy researchers.
Next, through the effort researchers, the national character of Chinese philosophy will be fully interpreted so as to highlight its significance for this time in world history, instead of being washed away by the tide of economic globalization.

Moreover, the concepts and methods of the study of Chinese philosophy, as well as academic opinions will be further diversified. The traditional idea that: “Everything can get free development without harming each other, the thoughts of the hundred schools can carry on together without contradiction” will become a vivid reality under modern conditions. Whether they are Chinese or foreign, traditional or modern, as long as they have sufficient ground for their views and stand to reason in promoting the development of Chinese philosophy and Chinese national spirit, they should deserve due respect.

In the end, the research of Chinese philosophy will be gradually globalized, and the world will have a more profound and complete understanding of its study. In mutual communication, the research level of Chinese philosophy will be drastically enhanced.

With regard to future research approaches, they can be roughly divided into three types. First, participating in life and interposing in reality. The scholars who adopt this research approach, whether they fully acknowledge the reality or harshly criticize it, will elucidate their viewpoints of Chinese philosophy form the construction of spiritual civilization and contemporary culture by comparing the culture of Chinese and Western, ancient and modern so as to promote social progress.

Second, laying emphasis on the scientific principle and call for “global vision” when solving problems. Absorbing the norms of international academic research and paying more attention to the connection with the international academic community. The scholars adopting this approach may either emphasize pure academics and the separation of academics and politics or elucidate their political opinions to “serve” certain politics; it is also possible to promote their own academic opinions by utilizing politics.

Third, advocating subject consciousness and putting forward unique philosophical insights and constructing their own philosophical systems. The scholars choosing this approach will probably take philosophers such as Feng Youlan, Xiong Shili, Mou Zongsan et al as examples, strive to understand cultures in eastern and Western countries, ancient and modern times thoroughly, and finally create a philosophy of their own.

No matter which research approach the scholars adopt, they are all ready to shoulder the responsibility, and they will endeavor to establish modern philosophy systems with Chinese style and Chinese manners. Seen from the general trend, we can see that the development of the study of Chinese philosophy in the future will be diversified, powerful and dynamic at the same time.

The old days in which politics replaced academic research and one mode standardized all research have gone forever. Likewise, the old research methods and mentality with an obvious narcissistic complex and isolated approach will be
broken up by more and more international academic exchanges, thus turning into open and interconnected research that can adhere to common norms.

In short, the research of Chinese philosophy will be flourishing and vigorous in the future, and this is also the natural historical process and the logical result with different cultural integration and cultural renewal.

(Written in May, 2000)
This book is the abridged version of my book “Between Tradition and Modernity—Philosophical Reflections on the Modernization of Chinese Culture”, which is one of the books in the “Contemporary Chinese Philosophers” series, published by Beijing Normal University Press in February 2011. In 2012, the book was approved for funding by the “Chinese Culture Translation Project” of the National Social Science Fund, to be translated into English, published and distributed abroad. On request of Beijing Normal University Press, I compress the 1,040,000-word-long book into the current version with close to 600,000 words.

Insofar as the content and function of culture and philosophy is concerned, people of different countries with different cultural backgrounds have quite different interpretations. Even within the same country, people with different academic insights may have different interpretations. As a book in the series of “Chinese Culture Translation Project”, the book will be distributed overseas, and it will be of positive significance for the people in other countries to develop an understanding of Chinese culture, Chinese people and the Chinese nation. Meanwhile, the book will also shed some light on the understanding of the academic circle in contemporary China, in particular contemporary Chinese philosophy.

I wrote some words in the postscript of the Chinese version of the book, which may help readers to have a better understanding of the book. And these remarks are quoted as follows: This book entitled “Between Tradition and Modernity-The Philosophical Reflections on the Modernization of Chinese Culture” is the outcome of my own twenty year-long studies on the relationship between modernization and Chinese culture from the perspective of cultural reconstruction and philosophical reflection. The book highlights my representative opinions and research outcomes, and typically reflects my academic thought, research approach, and cultural values.

I have been concerned with the research and construction of Chinese culture since I began to study ancient Chinese philosophy under the guidance of Professor Li Jinquan in Zhongshan University in Guangzhou in the early 1980s. After graduation, I worked at the university as a teacher, and I have been trying to integrate the studies on ancient Chinese philosophy into the thinking framework of the historical development and modern reconstruction of Chinese culture, and to promote the studies of traditional Chinese culture to the level of philosophical reflection. In short, I can say that my academic research is to explore the
philosophical field from a cultural perspective and to give cultural criticism and cultural reconstruction from a philosophical perspective. Such a philosophical examination and cultural criticism point to a realistic value orientation, which is the great revitalization of Chinese culture and the Chinese nation. Therefore, adherence to the unity of academics, thought, and practicality is my pursuit. To have philosophical reflection in cultural studies, and cultural concerns in philosophical studies is the academic logic of my studies and the expected effects of my academic achievement and research.

The world has already come to China and China should take a further step to go to the world. An important path that China should follow in order to go to the world, is to introduce its culture by means of cultural transmission. Chinese culture and foreign cultures should learn from each other, and complement each other, with the shared vision of a better tomorrow. We should get along well with others, but not necessarily agree with them. We should also “appreciate the cultural values of others as we do to our own, and the world will become a harmonious whole. Everybody cherishes his or her own culture/values, and if we respect and treasure other’s cultural values, the world will be a harmonious one”. (the words of Fei Xiao tong, a Chinese anthropologist), and Chinese culture will endure in the world, and the world civilization is bound to become better.
Notes on the text

9. From Shu Er of *The Analects*
10. *Sima Qian’s Preface From Records of the Historian*
11. Du Fu: *Recapture of the Regions North and South of the Yellow River*
12. Du Fu: *Temple of the Premier of Shu*
13. Lu You: *The Moon at the Fortified Pass*
14. Lu You: *To My Son*
15. Su Shi: *A Riverside Town, Hunting in Mi City*
16. Huan Tan’s Biography of History of Latter Han
17. Xue Er in *Analects*
18. Tianxia in *Zhuangzi*
19. *Admonition of The Book of History*
20. *31th Year of Duke Xiang of The Tso Chuan*
21. *6th Year of Duke Huan of The Tso Chuan*
22. Lu Yu (First Half) of *Guo Yu*
23. *32th Year of Duke Zhuang of The Tso Chuan*
Zi Lu in *The Analects*
Yao Yue in *The Analects*
Jinxin (Second Half) in *Mengzi*
Lilou (First Half) in *Mengzi*
Jinxin (Second Half) in *Mengzi*
Lilou (First Half) in *Mengzi*
Wangba in *Xunzi*
Lao Tzu, Chapter 49
Lao Tzu, Chapter 75
Yongren in *Han Feizi*
Liefan in *Han Feizi*
Dazheng (First Half) in *Xinshu*
Zi Zhi Tong Jian Book I
Ximing
Xishi
Essays of Two Chengs Book V
Cuiyan Book II
Zhu Xi’s Biography in *History of Song*
The Unauthorized Biography of the Book of Change Book II
Mingjian in *Qianshu*
Jishi in *The Analects*
The Spring an Autumn Annals Yanzi Inner Pieces, Wenshang Book III
Qingzhong of Guanzi
Duzhi of Chun Qiu Fan Lu
The History Of Ming Book CCXXVI
The Land System of Heavenly dynasty
Wu Jing’s Biography of New Book of Tang by Liu Zhiji
Weilinggong in *The Analects of Confucius*
Weizheng in *Analects of Confucius*
Appraisal of Lulingguang’s Palace
Preface to the notes to appreciating the ancient paintings.
Notes to the ancient paintings
Zilu of Confucius Analects.
Yanghuo of Confucius Analects.
Zhenglun of Xunzi.
notes on the text

64 Zhengming of Xunzi
65 (North Song dynasty) Huang Boen: “Miscellaneous thoughts from eastern vision.
66 History of Painting.
67 original painting”, see “Songxue Shi’s anthology
68 Weizheng of Analects.
69 King Hui of Liang on Mencius.
70 Xue'er of Confucius Analects.
71 Gongshunchou of Mencius.
72 Book of Han Dong Zhongshu Biography
73 Zhu Xi, The Four Books Chapters and Sentences Variorum, Preface of Chapters and Sentences in Moderation
74 History of Song dynasty Cheng Hao Biography
75 On erroneous of People in Song dynasty
76 The Book of Han, Dong Zhongshu Biography
77 Answering to Geng Zhongcheng
78 Sayings in the Room
79 Yuan Jun
80 The Letter to Someone
81 As for the division line of the pre-modern and modern periods of Chinese history, the academic circles have different opinions. One school of thought holds that the pre-modern period is between the Opium War from 1840 to the “May Fourth” Movement of 1919; and the modern period is from the “May Fourth” Movement of 1919 to the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. The former is the old democratic revolution, and the latter the new-democratic revolution. Another view holds that the whole period between the Opium War in 1840 and the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 belongs to the pre-modern period, the reason is that during this period, the society of China was semi-feudal and semi-colonial. The nature of the society should be the criterion of judging the social and historical development stage of the society. Therefore, China's modern history should last until 1949. I think both viewpoints are reasonable. Because this paper is concerned about the late Qing dynasty and Early Republic of China, the term modern and pre-modern is used to refer this period.
82 This so-called “last twenty years” refers to the two decades between 1980s and 2000s.
83 The academic circle have different ideas concerning the time when the book Rites was written. The main points are: A. In the Han dynasty, Liu Xin’s proposed that the book was handwritten by Duke Chou, that is, the book was completed in the Western Zhou dynasty; B. Liu Qiyu, a modern scholar, said the book was completed in the Spring and Autumn period; C. He Xiu, a scholar in the Eastern Han dynasty, and some modern scholars like Qiu Mu, Guo Moruo, Gu Jigang and Fan Wenlan believed that the book was completed in the Warring Period; D. We Liaowen, a Confucian Scholar in the Song
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dynasty, and Liang Qichao in the modern time proposed that the book was written between the Zhou and Qin dynasties. E. Hu Shih, a modern scholar believed the book was written in the Western Han dynasty. If we accept the theory of Western Han which is the closest to the present, the book was completed 2,000 years ago Therefore, we can see the word “Guoxue” (studies of a nation’s culture) has a very long history.

88 Ibid, p 604.
91 Qian Mu: “Preface to General National Studies,” Taipei: Commercial Press, 1987 edition, page 1. Qian’s book was first published in May 1931. The quoted text in this chapter is quoted from the Taiwan’s 14th edition of the book, which is not different from the first edition in terms of the content.
Notes on the text


110 Ibid.


112 In fact, the debate over the issue of “Chinese cultural studies as fundamental structure, Western learning for practical use” in pre-modern China is in essence also an important part of the controversy on traditional Chinese culture. Owing to the limited space and concentration on the key issues, this part is therefore omitted here.


114 Hu Shih: “Reflective Notes on Mr. Liang Shuming’s “Eastern and Western Culture and their Philosophy”, “Reading Magazine” No. 8 (1 April 1923).


116 Chen Duxiu: “My Sincere Advice to the Youths”, “Youths Magazine” Volume 1, No. 1, September 1915.


These five articles are published in the special issue on China’s modernization “Shanghai Post Monthly” Volume 2, 7.

“Cultural Construction”, No. 4, Volume 1.

“Cultural Construction”, No. 4, Volume 1.

Zhang Shenfu, one of the members involved in the founding of the Chinese Communist Party, and the sponsor introducing Zhou Enlai, Zhu De and other Communist leaders into the Communist Party, once said in “On Sinicization”, “It is intentionally right to advocate the Chinese culturally-based movement based on the need of consciousness and self-confidence a few years ago. Those who objected to it or ridicule on it did not understand the situation, or they were blindly driven by emotions, and they did not consider the issue as it stood.” (“Zhang Shenfu’s anthology” Vol I, Shijiazhuang: Hebei People's Publishing House, 2005 edition, page 307. The article was originally published in “Wartime Culture” Volume II, February 10, 1939)

The article by Ji was written in 1939 and published in 1940.


In fact, if the content of last two decades’ discussion is concerned about the cultural issues, it can be called a cultural craze; However, due to widespread use of the concept of “traditional Chinese cultural Studies” in the 1990s, and the new century, the term of traditional cultural studies became widespread, the article also adopts this term.


A considerable number of primary and secondary schools carried out poetry reading activities, and some also composed readers on traditional Chinese culture, and some extracurricular activities are also organized. For instance, the attached middle school of South China Normal University not only organized Chinese culture courses, and also hosted the “four places students summer camp of traditional Chinese culture” in 2007 and invited scholars across the Taiwan Strait to the occasion to deliver lectures on Chinese culture. A vice governor of Guangdong Province was invited to give a speech in support of the camp. I was invited to lecture on “Lingnan culture and the spirit of the times”.

Led by the Propaganda Department of Guangdong Provincial Party Committee, “Citizens’ Moral Maxims” was compiled (Guangdong People’s Publishing House, 2002 edition) and also published was “Morality Quadword Song” (Guangdong People’s Publishing House, 1996 edition), to promote modern civic virtue which absorbs some reasonable elements of Chinese culture studies,
for example, “compare one’s feelings with another’s, do as one would be done by others; do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire”.


Even in the era of globalization, when considerable achievement has been made in modernization, there is still the issue of cultural construction as to how to maintain the nationality issue. See Li Zong-gui: A. “Economic Globalization and Construction of National Culture “,” Philosophical Studies “, No. 1, 2001; B”. We should pay attention on nationality traditional culture “,” People’s Daily “, February 4, 2005.


“Zihan from Analects”.

Yongye from Analects

Yanyuan from Analects

Biography of Dong Zhongshu from The History Book of Former Han

Yan Yuan: “Rectified Revision of the Four Books” Volume I.

Li Ren from The Analects of Confucius

Yan Yuan from the Analects.

See Li Zonggui: “Attention should be Paid to the National Character of Traditional Culture”, “People’s Daily”, February 4, 2005, the 15th page.


Tai-Po in The Analects

Wei Tsze in The Analects

Le Jin in The Analects

Kung-Ye Chang in The Analects

Hsio R in The Analects

Tai-Po in The Analects

Hsien Tsin in The Analects

Wei Ling Kung in The Analects

Chi Family in The Analects

Chin Hsin (first half) in Mengzi

Teng Wen Gong (first half) in Mengzi

Gaozi (first half) in Mengzi

Li Lou (first half) in Mengzi

Discourses on the Stales · Zheng.

Tso Chuan · Twenty Years of King Zhao.
Between Tradition and Modernity

162 The Analects · Zi Lu.
163 The Analects · Xue Er.
164 The Analects · Yan Yuan.
165 Mengzi · Gong Sunchou (second half).
166 The Analects · Yong Ye.
167 The Analects · Yan Yuan.
168 Zheng Meng · Tai He.
169 Yi · Tuan Zhuan.
170 Book of Han · The Biography of Dong Zhongshu.
171 Chuang Tzu · The World.
172 Tso Chuan · Thirty Years of King Zhao.
173 The Analects · Bayu.
174 The Book of Songs · Xiaoya · June · “Preface”.
175 Mengzi · Tengwengong (the second half).
176 Chunjiu Fanlu · Bamboo Forests
177 The Study of Benevolence, Tan Sitong
187 Zhu Xi, Commentaries on Four Books’ Sentences · Jinxin (second half)
188 The Original Tao
189 The Letter to Minister Meng.
190 The Analects · Xianjin.
191 Tso Chuan · 11th Year of King Yin.
192 The Analects · Yan Yuan.
193 Mengzi · Li Lou (first half).
194 Xunzi · Tianlun.
195 The Book of Han · Biography of Dong Zhongshu.
196 Chunqiu Fanlu · Yu Ying.
Notes on the text

197 Chunqiu Fanlu · Bamboo Forest.
198 The Book of Piety · Shengchi
199 Analects · Bayu
200 Mengzi · Gongsun Chou (first half)
201 Xinyu · Daoji
202 The Records of History · Biographies of Li Sheng Lujia
203 Mengzi · Teng Wen Gong (second half)
204 A Talent Doesn't Meet the Fortune
205 Mengzi · Lilou (first half)
206 Mengzi · Gaozi (first half)
207 Analects · Zilu
208 Analects · Yanghuo
209 Analects · Xianwen
210 Mengzi · King Lianghui (first half)
211 Xinyu · Daoji
212 Chunqiu Fanlu · Body is More Important Than Justice
213 Book of Han · Biography of Dong Zhongshu
224 As a matter of fact, the national spirit characterized with political thinking in the modern times had an impact in the first 30 years after the founding of the PRC, and the national spirit characterized by economic thinking began to emerge after the reform and opening up.
226 Ibid.


234 There are, in fact, other culture declarations, such as *Rejuvenation Declaration of Chinese Culture* written by Li Bochun and signed by 86 Chinese culture researchers including Zhang Dainian and Ji Xianlin (See Li Bochun, 2003, *Chinese Culture and 21 Century*, Beijing: China Yanshi Press, 1–8) and hot-debated “Neo-Confucianism Culture Declaration of the Mainland China”. We ignore the former since it expounds that 21 century is the time for Chinese culture rejuvenation but lacks serious argumentation, and some of its signers are not solely Chinese culture researchers. Furthermore, its theme is not in conformity with our discussions here. We ignore the latter because no formal publication is available.


238 The following papers are considered Hu Shih’s representative works advocating wholesale westernization: One is *Cultural Conflicts in Today's China* published in 1929, others are three consecutive articles on “confidence and reflections” published in 1934. The wholesale westernization argued by Chen Xuicing was shown in the following two monographs: One is *The Future of Chinese Culture* published in 1934, the other is *My Views on Eastern and Western Cultures* completed in Lingnan University in Guangzhou in 1933.

Notes on the text


245 The title of this declaration was Declaration to the World People for Chinese Culture: Our Common Agreement on Chinese Academia and the Future of Chinese Culture and World Culture published in Democracy Review, January issue in Hong Kong in 1958. But the declaration was an appendix in Tang Junyi’s works Chinese Humanities and Today’s World (Vol. Two, 1975, Student Book Store). The title there was Chinese Culture and the World: Our Common Agreement on Chinese Academia and the Future of Chinese Culture and World Culture. There is no difference of content in the two articles.


248 Tang Junyi was the writer of the declaration of modern Neo-Confucianism. But the order of the authors was Mou Zongsan, Xu Fuguan, Zhang Junmai and Tang Junyi because Tang put his name at the end to show the humble spirit inherent in Chinese culture. In fact, the declaration was replete with Tang’s thought and writing style, so we put Tang in the first place in the following discussions.

249 The president of the Chinese Culture Promotion Association was Ye Xuanping, then Vice-chairman of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference.

250 Interestingly, most of the media and journals either reported the event or provided its gist with only a few providing the full text. Among the print media Literature Press gave the full text on the front page of Sept 9th issue, and The Earth sponsored by the People’s Daily printed it in the 18th issue, 2004.

251 Xu Jialu, then Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress; Ji Xianlin, the former Vice-President of Peking University; Ren Jiyu, the former director of the Institute of World Religions, Chinese
Academy of Social Sciences, and the former Curator of the National Library; Chen Ning Yang, Chinese American and Nobel laureate in physics; Wang Meng, renowned writer and the former Minister of the Ministry of Culture.


253 Chi-shing Chak, Research Fellow of Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, says, “In academic and cultural circles in Hong Kong and Taiwan at the time people considered anything foreign 10 times more valuable”. Refer to Chak, Confucianism and Modernization: Culture Declaration of Neo-Confucianism in Hong Kong and Taiwan, *Exchange Papers in The Symposium on Cross-Straits Culture Root*, Beijing, January 21–25, 2008.

254 Due to blockade and pressure from the international community, Chinese mainland was filled with an intensified hatred and refusal toward the West from the top to the bottom in the 1950s.


258 Ibid, 16.

259 Ibid, 24

260 Ibid, 26


Notes on the text

273 Teng Wen Gong I from The Works of Mencius
274 Zhu Lin from Chun Qiu Fan Lu(additional comments about Spring and Autumn Annals)
276 Shu Er from The Analects
277 Wei Ling Gong from The Analects
278 Teng Wen Gong II from The Works of Mencius
279 The Ode of a Frustrated Man, Works of Dong Zhongshu
280 Xi Ci II from The Book of Changes.
281 Biography of Si Ma Xiangru from History of the Han dynasty.
282 On Punishment or Reward with Mercy from Su Shi Essays
283 The Commentary of Zuo. The Twenty-fourth Year of Duke Xiang of Lu
284 The Book of Changes. The Qian Trigrams. Xiang Zhuan
285 The Classic of Filial Piety. Amplification of Making Our Name Famous
286 The Analects. Taibo of Wu
287 The Analects. Shu Er
288 The Book of Han. Dong Zhongshu
294 The Shangshu · Dayu Mo. The Commentary of Zuo · The Seven Year of Duke Wen. The Great Learning. Doctrine of the Mean
295 Dazhao Li. Fundamental Ideological Differences Between the East and the West. New Youth. Chapter 4, Volume 1
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The Biography of Li Sheng and Lu Jia, Historical Records
Ibid.
Encourage Learning, Xunzi.
Kingship, Xunzi.
The Biography of Jia Yi, The Book of Han.
The Biography of Shu Suntong, The Book of Han.
Ibid.
The Biography of Rulin, The Book of Han.

Because of the limitation of the length of the article, more details will not be presented here. Those who have interest can refer to the following papers. 1. The Cultural Analysis of Dong Zhongshu’s Theory about Morality, Confucius Studies, No.3, (1991); 2. On Integration of the Culture of Feudal System by Dong Zhongshu, Academic Research, No.1, (1994).

Ren Jiuy (editor in chief), History of Chinese Philosophy (Volume Qin and Han dynasties), Beijing: the People’s Publishing House, (1985), pp164–165
Notes on the text

332 The Foreword of Seeing Jiao Qian off by Liu Ban, cited from Election VIII, Critical Examinations of Documents.
335 The Annals of Emperor Zhang, The Book of Post Han.
337 For the nature of The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan, some scholars think that it belongs to classical studies, some insist that it is a code of laws while still others think that it is code of rites. Please refer Chapter 8 of The Coherent Argumentation of Classics in Bai Huguan and the Thoughts of Han dynasty, Haikou: South Press, (2002), pp200–218.
339 Xuan Jiling, The Book of History.
340 The Biography of Cao Bao, The Book of Post Han.
341 Ibid.
342 Ibid.
343 The Biography of Cao Bao, The Book of Post Han.
344 Ibid.
345 Ibid.
347 The Biography of Cao Bao, The Book of Post Han.
351 The Doctrine of Mean, The Book of Rites.
352 According to the addendum of A General Survey of Rites and Classics by Shao Yichen.
353 The Baseline of Spring and Autumn Studies
354 Because of the space and topic, more details are not presented here. Those who have interest can refer: 1. Li Zonggui, The Theories of Similarity and Harmony and Dong Zhongshu’s Philosophical Methodology, Philosophy Studies, No.9, (1986); 2. Li Zonggui, The Medicine in Qin and Han dynasties and Dong

Treatise on Economy, The Book of Han.

The Law of Benevolence and Righteousness, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Li Hegen, Spring and Autumn Studies

Wu Preface, Spring and Autumn Studies.


King Zhuang of Chu, Spring and Autumn Studies.

King Zhuang of Chu, Spring and Autumn Studies

The Nature and the Form of Three dynasties’ System Reformation, Spring and Autumn Studies.

King Zhuang of Chu, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Ibid.

The Nature and the Form of Three dynasties’ System Reformation, Spring and Autumn Studies

The Benevolent Governance, Spring and Autumn Studies

King Zhuang of Chu, Spring and Autumn Studies

Conversation on the Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.


The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, Book of Han.

Deep Analysis of Terms and Names, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Jade’s Beauty, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Deep Analysis of Terms and Names, Spring and Autumn Studies

Obey the Mandate of Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies.

The Essence, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Deep Analysis of Terms and Names, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Xu Fuguan, History of Thought in Two Han dynasties (Book II), Taiwan: Student Book Store, (1976), pp366–367.

The Will of Heaven, Mocius.

Sacrifice in Outskirt, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Obey the Mandate of Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Praying for Rain, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Deep Analysis of Terms and Names, Spring and Autumn Studies.

The Will of Heaven, Mencius.

Ibid.

Follow the Way of Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Deep Analysis of Terms and Names, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Identification with the Superior, Mocius.

Ibid.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, The Book of Han.

The Jade Cup, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Ibid.
Notes on the text

392 Ibid.
393 Ibid.
394 Ibid.
395 Ibid.
396 Ibid.
397 Bamboos, Spring and Autumn Studies
398 The Essence, Spring and Autumn Studies.
399 The Consistent Way of Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies
400 The Discussion about Yin and Yang, Spring and Autumn Studies
401 The Nature of Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies
402 The Author's Preface by Si Maqian, Records of Great Historian
403 Spring and Autumn Studies.
404 The Movement of Heaven and Earth, Spring and Autumn Studies.
405 Ibid.
406 The Government System alike to Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies.
407 The Jade Cup, Spring and Autumn Studies.
408 Alike Heaven's Action, Spring and Autumn Studies.
409 Meaning of Yin and Yang, Spring and Autumn Studies.
410 The Interactions of the Same, Spring and Autumn Studies.
411 Follow the Way of Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies.
412 Deep Analysis of Terms and Names, Spring and Autumn Studies.
413 Alike Heaven's Actions, Spring and Autumn Studies.
414 The Benevolent Governance Reaches to Heaven, Earth and Human, Spring
   and Autumn Studies.
415 Basic Meaning, Spring and Autumn Studies.
416 Interactions of the Same Kind, Spring and Autumn Studies.
417 Inter-promotion Relation in Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
418 Law of Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
419 On Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
420 Law of Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
421 Analysis of Heaven for Human, Spring and Autumn Studies.
422 The Accompaniment of Four Seasons, Spring and Autumn Studies.
423 Ibid.
424 Interactions of the Same Kind, Spring and Autumn Studies.
425 Ibid.
426 Law of Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
427 Inter-promotion Relation in Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
428 Law of Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
429 On Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
430 Law of Five Elements, Spring and Autumn Studies.
431 The Government System alike to Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies.
432 People's Destiny Matches Heaven's, Spring and Autumn Studies.
433 Ibid.
434 People's Destiny Matches Heaven's, Spring and Autumn Studies.
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On Heaven, Master Xunzi.
On Kingship, Master Xunzi.
Li Zehou, *Summary of Master Xunzi, Book of Change and Doctrine of the Mean* [J]. *Literature, History and Philosophy*, 1985(1).
The Great Treaties II, Book of Changes.
Shuo Gua, Book of Changes.
Xu Gua, Book of Changes.
Wen Yan, Qian Gua, Book of Changes.
Explanation of Names, Writings of Prince Huainan.
The Outline, Writings of Prince Huainan.
Tai peoples, Writings of Prince Huainan.
Preface, *Spring and Autumn by Lvs*.
Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
Duke Ling of Wei, *The Analects*.
The Benevolent Governance Reaches to Heaven, Earth and Human, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

About Governance, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
Biography of Dong Zhongshu, Book of Han.
Governance Reaches to Heaven, Earth and Human, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

Ibid.
Biography of Dong Zhongshu, Book of Han.
Biography of Dong Zhongshu, Book of Han.
The Unification of Opinions, Mocius II.
The Will of Heaven, Mocius II.
The Meaning of Yin and Yang, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
Inter-promotion Relation in Five Elements, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
The Interactions of the Same, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
Follow the Way of Heaven, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
Deep Analysis of Terms and Names, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

This was invented out of thin air by Dong to match the number of five elements so as to argue that the interaction between Heaven and human and “all is one” are “truth of Heaven”, which itself means nothing eventual.

The Government System Alike to Heaven, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
People’s Destiny Matches Heaven’s, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
People’s Destiny Matches Heaven’s, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.
Ibid.

Rectification of Name, Master Xunzi.
The Great Treaties I, Book of Changes.
Tuan Zhuan (the commentary on the hexagram text), Book of Changes.


People's Destiny Matches Heaven's, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Response to the Same, Spring and Autumn by Master Lv.

Tuanzhuan, Xiangua, Book of Changes. v

Interactions of the Same Kind, Spring and Autumn Studies

The Discussion about Yin and Yang, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Alike Heaven's Actions, Spring and Autumn Studies.

The Jade Cup, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Here “參” means comparison. Latest Notes of Book of Changes by Gao Xiang holds that “參” means “three”. Qilu Press, June, 1979, p532. The Common Use Dictionary of Archaic Chinese also records that “參” means “three”. The Commercial Press, September, 1979, p20. Both above explain “參” as “number”. It is going against my point. Mr. Pang Pu pointed out it is rather proper to understand “參” as comparison and matches. That is to gain a new profound and objective conclusion through the comparison of several different situations”. About “參”, Social Sciences in China, 1981(5).

On Heaven, Master Xunzi.

Eight Canons, Han Feizi.

Preface, Spring and Autumn by Master Lv.

Summary, Writings of Prince Huainan.

On the Tai Race, Writings of Prince Huainan.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, The Book of Han.

The God of Origin, Spring and Autumn Studies

The Government System Alike to Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang, Spring and Autumn Studies.

The Government System Alike to Heaven, Spring and Autumn Studies.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, The Book of Han.

Ibid.

Two Starting Points, Spring and Autumn Studies.

Bamboos, Spring and Autumn Studies.


The Ji Family, The Analects

Yanghuo, The Analects.

On Kingship, Master Xunzi.

Only Elaboration, The Analects.

Teng Wengong I, Mencius.

Gong Sunchou I, Mencius.

Yuan Xian’s Questions, *The Analects*.

Bamboos, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, *The Book of Han*.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Zhengyu, Kuoyu.

The Twentieth Year of Zhao Gong, Zuo’s Commentary.

Zi Lu, *The Analects*.

On Learning, *The Analects*.

Tuan Zhan (the commentary on the hexagram text), *Book of Changes*.

On Five Elements, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

Law of Five Elements, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

Ibid.

Follow the Way of Heaven, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

Follow the Way of Heaven, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.


Ibid.

Follow the Way of Heaven, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, *The Book of Han*.

Follow the Way of Heaven, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

Follow the Way of Heaven, *Spring and Autumn Studies*.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, *The Book of Han*.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, *The Book of Han*.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, *The Book of Han*.


Xi Ci II, *Book of Changes*.

The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, *The Book of Han*.

Collected Biographies of Scholars, *Book of History*.


The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, *The Book of Han*.
The Biography of Dong Zhongshu, The Book of Han.

A Study of the ‘New Text’ Forgeries was published by Zhonghua Book Company in Beijing, March 1953, and in 1988, it was printed for the third time; A Study of the Reforms of Confucius was also published by Zhonghua Book Company in Beijing, the first edition was printed in September 1958, and in 1988, the 2nd edition was also printed. On Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn was not published until as late as July in 1990, compared with the first two books, exactly three decades later!


Kang You-wei, On Dong Zhongshu’s Study of Spring-Autumn, sorted out by Lou Yulie, Beijing: Zhong Hua Book Company, 1990: 1

Taiwan scholar Ding Yajie has detailed discussion on this issue, which can be used as reference, see the book Study on Gongyang Commentary in the Late Qing dynasty and the Early Republic of China--PI xirui, Liao Ping and Kang Youwei, chapter VI, section III (“Kang Youwei’s ideal world”) the mode of “Three Stages”, Taipei: Wan Juanlou Books Limited, 2002 version, page 302–314.

Prior to Hundred Day’s Reform movement, Kang You-wei thought autocratic monarchy society was marked by political chaos and social anomy; society, that is, feudal society of ancient China; constitutional monarchy society was characterized by the reestablishment of legitimate political order, such as the capitalist society like Japan and the UK; Democratic Republicanism society is when the world as a whole experiences great harmony, such as capitalist societies like the United States and France. After the reformation movement
failed, Kang Youwei amended his theory of “Three Stages”, defined the three stages of human history as the feudal autocracy society, the capitalist society (whether constitutional monarchy or democratic republic), and ideal society of great harmony, which is discussed in details in his book *Da Tongshu*.

567 As above, page 239–240.
571 “There are no variable explanations for the sublime words in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, there are no explicit items in the Gongyang Commentary and Guliang Commentary, only Dong Zhongshu expounded them creatively”.—As the book above, page 203.
572 “Contemporary New Confucianism” that the article is talking about actually refers to “modern new Confucianism”, there are no essential differences. The idea that “contemporary New Confucianism” in Hong Kong and Taiwan while “modern new Confucianism” on the mainland is a kind of misunderstanding caused by the ulterior motives of mainland academics circles. In order to avoid misunderstanding, the concept of “contemporary New Confucianism” is used in this text. See also: Li Zonggui, *Connotation of Neo-Confucianism*, the Traditional Culture and Humanistic Spirit, Guangzhou: Guangdong People’s Publishing House, (1997): 347–355; Li Zonggui: *Origin, Development and Ideological Characteristics of the Modern Neo-Confucianism*, the People’s Daily, March 6, 1989, the 6th edition.
573 The full name of the article is: the Manifesto of Chinese Culture to the World—the Common Vision for the Future of Chinese Academic Research and Chinese Culture and World Culture, it was published simultaneously in *Democratic Review* of Hong Kong and *Regeneration* of Taiwan on Jan. 1 1958.
575 Yang Zuhan, *Yu Ying-shih’s Criticism on Neo-Confucian, MOU Zongsan’s Interpretation of Confucianism—Responding to Yang Zebo’s Review Confucian


The address in “the Fifth International Symposium on contemporary Neo-Confucianism” in Jinan, Shandong in the early September of 1998.


Qi Liang, Critique of the Neo-Confucianism, Shanghai: Sanlian Bookstore, 1995.


There are different “viewpoints” about the starting year of the twenty-first century in Chinese officials and masses. One view is that the year 2000 is the beginning of the twenty-first century; another view is that the year of 2001 is the beginning of the twenty-first century. The author of this book believes that
the year 2001 is. Quite simply, as some astronomers have pointed out, in the way of the numbering the years, there is no “the year ending with zero”.


The book was written in 1928. In the epilogue of the book Gongsunlongzi, Tan Jiefu said, “in 1928, *The Profound Meaning of Mohism and Form and Name* were published. In 1932, they were granted the study of form and name (at Wuhan University) and printed as handouts. “(published in Zhonghua Book Company in 1963, page173.)

Lecture notes from Peking University, written in 1922 and printed at Peking University in 1923.


Press. But soon it failed to be printed because the Anti-Japanese War broke out.

603 Du Guoxiang, Critique of the Pre-Qin Scholars, Shanghai: Writers Bookstore, 1949. It was with the signature of Du Shousu, when reprinted in Sanlian Bookstore of Beijing in October 1955, the title of the book was changed to The Research of Pre-Qin Scholars, with the signature of Du Guoxiang.


605 Yang Rongguo, The Thoughts of Confucius and Mozi, Shanghai: Life Bookstore, 1946.

606 Yang Rongguo began writing The History of Chinese Ancient Thoughts in late 1946 after the book of The Thoughts of Confucius and Mozi, and finished writing at the end of 1948. At that time the author taught Chinese Intellectual History in Guilin Teachers ‘College. The book was published in 1954 by the People’s Publishing House (Beijing).

607 Zhao Jibin, Critique of the Ancient Confucian Philosophy, Shanghai: Zhonghua Book Company, 1948.


609 Hou Wailu, The History of Ideological Thoughts in Modern China, Shanghai: Life Bookstore, 1947.

610 Hou Wailu, The History of Ideological Theory in Modern China, Chongqing: Style Bookstores, 1944.


616 As above, page10

617 As above, page19.


622 Feng Youlan, New Discourses on Events, Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1940.
627 “The series of six books were written during the period of Zhen Yuan”. Feng Youlan had the following explanations: “the so-called period of Zhen Yuan” refers to the period of Anti-Japanese War, that is, the revival of the Chinese nation......China must win in The Anti-Japanese War, and the Chinese nation is bound to revive, This period means the eve of national rejuvenation”. ---Feng youlan, Preface in the Sansongtang, Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 1984, p281.
628 Feng Youlan, Preface in the Sansongtang preface, Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 1984, p274.
630 If calculated exactly, from 1949 to 1978, including starting and ending years, there are 30 years; but from 1979 to 2000, there are more than 20 years, the 20 years here is an approximate number. Similarly, seeing 1949 as demarcation, dividing Chinese philosophy in the 20th century roughly into the first 50 years and the last 50 years is also an approximate number.
637 Hou wailu, Zhao Jibin and Du Guoxiang jointly finished *General History of Chinese Thought*, a total of five volumes. The first volume was published in 1947 by Shanghai New Knowledge Bookstore, then republished by People's Publishing House in 1957; The second and third volume were published in 1950 by Sanlian Bookstore with the signature of Hou wailu, Zhao Jibin, and Du Guoxiang and Qiu Hansheng, then republished in 1957 by People's Publishing House; The fourth volume (part I and part II) was compiled by Hou wailu, part I was published in 1959 by People's Publishing House, part II
was published in 1960 by People's Publishing House; the fifth volume with the signature of Hou wailu was published by People's Publishing House in 1956.

Ren Jiyu, *The History of Chinese Philosophy*, Beijing: People's Publishing House. Volume I was published in July, 1963, volume II was published in December, 1963, volume III was published in October, 1964, the fourth volume was published in March, 1979. The researchers participating in the textbook compilation include Wang Ming, in Ming, Kong Fan, Shi Jun, Deng Aimin, Lu Yusan, Ren Jiyu, Zhuang Ang, Sun Changjiang, Wu Zeyu, Li Yan, Rong Zhaozu, Tang Yijie, Yang Xianbang and Lou Yulie who are respectively from the following units: The Institute of Philosophy of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Teaching and Research Office of Chinese Philosophy of Department of Philosophy of Peking University, Philosophy Department of Renmin University of China and others.


Li Zehou, *Brief Introduction to the Ideologies of the Qin and Han dynasties*, *Chinese Social Science*, 1984, No. 2.


*Category Study of the History of Chinese Philosophy* (I), The Quest, 1984, the 1st issue; *Category Study of the History of Chinese Philosophy* (II), 1984, the 2nd issue.


In the “Preface” of *New History of Chinese Philosophy*, Feng Youlan said, “the writings of the history of philosophy are various. Some are only about philosophy in narrow sense, some focus on philosopher’s life and the political and social environment in his time, some emphasized the characters of philosophers. ….. In the *New History of Chinese Philosophy*, there are elucidations of both philosophical system of philosophers and their political and social environment. It may be a little miscellaneous, but if written well, it may not only regard the philosophy history as a centre but also describes the history of Chinese culture. If that is the case, then that is just what I wanted”. See the first volume of the *New History of Chinese Philosophy* written by Feng Youlan. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1982, p2–3. In fact, I should say that Feng Youlan accomplished his goal, the book was indeed a work of philosophical history with characteristics of both focusing on philosophy history and illustrating Chinese culture.

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As above, p487.


Fang Keli and Li Jinquan, *Series of Modern Neo-Confucianism Studies* (24 volumes), Shenyang: Liaoning University Publishing Houses; Tianjin: Tianjin People's Publishing House; the two have been published respectively in recent years.


Zhang Liwen: *The Study of Neo-Confucian School of the Song and Ming dynasties*, Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 1983.


Meng Peiyuan, graduated from Peking University in 1963.


