

The Notion of Sincerity (Ch'eng) in The Confucian Classics

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Even a novice in Confucian literature could not fail to recognize the importance of the notion of "Sincerity" (ch'eng)¹ upon reading the two Classics, the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean. These two works are analogous to two foundation stones for the whole development of the Confucian tradition, and have long been recognized as important sources of philosophical inspiration on the subject of the Confucian Way, or tao, of becoming a sage. Much attention has been given to these two short Classics throughout the history of Confucianism, and therefore there is no doubt that the notion of Sincerity should occupy a crucial place in this tradition. In fact, Chu Hsi's anthology, Chin-ssu lu [Reflections on Things at Hand],² begins with Chou Tun-i's T'ai-chi-t'u shuo [Explanation of the Diagram of the Great Ultimate]³ and is followed by a section on "Sincerity." Using the compiler's own words, the Explanation was put at the beginning "merely to enable the students to know their terms and to have something to look forward to."⁴ Therefore a thorough understanding of the notion of Sincerity is important, not only for an understanding of Confucian philosophy in general, but also for the whole enterprise of Confucian learning to become a sage.

Though the Chinese character ch'eng is usually rendered as "sincere" or "sincerity," in the context of the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean the term ch'eng has a connotation that goes beyond that of the usual English translations.⁵ Whether it is translated as "true" or as "sincere," ch'eng definitely points to human reality which is not only the basis of self-knowledge but also the ground of the human participation with Heaven. This would seem to imply clearly that the meaning of Sincerity has a cosmic as well as a moral significance, and that therefore it should be understood as an essential force through which the human person is to be united with Heaven. Keeping in mind that this unity of human and Heaven is a potentiality to be reached through the realization of authentic

human nature, in this article we offer a comprehensive treatment of the meaning of Sincerity in the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean, especially in its relation to the notions of Heaven, Nature, Virtues, and Learning, in order to synthesize this cosmic and moral significance of ch'eng in these two key works of the Confucian corpus.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the concept of Sincerity in the Doctrine of the Mean provides a metaphysical foundation for the Confucian theory of learning. Unlike some other Confucian concepts, the notion of Sincerity plays a pivotal role for coming to a comprehensive understanding of Confucianism in general. In fact the notion provided a bridge between the virtue-centered approach of ancient Confucianism and the more metaphysically oriented Neo-Confucianism.⁶ Since the notion of Sincerity occupies the central teaching of the Doctrine of the Mean and the Great Learning, some textual study will be necessary in dealing with the Classical texts, especially in light of the fact that the philosophical elaboration on the notion of Sincerity was centered mainly around the exegetical commentary on the related phrases in the Classics.

Long before ch'eng received philosophical attention as a metaphysical term, it had been used in the Book of Rites to describe a disposition of "oughtness" of the human heart in performing the memorial rites for ancestors, or in the marriage ceremony;⁷ the innermost goodness of the human heart;⁸ and also sometimes as a tool to depart from falsehood.⁹ But it was in the Doctrine of the Mean that the term ch'eng was first used in order to describe Confucian moral metaphysics.¹⁰

The Epistemological Program of the Great Learning

The Great Learning was originally chapter 42 of the Book of Rites. Little attention was paid to this work until the time of Ssu-ma Kuang (1019-1086), who wrote a commentary on it, and treated it for the first time as a separate work. Chu Hsi (1130-1200) rearranged the text, following the arrangement of Ch'eng Hao (Ming-tao, 1032-1085) and his younger brother Ch'eng I (I-ch'un, 1033-1107). Moreover, Chu Hsi also added a "supplement," and divided the treatise into one "canonical text" (ching), and ten chapters of "commentary" (chwan).¹¹

The Chinese title, Ta-hsüeh, literally means education for the adult. In contrast to hsiao-hsüeh,¹² or education for the young, which consists of good manners, daily behavior, etc., ta-hsüeh involves both moral cultivation and social order. This means education for the good man or the gentleman, or, using the word in the sense of "greatness," education for the magnanimous man. However, as a philosophical work transmitted by the Confucian School, the Great Learning formed the gate by which learners first entered into virtue. According to Chu Hsi, "the order in which the ancients pursued their learning" has been preserved only in the Great Learning.¹³

The opening paragraph of the "canonical text" itself reads, "What the Great Learning teaches, is -- to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence." These lines specify the well-known "three essential points" of Confucian learning, namely, (1) illustrating illustrious virtue, (2) renovating the people,¹⁴ and (3) resting in the highest excellence, as the fundamental themes in the Confucian learning to become a sage. Resting in the highest excellence moves one up to a higher step than the other two points, in spite of their parallel arrangement in the Great Learning. While Wang Yang-ming stressed the unity of these three items simultaneously, Chu Hsi emphasized the progressive development from the fundamental step of illustrating illustrious virtue to the level of resting in the highest excellence. In this regard, Chu Hsi was more faithful than Wang Yang-ming to the internal logic of the "canonical text" of the Great Learning. Even though the goal of illustrating illustrious virtue and renovating the people is in resting in the highest excellence, it is impossible to do so if one does not know first where this highest excellence lies. Therefore, the paragraph of the "canonical text" which immediately follows states:

The point where to rest being known, the object of pursuit is then determined; and, that being determined, a calm unperturbedness may be attained to. To that calmness there will succeed a tranquil repose. In that repose there may be careful deliberation, and that deliberation will be followed by the attainment (of the desired end). [Text of Confucius, 2]¹⁵

There is no section in the commentary which explains this paragraph. According to Chu Hsi the section was probably lost, or it would not be necessary for the original commentator since its basic meaning was very clear. Thus, knowing that the ultimate goal is in resting in the highest excellence, then when one is determined to pursue learning to be a sage his mind will be necessarily inclined in that direction. When one determines his intention to follow that direction, the mind will attain its tranquility, since it will no longer be disturbed by any other doubts. When the mind is in tranquil, there will be no further anxiety of being separated from the right way. What this means is that in this tranquility, attained through a diligent devotion to self-cultivation, one will be able to respond to any given situation according to the Way (tao). As elaborated in the Great Learning, the way of learning to become a sage is highly structured. There are things to be known first, and there are things which naturally follow after that initial knowledge. Thus, the Great Learning continues:

Things have their root and their branches. Affairs have their end and their beginning.

To know what is first and what is last will lead near to what is taught (in the Great Learning).¹⁶ [Text of Confucius, 3]

This well-known quotation is seen not only an example of knowing the root and branches, but also directly points to the renovation of the people by the sage-king. The idea of attainment of sagehood meshes perfectly with the Confucian ideal of being a sage-ruler to be exercised in the political domain. As has already been stated, everything that exists has its root and branches, and every affair has its beginning and end. In understanding the relation between illustrating the virtue and renovating the people, the illustration of virtue is the basis for the renovation the people, and the people's renovation is the culmination of virtue's illustration. Chu Hsi said in his own commentary that "the illustration of virtue is the root, and the renovation of the people is the completion. Knowing where to rest is the beginning, and being able to attain it is the end. The root and the beginning are what is first. The completion and end are what is last."¹⁷

The Great Learning continues by presenting next the so-called "eight steps" of the Confucian learning process: investigation of things, extension of knowledge, sincerity of the will, rectification of the mind, cultivation of the personal life, regulation of the family, national order, and world peace. These eight steps are the well-known blueprint for translating the Confucian ideal into actual living. In order to see how ch'eng functions in this context we must briefly consider some of the issues involved in these individual steps.

The fifth chapter of the commentary, which consists of only two sentences, reads, "This is called knowing the root. This is called the perfecting of knowledge." In the old text of the Great Learning, as found in the Book of Rites, these two sentences came at the end of the "canonical text," and were followed by sections on sincerity of the will, rectification of the mind, cultivation of the personal life, regulation of the family, order of the state, and peace throughout the world. Therefore, commentaries on the first two steps, investigation of things and extension of knowledge, did not appear. Assuming that these two sections had been lost long before, Chu Hsi moved these two sentences to form the fifth chapter of the commentary, and asserted that they refer to the investigation of things and extension of knowledge, and also offered a "supplement" to fill in the lacuna. Though arbitrary, Chu Hsi's re-arrangement was logically consistent with the internal logic of the mind of the "canonical text" of the Great Learning. What was most important in this arrangement was that Chu Hsi put the section on the investigation of things ahead of the section on the sincerity of the will.¹⁸

The sixth chapter of the commentary states that what is meant by "making the will sincere" is "allowing no self-deception," just as we instinctively hate a bad smell, or love what is beautiful. Here, the sincerity of the will is spoken in relation to the superior man's "watchfulness over himself when he is alone." In the case of an inferior person, when he is alone and at his leisure, there would be no limit to which he might go in his evil deeds; but when he sees a superior man, he tries to disguise himself, concealing the evil and showing off the good in him. However, what is true in one's heart will be shown in outward appearance. Therefore, being watchful over himself when alone, the superior man always makes his will sincere. What is implied here is the internalization of moral

knowledge of good and evil to the level of instinctual awareness of pleasure and/or lack of pleasure. The moral awareness is not for demonstration in front of other people, but for self-cultivation. The inner sincerity will be shown in outward appearance.

The seventh chapter of the commentary explains the relationship between the rectification of the mind and the cultivation of personal life in plain words. When one is affected by any wrath, fear, fondness to any extent, worries and anxieties, etc., one's mind will not be correct. Since the mind directs the body, when one's mind is not correct, self-cultivation will be disturbed. Thus, the commentary states, "When the mind is not present, we look and do not see; we hear and do not understand; we eat and do not know the taste of what we eat." The mind must be concentrated on one thing in order to retain its correctness. Therefore, in order to cultivate one's personal life, one must rectify his mind first.

The eighth chapter of the commentary plainly explains the relationship between self-cultivation and regulation of the family. People usually do not know the faults of their own children, nor do they know their offspring's own goodness. This is because of the tendency of partiality. We are partial when we feel affection and love, when we despise and dislike, when we stand in awe and reverence, when we feel sorrow and compassion, and when we are arrogant and rude. But the cultivated person knows the bad qualities of what he loves, as well as the excellences of what he hates. Therefore, the cultivation of one's personal life is the very foundation for the regulation of the family.

In explaining this relationship, the ninth chapter of the commentary specifies as examples three cardinal family virtues and gives two contrasting examples from the ancient kings. The final chapter of the commentary, in describing the relationship between these two steps, gives a brief presentation of government ethics. Since the king is seen as "the parent of the people,"¹⁹ the presentation begins with the fundamental family virtues. When the ruler treats the elders with respect, then the people will be inclined toward filial piety. When the ruler treats the aged with respect, then the people will be aroused to fraternal respect. When the ruler treats the young and the helpless compassionately, then the common people will not follow the opposite course. Therefore this is the principle which,

as with a measuring square, the ruler may regulate his conduct.²⁰ Thus, the ruler of a state should never be careless in watching over his own virtue.

This presentation specifies the main teaching of the Great Learning: the three essential points and the eight steps of Confucian learning process to be a sage-king, following Chu Hsi's arrangement of the text of the Great Learning. The most important aspect of Chu Hsi's arrangement was that he put the investigation of things and extension of knowledge ahead of the sincerity of the will. According to Chu Hsi, since the true Way is not far from knowing the root and branches of things, and knowing the beginning and the end of affairs, the extension of knowledge is prior to the sincerity of the will. The extension of knowledge consists in comprehending the root and branches of things through the investigation of things. When the mind can penetrate beneath the external appearance of things and see their fundamental reality, only then can it have true knowledge of them. If we perceive things on those occasions when we have been deceived by their appearance, then we cannot have true knowledge of them. The extension of knowledge and investigation of things are both mental operations, and therefore are intimately and naturally connected with the mind's correctness, much as interacting cause and effect. For one who possesses the perfection of knowledge, then, the will becomes sincere.

In Wang Yang-ming's theory of Confucian learning, however, the prime importance was given to the sincerity of the will. According to Wang, Chu Hsi's theory of investigation of things and extension of knowledge insisted that every blade of grass and every tree possesses principle, and therefore should be investigated, so then the mind should go to things to investigate the principle inherent in them. This theory considered things as external and separated mind and principle. If the principles were outside the mind, then Wang said, for example, the principle of filial piety, and therefore the desire to be filial itself, would cease to exist as soon as the parent dies.²¹ For Wang, principle and mind are one. There would be no principle of things unless the mind were determined to realize it. This is the reason why Wang insisted that the sincerity of the will must precede the investigation of things and the extension of knowledge, and why we see that the primary importance

in learning is to make up one's mind to become a sage. Nevertheless, since the Great Learning is the foundational text for the Confucian theory of Learning, the notion of "making one's will sincere" in the process of learning, plays an important role in Confucian epistemology. These aspects of "outgoings of the sincerity" and "watchfulness over oneself when alone" are further developed in the Doctrine of the Mean.

The Metaphysical system of the Doctrine of the Mean

The Doctrine of the Mean was originally a chapter of the Book of Rites. As in the case of the Great Learning, great interest in it arose in the Sung period (960-1279). Both Ssu-ma Kuang (1019-1086) and Ch'eng Hao wrote commentaries on it, but it was Chu Hsi who brought it into prominence. He redivided the old text, the Li-chi cheng-i (Correct Meaning of the Book of Rites), that had been used in Cheng Hsüan's (127-200) commentary into thirty-three sections without altering the order of the text.²²

The text itself can be divided into three distinct parts: the first nineteen chapters which deal mainly with the character and the duties of the superior man; the twentieth chapter, especially its first fifteen sections, which deals mainly with the idea of politics, including the moral responsibilities and the ideal institutions of the sage-kings; and the last thirteen chapters which deal mainly with the metaphysical concept of ch'eng, or Sincerity.

The Chinese ideograms, Chung-Yung, employed as the title for the Doctrine of the Mean mean literally "centrality and universality." These two ideograms have been translated variously as the "Mean," "Mean-in-Action," "Normality," "Universal moral order," etc. According to one of the oldest commentaries of the Classics, yung means "to use (to employ)," and chung-yung means "using the Mean as the ordinary way."²³ According to Chu Hsi, chung-yung means neither one-sided nor extreme, but the ordinary principle of the Mean. In his own commentary he says, "Being without inclination to either side is called chung; admitting of no change is called yung. By chung is denoted the correct course to be pursued by all under heaven; by yung is denoted the fixed principle regulating

all under heaven."²⁴ Therefore, chung means what is central referring to human nature, while yung means what is universal and harmonious referring to human nature's relation to the universe. The book Doctrine of the Mean, as it represents the authentic teaching of Confucian School, first speaks of One principle, and next it spreads this out to embraces all things, and finally it returns and gathers them under the One principle.

The Doctrine of the Mean begins by introducing three fundamental Confucian concepts: Nature (hsing), Way (tao), and Instruction (chiao). In line with these concepts the Confucian enterprise of learning is seen as learning to achieve sagehood through moral cultivation. Yet while the foundation of Confucian theory of learning is rooted in the will, or mandate, of Heaven (t'ien-ming), its full exhibition is demonstrated in the teaching of the sage. Ultimate sagehood must be actualized in governing the state and bringing peace to the whole world. Thus the "superior man," or the sage as an idealized human being, takes the highest place of importance in Confucian ideals. As the Doctrine of the Mean affirms,

The path [tao] may not be left for an instant. If it could be left, it would not be the path. On this account, the superior man does not wait till he sees things, to be cautious, nor till he hears things, to be apprehensive. There is nothing more visible than what is secret, and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore the superior man is watchful over himself, when he is alone [1:2-3].

The last two sentences are similar to those we have seen in the sixth chapter of the "commentary" of the Great Learning, which says, "What truly [ch'eng, Sincerity] is within will be manifested without. Therefore, the superior man must be watchful over himself when he is alone." As we have already stated, these phrases were spoken in relation to the idea of the sincerity of the will in the Great Learning. What is most important here is to note the way in which the Doctrine of the Mean develops its own notion of Sincerity in relation to the state of sagehood. The

epistemological notion of the sincerity of the will in practical steps of Confucian learning is turned into a metaphysical concept as the foundation of ultimate sagehood. Therefore, we can see that in the state of sagehood itself there is a key relational interaction between intelligence and sincere will.

In order to develop further the characteristics of sagehood, the Doctrine of the Mean introduces some crucial aspects of human mind. The text goes on to introduce the notions of Equilibrium (chung) and Harmony (ho) [1:4-5]. The state of equilibrium specifically means the state of absence of any selfish desire in the mind. The state of mind being free of any such selfish desire is described as a virtuous state of a superior man whose nature is completely in accordance with the Way of Heaven. Equilibrium and Harmony describe the state of mind of the superior man, with Equilibrium primarily connoting the natural state, and Harmony principally connoting the self-reflection on the various movements of the mind. In the Doctrine of the Mean, Equilibrium is the great foundation of the world, and Harmony is its universal path. When Equilibrium and Harmony are realized to their highest degree, Heaven and Earth will attain their proper order, and all things will flourish. In a succinct form, this is a summary of the entire teaching of the Great Learning.

The idea of the Mean in relation to the state of a sage is further developed in the next eleven chapters quoting from Confucius' own words. The practical aspect of the Way (tao) in relation to the superior man is further explained in chapters 13 to 15. It says that "The path is not far from man. When men try to pursue a course, which is far from the common indications of consciousness, this course cannot be considered the PATH [tao]." [13:1] The Way should not be sought apart from ordinary human relationship. As in the case of the Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean also avers:

To serve my father, as I would require my son to serve me; to serve my prince, as I require my minister to serve me; to serve my elder brother, as I would require my younger brother to serve me; to set the example in behaving to a friend, as I would require him to behave to me. [13:4]

This idea is in complete agreement with that of the Great Learning. Thus, the way of the superior man may be compared to that takes place when traveling, when we want to go to a distant place, we must start from the nearest point; when we want to ascend a height, we must begin from below.

The intriguing idea of "spiritual beings" (kuei-shen)²⁵ is introduced in chapter 16. What must be noted here is that the kuei-shen, being the substance of all things, displays its (their) own power abundantly in spite of our inability to sense their presence among us. Therefore, synonymous with the saying of the Great Learning, "What truly is within will be manifested without," the Doctrine of the Mean avers, "Such is the manifestness of what is minute! Such is the impossibility of repressing the outgoings of sincerity!" [16:5] As we have mentioned already, when speaking of spiritual beings, the notion of Sincerity represents the disposition of "oughtness" of our heart in memorial rites for our ancestors, etc.

In this context it is important to note that in the Confucian practice of virtue the memorial rite for one's ancestors is stressed because it is the ritual expression of one's filial piety. Seen in this light, filial piety is the most fundamental virtue among all others. Using the example of filial piety of the sage kings, Shun and Wu, chapters 17 to 19 extend the scope of the virtue for obtaining the Heavenly appointment (t'ien-ming). Thus, it is said here that the one of great virtue will surely receive the appointment of Heaven. In this way, the notion of Sincerity plays an important role in connecting the human with Heaven. What is further mentioned here is the reverential attitude to the "Lord on High" (Shang-ti):

By the ceremonies of the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth they served God [Shang-ti, Lord on High], and by the ceremonies of the ancestral temple they sacrificed to their ancestors. He who understands the ceremonies of the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, and the meaning of the several sacrifices to ancestors, would find the government of a kingdom as easy as to look into his palm! [19:6]

The reverential attitude or service to the Lord on High is important here because it is rooted in the proper knowledge and practice of the virtue of filial piety, which would amply equip a ruler for all the duties of his government.

Therefore, when the Confucian belief is taken into consideration that all human nature is imparted with cardinal virtues by Heaven, the way of cultivation of one's personal life takes on a crucial function in the Confucian theory of learning. In chapter 20, after narrowing down all of the virtues to benevolence (jen) and righteousness (i), the text goes on to say that self-cultivation is to be done through the Way, and the cultivation of the Way is to be done through the virtue of benevolence. Since benevolence is the distinguishing character of the human,²⁶ the greatest application of it is in being affectionate toward one's relatives. Moreover, since righteousness is the principle of setting things right and proper, its greatest application is found in honoring the worthy. The relative degree of affection we ought to feel for our relatives, and the relative degrees of honoring the worthy, give rise to the rules of propriety (li). Therefore the ruler must not fail to cultivate his own personal life. Wishing to cultivate his personal life, he must not fail to serve his parents. Wishing to serve his parents, he must not fail to know man. Wishing to know man, he must not fail to know Heaven. The well-known Confucian Five Relations and Three Bonds are noted here in this context of universality:

The duties of universal obligation are five, and the virtues wherewith they are practised are three. The duties are those between sovereign and minister, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder brother and younger, and those belonging to the intercourse of friends. Those five are the duties of universal obligation. Knowledge, magnanimity, and energy, these three,²⁷ are the virtues universally binding. And the means by which they carry (the duties) into practice is singleness. [20:8]

In spite of the Confucian belief that the innate goodness of human nature is imparted by Heaven, there are different types of learning due to one's own innate quality, such as sage and worthy-one. Thus, while some are born with the knowledge of these virtues, others must learn them through diligent study, and yet others through harder work. But when the knowledge is once acquired, it reaches the same end. Accordingly, while some practice these virtues naturally and easily, others practice them for their advantage, and still others practice them with great effort and difficulty. But when the achievement is made, it comes to the same result. The text then goes on to give the so-called "nine standards" by which to administer the empire, its states, and the families: cultivating the personal life, honoring the worthy, being affectionate to relatives, being respectful toward the great ministers, identifying oneself with the welfare of the whole body of officers, treating the common people as one's own children, attracting the various artisans, showing tenderness to strangers from far countries, and extending kindly and awesome influence on the feudal lords. But the way by which they are followed is one, i.e., Sincerity.

At this juncture an extensive section on Sincerity follows. The ultimate goal of Confucian learning, as we have already seen in the Great Learning, is in the service of the world. But the beginning of learning is at the very root of personhood:

When those in inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people. There is a way to obtain the confidence of the sovereign; -- if one is not trusted by his friends, he will not get the confidence of his sovereign. There is a way to being trusted by one's friends; -- if one is not obedient to his parents, he will not be true to friends. There is a way to being obedient to one's parents; -- if one, on turning his thoughts in upon himself, finds a want of sincerity, he will not be obedient to his parents. There is a way to the attainment of sincerity in one's self; -- if a man do not understand what is good, he will not attain sincerity in himself. [20:17]

A discourse on Sincerity immediately follows this section from the Doctrine of the Mean:

Sincerity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men. He who possesses sincerity, is he who, without an effort, hits what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought; -- he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the (right) way. He who attains to sincerity, is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast. [20:18]

When ch'eng is spoken in relation to the state of sagehood, it is the Absolute Sincerity, and when it is spoken with the way of learning, it is the Sincerity Acquired. Using the same idea as in the previous chapter, here the Doctrine of the Mean shows that Sincerity once attained, there will be no distinction--even though there may be different degrees of practice. The sage is the one who naturally embodies the Way of Heaven, while those who are below the sage attain Sincerity through self-cultivation. If the state of sagehood is in harmony between Heaven and man, or the Mean, then Sincerity is the quality that brings them together. Sincerity is not just a state of mind, but an active force that transforms and completes things, and draws the human and Heaven together. Insofar as this union is mystical, it tends to be transcendental, but its practical aspect is never forgotten. In fact, if Sincerity is to be true, it must involve strenuous efforts at learning and earnest efforts at practice. Thus the Doctrine of the Mean goes on to say:

To this attainment there are requisite the extensive study of what is good, accurate inquiry about it, careful reflection on it, the clear discrimination of it, and the earnest practice of it. [20:19]

But these five "requisites" (study, inquiry, thinking, sifting, and practice) are simply the practical methods of learning to be a sage counseled for those who wish to attain Sincerity. If one follows

these counsels, then even a stupid person will surely become intelligent; and even a weak person will become strong. In this vein the text continues:

When we have intelligence resulting from sincerity, this condition is to be ascribed to nature; when we have sincerity resulting from intelligence, this condition is to be ascribed to instruction. But given the sincerity, and there shall be the intelligence; given the intelligence, and there shall be the sincerity. [21]

According to the standard interpretation, while the first part of each sentence, "intelligence resulting from sincerity" and "given the sincerity, and there shall be the intelligence," is spoken in relation to the born sage, the second part, "sincerity resulting from intelligence" and "given the intelligence, and there shall be the sincerity," is meant in relation to the one who becomes a sage through learning. In the case of the sage, who is naturally in accord with the Nature of Heaven, right judgement naturally flows out. But in the case of those who are not yet sages, right understanding is the basis for the attainment of Sincerity. As we have seen in the Great Learning, the investigation of things and the extension of knowledge are pre-requisites for making one's will sincere, and so form the basis of Confucian self-cultivation. The relation between Intelligence and Sincerity received tremendous attention by Neo-Confucianists in the Sung period. Let it suffice here merely to mention that Intelligence is understood as the means to attain Sincerity, while the Absolute Sincerity of the sage sets the norm to be followed for those who want to become a sage. But when the most complete Sincerity is attained there will be no further distinction between a "born" sage and an "attained" sage. Therefore, in this line, the Doctrine of the Mean affirms:

It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can give its full development to his nature. Able to give its full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able

to give its full development to the nature of other men, he can give their full development to the natures of creatures and things. Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a ternion. [22]

Obviously according to the mind of James Legge, it was not easy to describe the characteristics of Sincerity without imagining a personified Sincerity, i.e., a sage. This was also true for the ancient commentators on the same paragraph. Certainly, this paragraph speaks about the sage who was born in complete harmony with nature. But the focus of attention here is on the characteristics of Sincerity itself, not on the one who has attained Sincerity. Therefore, this paragraph explains the results of sagehood and how it influences others to develop their own nature to be in complete accord with the way of Heaven. By being manifested naturally in the sage's nature, the sage participates in the transforming and nourishing functions of Heaven and Earth, since the complete attainment of Sincerity is nothing other than the attainment of harmony with Heaven. This is "the state of equilibrium and harmony existing in perfection," and is also called the Mean. Whether innate or attained, the sage enjoys unity and complete harmony with the way of Heaven through this Absolute Sincerity. Thus, the following paragraph gives the same attention to the attainment of Sincerity:

Next to the above is he who cultivates to the utmost the shoots (of goodness) in him. From those he can attain to the possession of sincerity. This sincerity becomes apparent. From being apparent, it becomes manifest. From being manifest, it becomes brilliant. Brilliant, it affects others. Affecting others, they are changed by

it. Changed by it, they are transformed. It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can transform. [23]

The metaphysical basis for the attainment of complete Sincerity, through learning to be a sage or self-cultivation, is the substance of human nature as imparted by Heaven. There is a natural flow from Sincerity to transformation, but this is not a series of temporal sequences to be followed. Rather this is the effect of complete Sincerity. Innate Sincerity manifests itself in spite of any external disturbance, and therefore, performs its transforming power. Thus, both the above and the previously cited paragraphs provide metaphysical as well as epistemological structure of Absolute Sincerity for the later Confucianists, and continue to give us important ideas about Sincerity:

It is characteristic of the most entire sincerity to be able to foreknow. When a nation or family is about to flourish, there are sure to be happy omens; and when it is about to perish, there are sure to be unlucky omens. (Such events are) seen in the milfoil and tortoise, and affect the movements of the four limbs. When calamity or happiness is about to come, the good shall certainly be foreknown by him, and the evil also. Therefore the individual possessed of the most complete sincerity is like a spirit. [24]

Because of its complete accordance to the way of Heaven, Sincerity manifests its power to foreknow. This foreknowledge attained by complete Sincerity is not a magical power to manipulate the natural flow of things or events, but rather a power to be exercised in bringing goodness to the State and the world. Therefore the effect of complete Sincerity is mysterious. Thus, the text follows with a rather exalted attribution to Sincerity:

Sincerity is that whereby self-completion is effected, and (its) way is that by which man must direct himself. Sincerity is the end and beginning of things; without

sincerity there would be nothing. On this account, the superior man regards the attainment of sincerity as the most excellent thing. The possessor of sincerity does not merely accomplish the self-completion of himself. With this quality he completes (other men and) things (also). The completing himself (shows his) perfect virtue. The completing (other men and) things (show his) knowledge. (Both these are) virtues belonging to the nature, and (this is) the way by which a union is effected of the external and internal. Therefore, whenever he -- (the entirely sincere man) -- employs them, -- (that it, these virtues, -- their action will be) right. [25]

What is stated in the first sentence is that Sincerity is the natural principle of how a thing is to be, or how a thing is to be accomplished by itself, which in turn is in complete accordance with its given nature. The way of Heaven is nothing other than the self-completion of that nature. Therefore, the true principle of Heaven is Sincerity. In the understanding of the Doctrine of the Mean, everything has its own principle imparted by Heaven, and so the text can say that Sincerity is the beginning and end of things. But the term "thing" (wu) must be understood in the Confucian perspective of learning to be a sage. Every effort at learning to be a sage is this type of "thing." In this sense, Sincerity means "being true to oneself" in employing the idea of making the will sincere from the Great Learning. Therefore, when one is successful in exterminating every single selfish desire in his mind, so as to be true to himself, then every effort will follow naturally in the attainment of complete Sincerity. When seen from the point of view of the material universe, Sincerity is the metaphysical foundation of all existence; while from the point of view of moral cultivation, Sincerity is the epistemological foundation of Confucian learning. Viewed in this sense, the attainment of Sincerity is the highest goal of learning to become a sage.

When it is said that Sincerity is self-completion, this does not mean that the self-completion is for the sake of oneself, which is hardly imaginable, but rather, that attributes of transforming and

nurturing effects of Sincerity are in process, and become the principle of unity for the external and the internal. In describing all effects of complete Sincerity, the Doctrine of the Mean states:

Hence to entire sincerity there belongs ceaselessness. Not ceasing, it continues long. Continuing long, it evidences itself. Evidencing itself, it reaches far. Reaching far, it becomes large and substantial. Large and substantial, it becomes high and brilliant. Large and substantial; -- this is how it contains (all) things. High and brilliant; -- this is how it overspreads (all) things. Reaching far and continuing long; -- this is how it perfects (all) things. So large and substantial, (the individual possessing it) is the co-equal of Earth. So high and brilliant, it makes him the co-equal of Heaven. So far-reaching and long-continuing, it makes him infinite. Such being its nature, without any display, it becomes manifested; without any movement, it produces changes; and without any effort, it accomplishes its ends. The Way of Heaven and Earth may be completely declared in one sentence. -- They are without any doubleness, and so they produce things in a manner that is unfathomable. The Way of Heaven and Earth is large and substantial, high and brilliant, far-reaching and long-enduring. [26:1-8]

This chapter continues to develop the mysterious effects of Sincerity. What is attributed to the Way of Heaven and Earth, now is attributed also to the merits of complete Sincerity. Because Sincerity is in perfect accord with the way of Heaven, and is equated with the Way or the Mean as the movement of the universe which continues without ceasing, Sincerity also advances its influence to transform and to nourish others without ceasing. The process described here is not only the process of perfecting virtue, but also the grasping of the mysterious effects of perfect Sincerity.

Sagehood is nothing but the complete possession of Sincerity. Therefore, as stated in chapter 27:

How great is the path proper to the Sage! Like overflowing water, it sends forth and nourishes all things, and rises up to the height of heaven. [27:1-2]

Honoring the virtuous nature and following the path of inquiry and study with a refined and subtle mind is the way followed by a superior man in his attainment of sagehood. The embodiment of entire Sincerity in a sage or the attainment of perfect Sincerity by a superior man must be manifested in the actual governing of the state. Chapters 28 to 30 develop the idea of the government ruled by a sage-king. These show that the way of the true ruler must be rooted in his own personal life and be attested by the following common people. What Confucius did, according to the text, was to transmit the ancient traditions of Yao and Shun, and mold them after the luminous systems of King Wen and King Wu. These ancient sage kings confirmed the natural order governing the revolution of the seasons in Heaven above, and followed the principles governing land and water below.

Moreover, the Doctrine of the Mean attributed the attainment of sagehood to Confucius. Thus, the text continues its development of the idea of sage-king in chapter 31, describing the sagely qualities manifested:

It is only he, possessed of all sagely qualities that can exist under heaven, who shows himself quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence, and all embracing knowledge, fitted to exercise rule; magnanimous, generous, benign, and mild, fitted to exercises forbearance; impulsive, energetic, firm, and enduring, fitted to maintain a firm hold; self-adjusted, grave, never swerving from the Mean, and correct, fitted to command reverence; accomplished, distinctive, concentrative, and searching, fitted to exercise discrimination. [31:1]

This is a description of a perfect man, or an ideal man in the Confucian perspective. The paragraph is really just a paraphrase of the description of Sincerity already given in chapters 23 and 26. The

important thing to notice here is that sagehood is interchangeable with absolute Sincerity when it is possessed by a person. In this vein chapter 32 says:

It is only the individual possessed of the most entire sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can adjust the great invariable relations of mankind, establish the great fundamental virtues of humanity, and know the transforming and nurturing operations of Heaven and Earth; -- shall this individual have any being or anything beyond himself on which he depends? Call him man in his ideal, how earnest is he! Call him an abyss, how deep is he! Call him Heaven, how vast is he! Who can know him, but he who is indeed quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence, and all-embracing knowledge, possessing all heavenly virtue? [32]

This text illustrates that the virtue of the sage is the same as the Way of true Sincerity. This section of the Doctrine of the Mean is the climax of its development of the notion of Sincerity. The virtue of a sage is Sincerity in its utmost manifestation, so that he can exercise in all human relationships the way of Heaven and Earth. Establishing the great fundamental virtue of jen, said to be the great Mean, utmost Sincerity participates in the transforming and nurturing functions of Heaven and Earth. Having said that sagehood is nothing but complete Sincerity, it is also true that only complete Sincerity can recognize the perfect virtue of the sage. Finally, this whole spectrum of ideas expressed in the Doctrine of the Mean, concludes in chapter 33 by using a series of quotations from the Book of Odes. These recapitulate the characteristics of the superior man as he is on the way of learning to be a sage.

Expository Recapitulation

Following this detailed exegesis of the text a brief recapitulation of the major points made will hopefully aid in a clearer comprehension of the significance of ch'eng in these two key books. As we

noted at the outset, the Chinese character ch'eng is normally rendered as "sincere" or "sincerity," but, in the context of the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean the term ch'eng has a connotation that goes beyond that of its usual translations. Whether it is translated as "true" or as "sincere," ch'eng definitely points to human reality which is not only the basis of self-knowledge but also the ground of the human participation with Heaven. This implies clearly Sincerity's cosmic and moral significance, as well as the essential force which unites the human person with Heaven. Keeping in mind that this unity of human and Heaven is a potentiality to be reached through the realization of authentic human nature, we will now spell out the meaning of Sincerity in the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean in relation to the key Confucian notions of Heaven, Nature, Virtues, and Learning.

1. Sincerity and Heaven

From the perspective of the Doctrine of the Mean, it is natural to assert that human knowledge cannot be obtained without the knowledge of Heaven. What is represented in the concept of t'ien (Heaven) is one's awareness of being in a vast cosmological system. In the history of Chinese thought Heaven has undergone a complex development. When natural appearances of the external heaven were incorporated into the elaboration of the human moral nature, Heaven became the source of the Absolute Principle of Nature (Universe).

In the Confucian mode of thinking, there are three intrinsically related layers of the notion of Heaven: religiosity, natural order, and morality. What lies behind the Confucian moral world is this Confucian religiosity, and the outer world is the manifestation of this moral world. The natural order of the observable cosmos is not only the physical movement of the universe, but also the manifestation of the moral will of Heaven. The Doctrine of the Mean played a definite role in this development and provided the metaphysical foundation for Confucian thought. Because the external movement of the universe is the outer manifestation of the innate moral structure of Heaven, human

behavior and the world's moral order must be patterned on the intrinsic metaphysical structure of Heaven itself.

The foundation of this premise was provided by the belief found in the Book of Changes that Heaven represents what is "great and originating, penetrating, advantageous, correct and firm."²⁸ "Heaven, it is motion, (gives the idea of) strength. The superior man, in accordance with this, nerves himself to ceaseless activity."²⁹ Heaven is the supreme Ruler who deserves worship, oftentimes requires sacrifices, and governs the entire formation of the universe in birth and in the nurturing of myriad things. Heaven as the Supreme Subject, therefore, is reinterpreted as the Mean in the Doctrine of the Mean. The Mean is the Centrality, yet is constituted of Equilibrium and Harmony, so it provides the substance of Heaven, and thus it becomes the foundation of the existence of Heaven.

While Equilibrium provides the impartiality of Heaven, Harmony provides the orderly movement of the universe. What has been achieved in the Doctrine of the Mean in regard to the concept of Heaven is far more than a systematic development of the concept. Unlike Heaven in the Book of Changes, Heaven in the Doctrine of the Mean is not only something to be internalized through observation and study, but also is to be immanently present in human nature itself. On this basis, the Doctrine of the Mean develops the attributes of Heaven as the tao. While Centrality and Harmony provide the ontological foundation of its formalistic principle of Heavenly tao, the attributes of "extensive and deep," "high and brilliant," "infinite," and "evident" are the operational principles of Heavenly tao.

In this context the notion of Sincerity becomes the single-most unifying point of all concepts. In fact, the actual content of all other Confucian concepts is uniquely condensed in the dynamic notion of Sincerity. Furthermore, the Doctrine of the Mean portrays Sincerity as the substantial virtue of Heavenly tao. Sincerity is the foundational substance of all existence. Sincerity is the end and beginning of things, and that without it there would be nothing. When Sincerity is said to be the quality of completing oneself and things, and of knowledge, Sincerity then becomes the principle of

Heaven in its outer manifestation. When it is viewed from its internal structure, Sincerity is the foundational principle of all acts of knowing and comprehending. When it is viewed from outside, Sincerity is the principle which makes Heaven possible for its ceaseless activity of origination and transformation. Sincerity means the impartial and pure desire of Heaven. While the Mean represents the structural aspect of Heaven, Sincerity represents the moral substance of Heaven.

2. Sincerity and Human Nature

The concept of *hsing* (Nature) in Confucian thought, as with all other Confucian concepts, is determined strictly by the notion of Heaven. The notion of Heaven, however, does not enjoy the highest importance in Confucian philosophy, but rather simply provides a framework for these other concepts. Since Confucianism can be said to be a study of human nature from the point of view of virtuous Heaven, then the discussion of human nature takes the central position in the Confucian system. What Confucius did when he transmitted the ancient traditions was to open the horizon for the Doctrine of the Mean to employ the quality of human character in the discussion of Nature denoting the human moral nature. Furthermore, all the concrete, yet idealized human virtues portrayed in the Analects are incorporated into the metaphysical core of the Doctrine of the Mean, thus showing its proper place as the source of all human moral behavior.

As the Doctrine of the Mean established its ground in saying "What Heaven has conferred is called the Nature [1:1]," the subsequent theories of human nature in turn became the topics for the principal debates among Confucianists throughout history. Nature, in the Doctrine of the Mean, is both the substance and the principle of all things. In this way Nature inherits the characteristic attributes of Heaven. Because Heaven is the producer of myriads of things, the individual nature of the thing is the manifestation of the totality of the principle of Nature. Therefore, the substance of the individual nature of a thing does not differ from the Heavenly Nature. The moral principle inheres in the individual nature as well. In this way nature becomes the subject of the human moral behavior in this world. Nature in the Doctrine of the Mean means the totality of the human mind as inherited

from Heaven. Therefore, the human mind becomes the subject of both knowledge and behavior, but in order to maintain its original substance conferred by Heaven, the mind must be placed firmly in the state of Equilibrium and Harmony. The Mean in the mind is the prerequisite of all moral behavior. In other words, the constituted internal substance of the Mean is Sincerity. In this way Sincerity becomes an attainable state through the concrete manifestations of the internal structure of the Mean.

The rectification of the mind in the Great Learning is coined metaphysically as the Mean, and the sincerity of the will in the Great Learning is imbued here in the term Sincerity. Even though the individual nature is the totality of being as imparted by Heaven, this nature can complete its original existence and attribution only through Sincerity. Without Sincerity nothing can continue its existence and thus Sincerity acts as the foundation principle of one's perfection. Furthermore, Sincerity is the original substance of Nature, and is also the operative principle of Nature. Ontologically then, Sincerity signifies the power of completion of things, and epistemologically, it is the power to comprehend the Heavenly Principle. Nature is the totality of the Heavenly Principle, whose metaphysical structure is the Mean, and whose constituted substance is Sincerity. Nature is constituted by Sincerity, and it will manifest itself through Sincerity. When Nature is manifested fully through the outgoings of Sincerity,³⁰ it is not self-confined, but participates in cosmological harmony.

3. Sincerity and Virtues

Thus, we see that the Confucian metaphysics is a moral metaphysics; it is a moral awareness based on the understanding of Heaven and Nature. The Doctrine of the Mean provides a comprehensive system for this moral metaphysics. The primordial format of this moral metaphysics is rooted in the understanding of the Heavenly Principle and human nature. As we have seen above, because the inner principle of Heaven is imparted in human nature as a form of moral command, the unity between Heaven and the human provides the basic structure of Confucian consciousness of virtue. In fact, the concept of virtue comes from the basic structure of "Heavenly Principle - Nature -

Tao." The moral consciousness is not something that will be attained a posteriori through learning, but something intrinsically imparted a priori.

While the internal structure of this moral consciousness is the Mean (or, Centrality, Equilibrium) and Harmony, the essence of this consciousness is Sincerity. Because the Mean is the fundamental structure of the moral consciousness, and furthermore, since Harmony is the manifestation of this Mean in action, the state of the Mean is nothing but that of Sincerity. This Mean can be maintained only through being rooted in Sincerity and being supported by Sincerity. In other words, while the Mean is the formative structure of the moral consciousness, Sincerity is the essential substance of that consciousness. Therefore, when it comes to a sphere of moral action, since the human will comes from Nature, the principle mentioned above likewise applies, namely, that Sincerity is the essence, and the Mean is the structure of the will. When the human will is governed by selfish desire, it will be a non-sincere will, and so will cause immoral behavior.

The sincere will is the self-manifestation of Nature. There it is intimately connected to the ideal image of the human being, or, to use the Confucian metaphor, the profound person.³¹ The profound person is the one who has arrived at the perfect state of Sincerity through life-long practice of learning. The fundamental aspect of the Confucian learning process is expressed in the Doctrine of the Mean as "to be sincere," which in the Great Learning it is called "sincerity of the will." The Doctrine of the Mean acknowledges that although each person is endowed with inner morality, the levels of awareness are not absolutely equal among all persons. Some are born with this inner moral knowledge, others learn it through study, and still others learn it through painful experience. As a result, some will practice self-cultivation with a natural ease, others practice it with a learned facility, and still others practice it only through difficult effort. Nevertheless, the Doctrine of the Mean insists that when this knowledge is once acquired, it comes to the same thing and when the achievement is made, it comes to the same end. What really matters is not the quality of a person's native endowments or the nature of his immediate surroundings, but how the person makes the best use of them.

4. Sincerity and Learning

As we have seen, the concrete way of realizing the ideal of sagehood is through self-cultivation, and we must remember that the Confucian idea of such self-cultivation never stops at the individual or personal level, but necessarily involves the individual's relationship with both other human beings and with Heaven. In other words, self-cultivation involves a progression which starts with knowledge of Heaven: the knowledge of Heaven implies the knowledge of man, the knowledge of man involves serving one's parents, and so forth. Here, the basic structure of self-cultivation is not a set of isolated moral codes; rather, it is a continuous process in which each step must be accomplished. The entire process of self-cultivation can be best seen as we try to understand more fully the meaning of Sincerity.

The Doctrine of the Mean, in accordance with the Mencian line of thinking, states that Sincerity is the essential unity which enables one to relate to Heaven. It is through Sincerity that the way of Heaven and the way of man are intrinsically related. For this reason, the knowledge of Heaven and the knowledge of man are not two qualitatively different things. The Doctrine of the Mean and Mencius both state that Heaven is sincere by nature, and what the human individual has to do is to learn how to be sincere. Underlying this view is the Confucian insistence on the centrality of education. One must exert continuous effort to realize his inner morality, as a duty both to himself as well as to Heaven. The Doctrine of the Mean suggests that the way to be sincere must be studied extensively, inquired into accurately, thought over carefully, sifted clearly, and practiced earnestly. Despite the moral propensity of one's inner nature, one must do his utmost to enlighten himself so that he can be truly human.

Since enlightenment as a form of self-education can eventually lead to Sincerity, Sincerity, as an irreducible human reality, necessarily implies enlightenment. Nevertheless, we must not form a mistaken notion that education is superfluous because Sincerity inevitably entails enlightenment. The classic aphorism, "given enlightenment, there will be sincerity" refers to "moral effort," whereas

"given sincerity, there will be enlightenment" refers to "original substance."³² It is inconceivable that Sincerity does not entail enlightenment, but only through education can enlightenment lead to Sincerity.

The primary concern of Confucian education is to make manifest the moral qualities inherent in our nature. Its aim is thus to raise the level of the person's moral self-awareness. In so doing, it is important to note that the educational locus becomes the quest for self-knowledge. Strictly speaking, this form of learning can never be imposed from outside. Without the willing participation of the learner, no knowledge or experience can be transmitted. Yet, Sincerity is by nature self-enlightening, since it is the ontological basis upon which the moral resolution of the learner becomes both the necessary and sufficient condition for education. In other words, Sincerity in the Confucian mode of thinking is a necessary part of the process of knowing and understanding. In the logical system of the Great Learning, the whole process of learning is displayed in the "eight steps." The Great Learning emphasizes the significance of Sincerity in its connection with learning and knowing. In other words, Sincerity has not only moral metaphysical meaning but also epistemological significance.

In summary, the assertion that human nature is imparted from Heaven suggests an ontological basis upon which the identification of human nature with the reality of Heaven becomes possible. Since this identification is in essence the human way, its actualization then depends upon human efforts. To actualize this underlying identity, however, does not transcend humanity but works through it. The person who embodies Sincerity to the utmost is also the most genuine human being, and it is in this sense then that he completely realizes his own nature. The person who realizes his own nature to the full becomes a paradigm of authentic humanity.³³

The process of attaining Sincerity through self-cultivation, as well as that of becoming absolutely sincere, can thus be envisioned as a process toward an ever-deepening subjectivity. This process makes a deep penetration into one's own ground of existence. In so doing, it helps to bring forth a more genuine and authentic manifestation of one's humanity. Simultaneously it extends

beyond the confines of one's physical self and takes in others as an integral part of one's own quest for self-realization. Seen in this light, Sincerity necessarily has a directional aspect. Once the direction is determined, it cannot but reveal its path. When the path becomes clear, its brilliance radiates. As a result, the person who possesses Sincerity moves, changes, and transforms others. This means that Sincerity is not only a state of being but also a process of becoming. Sincerity as a state of being signifies the ultimate reality of human nature and, as a process of becoming, the necessary way of actualizing that reality in concrete, ordinary human affairs. Therefore, Sincerity symbolizes not only what a person in an ultimate sense ought to be, but also what a person in a concrete way can eventually become.

Endnotes

1. It should be noted that the English word "Sincerity" is a rather poor approximation of the Chinese character ch'eng. As one of the ancient Chinese dictionaries, Shou-wen chieh-tzu [Explanation of Words and Elucidation of Characters] composed by Hsü Shen about A.D. 100, shows, the character ch'eng connotes honesty, genuineness, and truthfulness, etc. Etymologically it also connotes completion, actualization, or perfection.

2. Compiled by Chu Hsi with the assistance of Lü Tsu-ch'ien (1137-1181), it serves as a summary of, and introduction to, the vast literature of Neo-Confucian philosophy. Chu Hsi collected important passages from the writings of the four of the Five Masters of the earlier period of Sung dynasty (960-1279), and arranged them according to the blueprint of the Confucian learning process laid out in the Great Learning. He also included a chapter on the doctrines of Buddhism and Taoism, pointing out ways in which they deviated from the Confucian Way. An English translation available is by Wing-tsit Chan, Reflections on Things at Hand: The Neo-Confucian Anthology (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1967).

3. This short essay is found in many other collections, and has been translated into several European languages. The diagram, of which the essay is an explanation, is not necessary for the understanding of the philosophical idea in general or for the understanding of the essay in particular. In fact the Explanation has provided the essential outline of Neo-Confucian metaphysics and

cosmology in the last eight hundred years. Few short Chinese treatises like this have exerted so much influence. For an English translation, see Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 463-4.

4. Chin-ssu lu, "Preface by Lü Tsu-ch'ien." See Wing-tsit Chan, Reflections on Things at Hand, p. 3.

5. Wing-tsit Chan explains the meaning of ch'eng as follows: "The quality that brings man and Nature together is ch'eng, sincerity, truth or reality. The extensive discussion of this idea in the Classic makes it at once psychological, metaphysical, and religious. Sincerity is not just a state of mind, but an active force that is always transforming things and completing things and drawing man and Heaven (t'ien) together in the same current." See Wing-tsit Chan, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy, p. 96.

6. Thus, we hold that this notion of Sincerity would be comparable to the Taoist concept of wu-wei (No-Action) and the Buddhist concept of ching (Tranquility).

7. See, for example, Book I (Summary of the Rules of Propriety), Book III (The Than Kung), Book XI (The Single Victim at the Border Sacrifice).

8. See, for example, Book XVIII (Record on the Subject of Education), Book XIX (Record of Music), Book XXV (A Summary Account of Sacrifice), Book XXVI (The Different Teaching of the Different Kings).

9. See, for example, Book XIX (Record of Music), Book XXVI (The

Different Teaching of the Different Kings).

10. Among the Confucian Classics, the only two treatises which speak directly about the notion of Sincerity are the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean, though there is one section in Mencius, [4a:12], in which ch'eng appears. However, in this context it closely parallels the Doctrine of the Mean, [20:17-18], and therefore, it is not necessary to do a separate investigation of ch'eng in Mencius.

11. The "canonical text" was traditionally believed to be Confucius' own words as transmitted by his pupil Tsang Shan (505-c.436 B.C.), while the chapters of "commentary" were believed to be the commentary of Tsang Shan as recorded by his pupil Tzu-ssu (492-431 B.C.), the grandson of Confucius. These traditions, which were based on Chu Hsi's commentary, were merely suppositions unsupported by any statements in earlier writings. No matter how difficult it might be to decide its date and authorship, it was clearly Chu Hsi who made the text important in the history of Confucianism. Prior to Chu Hsi the treatise had been published without any specification of chapters and paragraphs. We now have two editions of the Great Learning: the text as it appeared in the Book of Rites and that arranged by Chu Hsi. It has been considered orthodox to follow Chu Hsi's text and his commentary in the study of the Great Learning for the later generations of Confucianists.

12. The Hsiao-hsüeh was compiled by Chu Hsi from the various sources of the Classical texts for the education for the young.

13. Ta-hsüeh chang-chü [Commentary on the Great Learning],

"Preface."

14. The greatest change which Ch'eng I (1033-1107) introduced into the Great Learning was to change ch'in (to love) of the old text into hsin (to renovate). The reason why Chu Hsi approved and followed this change is clearly seen in his own arrangement of the second chapter of the commentary. Against this change, Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529) and his disciples followed the original reading of ch'in. Wang insisted that the hsin in the phrase "To stir up the new people," means that the people make themselves be renovated, not that they are renovated by others as Chu Hsi had interpreted.

15. All citations of the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean will given merely by chapter and verse, and the translation used is that of James Legge, as found in his Confucian Analects, The Great Learning and the Doctrine of The Mean, Chinese Text; Translation with Exegetical Notes and Dictionary of all Characters, (New York: Dover Publications, 1971 [Republication of the second revised edition, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893 as Volume I in "The Chinese Classics" Series]). The parenthesis in this particular citation is James Legge's own gloss on the text given for clarification of its meaning. Though Legge's translation might be considered technically outdated from a sinologist's point of view, however since it has been so widely used in Western literature we feel that it would be more helpful to help the non-expert track the pertinent vocabulary.

16. The parenthesis is James Legge's gloss. In the opening paragraph he translated tao as "teaches." The same character is

used here for "what is taught," but their contextual meanings are different. Here, tao means the Way. Therefore, "To know what is first and what is last will lead one near to the Way," could be a better translation.

17. Ta hsüeh chang-chu, Commentary on the canonical text, 3; the translation is from Legge's footnote found on p. 357.

18. This paragraph of Chu Hsi is regarded as one of the best statements in which we can find the core of the Ch'eng-Chu School's doctrine of the investigation of things and the extension of knowledge.

19. Book of Odes [or Book of Poetry], #235, English translation by James Legge, The She King or the Book Of Poetry (two parts), vol. 4 of the Chinese Classics, rev. ed., (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960).

20. The principle of the measuring square represents the key idea of this chapter, and is a principle of simple reciprocity: Do unto others as you expect others should do unto you.

21. Cf. Ch'uan-hsi lu, sec. 135. See Wing-tsit Chan's translation of Wang Yang-ming in Instructions for Practical Living and Other Neo-Confucian Writings, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 98-99.

22. Chu Hsi accepted the account in Ssu-ma Ch'ien's Shih-chi (Records of the Historian) that Confucius' grandson Tzu-ssu (491-431 B.C.) was the author. Many modern scholars, however, refuse to accept this theory, and rather date it around 200 B.C. The work is not consistent either in style or in thought and it may well be a

work of more than one person over a considerable period in the fifth or fourth century B.C.

23. Cheng Hsüan's [127-200] Li-chi cheng-i [Correct Meanings of the Book of Rites] in the Thirteen Classics Series.

24. Chung-yung chang-chü [Commentary on the Doctrine of the Mean], "Introductory Remarks," from Legge's translation, p. 382.

25. The ordinary usage of the term kuei-shen means spiritual beings. Kuei signifies a "ghost" or "demon," while shen signifies "spirits" or a "spirit."

26. The character for benevolence is jen is a composite of the ideograms for a "human individual" plus the number "two," thus implying the relationship between two persons.

27. For these three, another translation would read: wisdom (chi), benevolence (jen), and courage (yung).

28. Book of Changes, hexagram #1 (ch'ien). Cf. James Legge, The I Ching (New York: Dover Publication, 1963), p. 57.

29. Book of Changes, Commentary of the hexagram #1. Cf. James Legge, The I Ching, p. 267. Another translation, that of Cary F. Baynes (based on Richard Wilhelm's German translation) reads, "The movement of Heaven is full of power. Thus the superior man makes himself strong and untiring." The I Ching or Book of Changes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), The Richard Wilhelm translation from Chinese into German, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes, (New York: Pantheon, 1950), p. 6.

30. Cf. Doctrine of the Mean, 16:5.

31. In this context Tu Wei-ming translates the term chün-tzu

(superior man) as "profound person." See his Centrality and Commonality (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1989).

32. Cf. Doctrine of the Mean, 21.

33. In this context see the work of Antonio S. Cua, especially his article, "The Concept of the Paradigmatic Individual in the Ethics of Confucius," Inquiry 14 (1971): 41-55; and his book, Dimensions of Moral Creativity: Paradigms, Principles, and Ideals, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), in which he develops the notion of the Confucian concept of chün-tzu, or Superior man, as a paradigmatic moral person in the community.

Glossary of Chinese Terms

*In order of initial appearance in the article

ch'eng	Sincerity
tao	The Way
wu-wei	No Action
ching	Tranquility
ching	Canonical text
chwan	Commentary, on the canonical text
Ta-hsüeh	<u>Great Learning</u>
hsiao-hsüeh	"small learning" (education for the young)
ch'in	to love
hsin	to renovate, stir up the people
Chung-Yung	<u>Doctrine of the Mean</u>
ying	to use (to employ)
chung	centrality, equilibrium
hsing	nature
chiao	instruction
t'ien-ming	Mandate of Heaven
ho	harmony
kuei	ghost or demon
shen	spirits, or a spirit.
kuei-shen	spirits, spiritual beings
Shang-ti	Lord of Heaven
jen	benevolence
i	righteousness

li	rules of propriety
chi	wisdom
yung	courage
wu	thing
t'ien	Heaven
ch'ien	hexagram #1, <u>Book of Changes</u>
chün-tzu	Superior person, prince, gentleman

**in Roman alphabetical order

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