

THE NOTION OF SINCERITY (S NG/CH'ENG) FROM A NEO-CONFUCIAN METAPHYSICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Often Neo-Confucianism has been studied primarily through the lens of concepts such as *tao* or *ri*. While *Tao* and *ri* provide a metaphysical basis for Neo-Confucian thought, they suffer from a certain lack of clarity due to the Taoist and Buddhist influences these concepts invariably carry. Moreover, *tao* and *ri* lack an adequate epistemological basis which would translate the ideals contained in Confucian thought into the practical moral living which had always been the goal and hallmark of Confucianism from its earliest days. An in-depth study of the Confucian notion of sincerity (*ch'eng*) can remedy these deficiencies by providing a more unified understanding of not only this concept itself, but also of Neo-Confucian thought as a whole. Furthermore, using sincerity as the hermeneutical key for Confucian metaphysics will facilitate the movement to an epistemology which in turn will translate more easily the Confucian ideals into the life of moral cultivation exemplified in the concept of sagehood.

INTRODUCTION

Since the time of Chu Hsi (1130-1200) the Neo-Confucian search for the fundamental concept which grounded the whole moral universe has led both many Neo-Confucianists of the period, as well as many contemporary scholars, to focus their approach on a re-appropriation of the Confucian tradition primarily through the lens of concepts such as *to/tao* or *ri*.¹ While *do/tao* and

¹*To/Tao* means "way" (both literally and figuratively); while *ri* means "principle." However, due to orthographic peculiarities involved in transcription of Chinese into the Roman alphabet the ideogram

ri definitely provide a certain metaphysical basis for Neo-Confucian thought, they suffer from a certain amount of inherent ambiguity due to the antecedent Taoist and Buddhist influences adoption of these concepts by Neo-Confucians entailed. Moreover, *to/tao* and *ri* lack an adequate epistemological basis which would translate the ideals contained in Confucian thought into the practical moral living which had always been the goal and hallmark of Confucianism from its earliest days. In this article, we propose a study of the Confucian notion of “sincerity” (*s ng/ch’eng*)² from the perspective of Neo-Confucian metaphysics in the hope that this approach will suggest a remedy of these deficiencies by providing a more unified understanding of the concept of sincerity itself, as well as its relation to the metaphysical grounding of Neo-Confucian thought as a whole. Studies in Neo-Confucianism so far have not really produced a sustained analytical treatise on this topic.

Sincerity is clearly a key concept in the Confucian canon, especially in the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean*.³ In these two classics the notion of sincerity has a double starting point: in an epistemological sense the *Great Learning* treats of the “sincerity of the will,” while the *Doctrine of the Mean* develops more the metaphysical connotations of “sincerity.” As a genuine Confucian concept, the notion of sincerity was further developed and deepened as it was re-interpreted in the light of the world-view embodied in the *Book of Changes (I Ching)*. The *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean* attained the position of prime importance in Neo-Confucianism chiefly due to this implicit epistemological and metaphysical outlook, which offered both a philosophical foundation and methodology for the Confucian ideal of becoming a sage.

Thus, in the context of the Confucian classics sincerity was interpreted in relation to the nature of sagehood, and sincerity of the will illustrated the process of learning required to become a sage. Therefore, *s ng/ch’eng* furnished a bridge between sincerity as the state of complete sagehood (the metaphysical dimension) and sincerity as a way to be followed (the epistemological dimension).

SINCERITY RECONSIDERED

Prior to the development of Neo-Confucianism, the notion of sincerity had not received much attention, and sincerity was usually considered in relation to the Five Constant Virtues (*o-sang*) of human nature. The virtue of loving is called *in/jen*, that of doing what is proper is called righteousness (*i*), that of putting things in order is called propriety (*ye/li*), that of penetration is

for *ri* is sometimes rendered as *li*. In this article we will give the Korean transliteration of the ideogram first, followed by the Chinese transliteration, thus *To* (Korean) and *Tao* (Chinese). In some cases the transliteration would be the same, as we see in the case of *ri*.

² As is the case with many Chinese terms, *s ng/ch’eng* does not render itself precisely into unequivocal English. “Sincerity” is probably the most common translation, though the ideogram also connotes honesty, genuineness, truthfulness, etc., while etymologically additional nuances of completion, actualization, and perfection are indicated.

³ For a development of this point see Luke J. Sim, with James T. Bretzke, “The Notion of Sincerity (*Ch’eng*) in The Confucian Classics,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 21 (1994): 179-212.

called wisdom (*chi/chih*), and that of abiding by one's commitments is called faithfulness (*sin/hsin*). Sincerity was either identified with the virtue of faithfulness, or it was viewed as the fundamental substance of the Five Constant Virtues (*o-sang*).⁴ But faced by the challenge of Taoism and Buddhism, Neo-Confucians sought to establish a firmer metaphysical basis for their moral system, and one of the first candidates for such a metaphysical elaboration was the notion of sincerity.

One of the oldest elaborations on the notion of sincerity is found in Li Ao (798?-844?), a Neo-Confucian pioneer of the Tang dynasty (618-907), who held that sincerity is marked by a state of quiet and repose:

At the time of tranquility, to know that there is no thought in the mind is fasting of the mind, to realize that originally there is no thought in the mind and that it is completely free from tranquility and activity, and to be in *the state of absolute quiet and inactivity*-- that is absolute sincerity.⁵ [Emphasis added]

Another characteristic attribute of sagehood in the *Doctrine of the Mean* is the "full development of one's nature."⁶ As the same idea is also found in the *Book of Changes*, it is natural to reinterpret the meaning of the phrase in relation to the saying of Appendix V, which reads: "They [the Sages] investigate the principle [*ri*] to the utmost and fully develop their nature [*s ng/hsing*] so they arrive at the Heavenly Mandate [*ch' nmy ng/t'ienming*][Emphasis added]."⁷ Here the idea of "full development of one's nature" as a characteristic attribute of the sage is spoken of together with the notion of

⁴ See, for example, the discussion of Tung Chung-shu (179-104 B.C.E.) who treats sincerity as good faith in relation to the human nature imparted by Heaven in Fung Yu-lan's *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, trans. Derk Bodde, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953): 40.

⁵ *Fu-hsing shu* [The Recovery of the Nature] in *Li Wen Kung chi* [Collected Works of Li Ao], 1:8a-9b. English translation is from Wing-tsit Chan, trans. and comp., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963): 456-459. The phrase "the state of absolute quiet and inactivity" comes originally from the *Book of Changes*, Appendix III (Cf. James Legge, trans. *The I Ching (The Book of Changes)*, 2nd ed., (New York: Dover Publications, 1963; reprint of 1899 Clarendon Press ed.): 370. Hereafter citations from the *Book of Changes*, unless otherwise noted, are taken from Legge's translation, and will be cited simply by chapter designations. For a fuller discussion of Li Ao see T.H. Barrett, *Li Ao: Buddhist, Taoist or Neo-Confucian?*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

⁶ *Doctrine of the Mean*, 22. For all passages cited from Four Books of the Confucian canon we give simply the name of the work, followed by the standard numbers which indicate where the passage may be found in the text. Unless otherwise noted, we use James Legge's classic translation, *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]). Even though one or another of the books of the classical Confucian canon has been more recently translated into better English (from a technical sinological point of view) Legge's is still the only translation of all the books of the canon done by a single individual, and thus it is easier to track some of the pertinent vocabulary. Legge's translation also provides the reader with the original Chinese text so it is easier to work with in terms of textual analysis.

⁷ We have provided our own translation of this paragraph, since Legge's translation may be somewhat misleading.

“investigation of the principle to the utmost.” This leads us to conclude that the *Great Learning's* theme of the “investigation of things” is an absolutely essential aspect of the Confucian moral pedagogy of learning to become a sage. In other words, the state of the complete development of one's nature as a sage is his or her⁸ participation in the transformative and sustaining function of the Heavenly Way, which is attained through a diligent study of the principle of Nature.

Another important influence of the *Book of Changes* in the development of the notion of Sincerity is that it gives an additional gloss on sincerity, as it explains sagehood in relation to the attributes of Heaven (*k n/ch'ien*).⁹ In discussing the nature of the sage, the *I Ching* reads:

He is sincere (even) in his ordinary conduct. Guarding [against] depravity, he preserves his sincerity. His goodness is recognized in the world, but he does not boast of it. His virtue is extensively displayed, transformation ensues.¹⁰

Here sincerity is explained in terms of the absence of falsehood, while in the language of the *Doctrine of the Mean* and the *Great Learning*, the sage is the one whose inner sincerity will naturally flow out in his or her external behavior.

These three connections mentioned above, between the notion of sincerity in the *Doctrine of the Mean*, the *Great Learning*, and that of sagehood in the *Book of Changes*, laid the foundation for later discussion and elaboration of the notion in Neo-Confucianism. Since the *Book of Changes* was also part of the Taoist canon, it is not surprising that Neo-Confucianism did not develop totally untainted by a certain Taoist flavor. For example, in the *Tao-Te Ching* we find the assertion that “the sage manages affairs without action and spreads doctrines without words,”¹¹ and thus we can see the idea of non-activity as rooted in the idea of “the state of absolute quiet and inactivity” of the *Book of Changes* interpreted as the characteristic aspect of Heavenly *to/tao*.

For Chou Tun-i (1017-1073), sincerity, in its original substance, “engages in no activity, but is the subtle, indpient, activating force giving rise to good and evil.”¹² The phrase “engages in no activity” (*muwi/wu-wei*) is the quintessential Taoist description of the characteristic of the Way (*to/tao*). But the Confucian ideal of sagehood, rooted in the practical implication of the Heavenly *to/tao*, should not be confused with the highly complicated idea of *to/tao* found in Taoism.

In order to establish a truly Confucian epistemological and metaphysical basis, Chang Tsai (1020-1077) gave a new perspective to the idea of sincerity: “Sincerity implies reality. Therefore it has a beginning and end. Insincerity implies absence of reality.”¹³ If we recall the famous

⁸ Historically Confucian scholars usually were men, and therefore the vocabulary associated with concepts such as the “sage” was given in masculine terms (e.g., *kunja/chün-tzu* [prince, superior man]). However, as an ethical category, Confucian virtue was never restricted to the male members of the human species alone, and therefore it in contemporary English it makes better sense to speak of the categories in terms of inclusive language.

⁹ *K n/Ch'ien* represents Heaven (*ch' n't'ien*) in the language of the *Book of Changes*.

¹⁰ James Legge, *The I Ching*, Appendix IV, p. 410.

¹¹ *Tao-Te Ching*, ch. 2. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 140.

¹² *T'ung-shu* [Penetrating the *Book of Changes*], ch. 3. For English translation, see Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, pp. 465-480.

¹³ *Cheng-meng* [Correcting Youthful Ignorance], ch. 5. English translation from Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 508. The Chinese ideogram for “reality” is *shih*, which means

affirmation from the *Great Learning* that all “things have their root and branches and that affairs have their end and beginning,”¹⁴ we can see that sincerity is both the goal of the Confucian ideal of sagehood, as well as the path by which one attains that goal.

Ch’eng Hao (1032-1085) elaborated another aspect of sincerity by calling it “the way to unify the internal and the external.”¹⁵ In the synthesis forwarded by Chu Hsi, we read that,

Sincerity means concrete principle, and engaging in no activity means being absolutely quiet. Concrete principle involves both tranquility and activity, but in its original substance it takes no action. Incipient force means activity at the subtle stage. With activity, good and evil take shape. With sincerity, there is no activity, and there is only goodness. With activity, there will be both good and evil.¹⁶

Chu Hsi’s own definition of sincerity as the ‘true reality and the absence of falsehood’¹⁷ then became the standard for subsequent generations.

SINCERITY IN THE NEO-CONFUCIAN THEORY OF NATURE

In Confucianism the term for “nature” (*ś ng/hsing*) connotes “original substance,” and/or that which is “imparted by Heaven,” in the sense of the fundamental characteristic and quality of a person or thing. When discussed in relation to a human being, *ś ng/hsing* refers to the virtuous nature of humans, while in relation to the myriad things of the universe, *ś ng/hsing* refers to their qualities for use by humans. If we think of ancient Confucianism as a philosophy of virtue, then Neo-Confucianism can be said to be a philosophy of human nature. When virtue is discussed in ancient Confucianism concrete examples or situations are usually provided to illustrate the meaning of the topic at hand. But in the Neo-Confucian discussion of human nature, we find ourselves in a maze of complex concepts and ideas, such as the Great Ultimate (*t’aeg k/t’ai-chi*), the way (*to/tao*), the principle (*ri*), Heaven and Earth, etc. Furthermore these terms often seem to be used somewhat interchangeably. Since Neo-Confucianism never developed a strict philosophical conceptual schematization, sincerity (*ś ng/ch’eng*) can be included in the list of Neo-Confucian terms which describe human nature.

“solid,” “substantial,” “true,” “reality,” etc.

¹⁴ *Great Learning*, “Text of Confucius,” 3.

¹⁵ *I-shu* [Surviving Works], 1:7. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 527.

¹⁶ *Chu Tzu yü-lei* [Classified Conversations of Chu Hsi], 94:27b; the translation is from Chu Hsi, and Lü Tsu-ch’ien. *Reflections on Things at Hand*, trans. Wing-tsit Chan, (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1977): 8.

¹⁷ Here we following Wing-tsit Chan’s translation of *sil/shih* in the *Chung-yung chang-chü* (cited in the previous footnote) as representing ‘true reality’ in the sense of being the ‘concrete principle’.

HEAVEN AS THE SOURCE OF SINCERITY

When Li Ao said that the sage's nature is in a state of absolute quiet and inactivity, as stated in the *Book of Changes*, i.e., in Li Ao's terms, in the state of absolute sincerity, he identified the attributes of Heaven with the qualities of sagehood. The sage is the one who is in the state of completed nature, who fully participates in the functions of Heaven, that is, in the functions of transforming and nurturing. Viewed in conjunction with the *Doctrine of the Mean's* affirmation that "what is imparted by heaven is called the nature,"¹⁸ the importance of the notion of sincerity becomes clear as it provides the key focus in the relation between Heaven and the human person. The human person not only participates fully in the attributes of Heaven, but also finds his or her very origin rooted in the Way of Heaven. Chou Tun-i expressed this idea clearly in his thought, which was to lay the pattern for the metaphysics and ethics of later Neo-Confucianism. According to Chou, Heaven (*k n/ch'ien*) is the source of sincerity, and sincerity is the foundation of sagehood, as we see in his commentary on a verse from the *Book of Changes*, Appendix I:

Sincerity (*s ng/ch'eng*) is the foundation of the sage. "Great is the *ch'ien* (*k n*) the originator! All things obtain their beginning from it."¹⁹ It is the source of sincerity. "The way of *ch'ien* (*k n*) is to change and transform so that everything will obtain its correct nature and destiny."²⁰ In this way sincerity is established. It is pure and perfectly good. Therefore "the successive movement of *yin* (*n*) and *yang* constitutes the Way (*to/tao*). What issues from the Way is good, and that which realizes it is the individual nature."²¹ *Origination and flourish characterize the penetration of sincerity, and advantage and firmness are its completion (or recovery). Great is the Change, the source of nature and destiny!*²² [Emphasis added]

The text of the first hexagram of the *Book of Changes* points out four attributes for Heaven: "*Ch'ien* [*k n*] (Heaven) represents what is great and originating, penetrating, advantageous, correct and firm." The four heavenly attributes of 1) origination (sublimity), 2) flourishing (potentiality of success), 3) advantageousness (power to further), and 4) firmness (perseverance) parallel in a certain sense the four Confucian cardinal virtues ascribed to humanity: benevolence (*n/jen*), righteousness (*i*), propriety (*ye/li*), and wisdom (*chi/chih*). The act of creation expressed in the two attributes of origination and flourishing is matched with the "penetration of sincerity," and the continuous actualization and differentiation of form is related to the "completion of sincerity." Building on this same theory, Chu Hsi articulated the attributes of Heaven as the metaphysical basis for these cardinal virtues:

The moral qualities of the mind of Heaven and Earth are four: origination,

¹⁸ *Doctrine of the Mean*, 1,1.

¹⁹ Cf. *Book of Changes*, commentary on hexagram #1, *k n/ch'ien*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Cf. *Book of Changes*, "Appended Remarks," pt. 1, ch. 5.

²² *T'ung-shu*, ch. 1. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 466.

flourish, advantages, and firmness. And the principle of origination unites and controls them all. In their operation they constitute the course of the four seasons, and the vital force of spring permeates all. Therefore in the mind of man there are also four moral qualities--namely, *jen* [*in*], righteousness, propriety, and wisdom--and *jen* embraces them all. In their emanation and function, they constitute the feeling of love, respect, being right, and discrimination between right and wrong--and the feeling of commiseration pervades them all.²³

Elaborating on the relation to sincerity, Chou Tun-i adds:

“The state of absolute quiet and inactivity” is sincerity. The spirit is that which, “when acted on, immediately penetrates all things.”²⁴ And the state of subtle incipient activation is the undifferentiated state between existence and nonexistence when activity has started but has not manifested itself in physical form. Sincerity is infinitely pure and hence evident. The spirit is responsive and hence works wonders. And incipient activation is subtle and hence abstruse. The sage is the one who is in the state of sincerity, spirit, and subtle incipient activation.²⁵

Based on this elaboration of the notion of Heaven as the source of sincerity, later Neo-Confucians would identify sincerity with the Way of Heaven or Heavenly *to/tao*. However, this identification depended on human observance of the Heavenly movement whose transforming and nurturing quality was derived from its “great vacuity” (*t’ieh /t’ai-hsü*),²⁶ while all human moral behavior originated from “thought.” In this sense, “thinking sincerity” (*sa-sung/ssu-ch’eng*) on the part of the human person is key to this identification process.

Chang Tsai spoke of the nature of this identification in the following way:

When the Way of Heaven [or principle] and the nature of man [or desires] function separately, there cannot be sincerity. When there is a difference between the knowledge obtained by following (the Way of) Heaven and that obtained by following (the nature of) man, there cannot be perfect enlightenment. What is meant by enlightenment resulting from sincerity is that in which there is no distinction between the Way of Heaven as being great and the nature of man as being small.²⁷ [Emphasis added]

Chang Tsai then goes on to elaborate on this development in a way which we might term harmonic moral convergence within human persons themselves, as well as between humanity and

²³ *Chu Tzu wen-chi* [Collection of Literary Works of Chu Hsi], 67:20a. See Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 594.

²⁴ Cf. *Book of Changes*, “Appended Remarks,” pt. 1. ch. 10.

²⁵ *T’ung-shu*, ch. 4. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 467.

²⁶ “Great vacuity” (*t’ieh /t’aihsü*) comes from the *Book of Changes*, “Appended Remarks,” pt. 1, ch. 10.

²⁷ *Cheng-meng*, ch. 6. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 507.

Heaven:

When moral principles and human destiny are united in harmony, they will be preserved and abide in principle. When humanity and wisdom are united in harmony, they will be preserved and abide in the sage. When activity and tranquillity are united in harmony, they will be preserved and abide in spirit. When *yin* (*m*) and *yang* are united in harmony they will be preserved and abide in the Way. *And when the nature of man and the Way of Heaven are united in harmony, they will be preserved and abide in sincerity.*²⁸ [Emphasis added]

For Ch'eng Hao (1032-1085), the Nature of Heaven is the metaphysical reality, which is *to/tao*, from which every existence in turn receives its proper nature. In accordance with both the Mencian line of thinking, "That which at birth is so is called the nature,"²⁹ and the *Doctrine of the Mean*, "What is imparted by Heaven is the Nature,"³⁰ Ch'eng Hao said that "What is called Heaven is simply Principle and nothing else," and that "Of the Principle of Heaven, Earth, and all things, there is not one that does not have its complement."³¹ In this regard, sincerity is not something which exists on its own as a metaphysical reality, but must always be viewed in terms of the practical disposition of human virtue toward Heaven. Ch'eng Hao adds that, "By 'the state of absolute quiet and inactivity' and 'that which when acted upon immediately penetrates all things,'³² is meant that the Principle of Nature is self-sufficient and from the very beginning lacks nothing."³³ In this way sincerity is identified with the Principle of Heaven and thus serves as the unifying principle. Commenting on the verse in the *Doctrine of the Mean*, "Without sincerity there will be nothing,"³⁴ Ch'eng Hao said that "Sincerity is the way to unify the internal and the external."³⁵ He goes on to say,

Wisdom, humanity, and courage are "the three universally recognized virtues," but "the way by which they are practiced is one."³⁶ As it is one there is sincerity. It merely means to make three virtues real. Apart from these three virtues, there is no other kind of sincerity.³⁷

Thus, we can conclude that when the Neo-Confucians identified sincerity with the Heavenly Principle, and whenever they spoke of the "One" unique unifying principle of the whole, they meant sincerity. This sentiment is echoed in the *Doctrine of the Mean's* solemn declaration that "Sincerity is the way of Heaven, and the attainment of sincerity is the way of man."³⁸

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Mencius*, 6a:3.

³⁰ *Doctrine of the Mean*, 1,1.

³¹ *I-shu*, 12, 11:4. Cf. Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, pp. 505-506.

³² Cf. *Book of Changes*, "Appended Remarks," pt. 1, ch. 10.

³³ *I-shu*, 2A:22b. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 534.

³⁴ *Doctrine of the Mean*, 25.

³⁵ *I-shu*, 1:7a. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 527.

³⁶ Cf. *Doctrine of the Mean*, 20.

³⁷ *I-shu*, 2A:5a. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 532.

³⁸ *Doctrine of the Mean*, 20:18.

It is with Ch'eng I (1033-1107) that the metaphysical sense of all Confucian notions is condensed into the phrase "*s ng/hsing is ri*, (Nature is the Principle)": "The nature is the same as principle. [*s ng/hsing is ri*.] This is what we call rational nature. Traced to their source, none of the principles in the world is not good."³⁹ In commenting on the verse, "What Heaven imparts is called Nature," found in the *Doctrine of the Mean*, Ch'eng I said that what is meant by "Nature" is the Principle.⁴⁰ With respect to the Principle, he emphasized the aspect of the harmony of the one and many and summed up Neo-Confucian metaphysics with the well-known proposition, "Principle is one but its manifestation is many (*Iilpunsu/ri-i fen shu*)."⁴¹ Ch'eng I elaborates this principle in the following manner:

Principle in the world is one. Although there are many roads in the world, the destination is the same, and although there are a hundred deliberations, the result is one.⁴² Although things involve many manifestations and events go through infinite variations, when they are united by the one, there cannot be any contradiction.⁴³

Thus, we can conclude that the Heavenly Principle can be investigated to the utmost because all things share this common principle. To know the Mandate of Heaven means to understand the Principle of Heaven, which must begin with the investigation of things at hand. This interpretation of Nature as the Principle provides the foundation of the Ch'eng-Chu School's epistemological theory of Confucian moral learning.

Lu Hsiang-shan (1139-1193), though a contemporary of Chu Hsi, strongly opposed the latter's thought and affirmed that one cannot be influenced by external things nor deceived by perverse doctrines because the moral principles inherent in the human mind are endowed by Heaven, and not drilled into one from the outside. Against the Ch'eng-Chu School's "Nature is the Principle," Lu Hsiang-shan proposed the formulation of "Mind is the Principle": "The mind is one and principle is one. Perfect truth is reduced to a unity; the essential principle is never a duality. The mind and principle can never be separated into two."⁴⁴

Of course, this same basic line of thought is taken up by the great opponent of Chu Hsi, Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529), who held that the innate knowledge (*liang-chi*) of the human mind is what is known as Heavenly Principle (*ch' ili/t'ien-ri*):

The innate knowledge of my mind is the same as the Principle of Nature. When the Principle of Nature in the innate knowledge of my mind is extended to all things, all things will attain their principle. To extend the innate knowledge of

³⁹ *I-shu*, 22A:11a. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 569.

⁴⁰ Cf. *I-shu*, 24.

⁴¹ See *I-shu*, 5:12b; *I-ch'uan* [Commentary on the *Book of Changes*], 3:3b, etc.

⁴² Here the reference is made to the *Book of Changes*, "Appended Remarks," pt. 2, ch. 5.

⁴³ *I-ch'uan*, 3:3b. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 571.

⁴⁴ *Hsian-shan ch'üan-chi* [Complete Works of Lu Hsiang-shan], 1:3b. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 574.

my mind is the matter of the extension of knowledge, and for all things to attain their principle is the matter of the investigation of things. In these the mind and the principle are combined into one.⁴⁵

Wang's theory of the extension of the innate knowledge of the good obviously points to a different epistemology of Confucian Learning, which came to be embodied in the Lu-Wang School of Neo-Confucianism. However, the identification of sincerity with the Heavenly Principle is seen perhaps more clearly among several Korean Neo-Confucianists, whose contribution to this line of thought has not been sufficiently treated. Using the idea of the unceasing activity of Heaven in the *Book of Changes*, Yi Un-juk (1491-1553) interpreted sincerity as the way through which one attains Heavenly Virtue. The attainment of Heavenly Virtue comes about through a moral pedagogy effected by the attainment of absolute sincerity:

The Virtue of Heaven [or Heavenly Virtue] is One (in principle), never two. It is purity, never mixture. To express this in one word, it is sincerity. This can be attained only after the mind becomes single, (in which state) the movement and the tranquillity do not oppose each other, and the inner and outer interact correctly.⁴⁶ [Our translation]

Therefore, without the attainment of Heavenly Virtue through the sincere mind, i.e., sincerity, and without putting them into practice, Heaven and Earth would become meaningless, and transformation of the whole world would stop because the unity between Heaven and humanity would not be achieved. In this vein Yi Yulgok (1536-1584) affirmed that sincerity is the true Principle of Heaven, and therefore the real substance of the mind. This was a direct inheritance from Chu Hsi's interpretation of sincerity as the Heavenly Principle. Building on Chu Hsi's commentary that the Heavenly Principle is the 'true reality (i.e., concrete reality) principle and the absence of falsehood',⁴⁷ Yi Yulgok identified sincerity with the *to/tao* of Heaven.

Heaven as the true principle has its merit of transformation and nourishment. A human feels and penetrates through the merit of the true mind. What is meant by true principle and true mind is nothing but sincerity. The one who attains utmost sincerity and the purity of Heavenly Principle is called the sage. The one who obtains it partially, is called the wise man.⁴⁸ [Our translation]

Sincerity thus has a bi-focal lens: seen from Heaven's viewpoint it is called the Heavenly Principle, while when glimpsed from the point of view of the human person it is revealed as Nature. In this

⁴⁵ *Ch'uan-hsi lu*, "Letter in Reply to Ku Tung-ch'iao," pt. 2, sec. 135. Wang Yang-ming, *Instructions for Practical Living and Other Neo-Confucian Writings*, trans. with notes by Wing Tsit Chan, (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1963): 99.

⁴⁶ *Hoejae s nsaeng mujip* [Collected Literary Works of Yi Un-juk], vol. 8, "Eight Rules for Self-cultivation," as cited by Kim Kil Whan, *Chos ncho Yuhak Sasang Y ngu* [A Study of Korean Neo-Confucian Thought], (Seoul: Il-chi Sa, 1986): 38.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Chung-yung chang-chü*, Chu Hsi's Exegetical Commentary on the *Doctrine of the Mean*, 16:5.

⁴⁸ *Yulgok ch n* [Complete Works of Yi Yulgok], "Treatise on sincerity," p. 1096. Quoted from Tsai Maosung, *T'oegye-Yulgok Ch' rhak- i PigyoYy ngu* [A Comparative Studies of T'oegye and Yulgok Philosophy] (Seoul: S ng'gyun'gwan University Press, 1985): 182.

passage Yi Yulgok also touches on what might be termed teleological gradations in the process of moral becoming.⁴⁹ His insight is related to the *Doctrine of the Mean's* moral classification of the three types of persons: those born with this innate moral knowledge, those who can learn it through diligent study, and those others will learn it only through painful life experiences.⁵⁰

SINCERITY AS THE ORIGINAL HUMAN NATURE

As we have already noted, a central Confucian tenet is that Heaven imparts to all human beings the Five Constant Virtues in the quest for sagehood (i.e. *in/jen*, *i*, *ye/li*, *chi/chih*, and *sin/hsin*). Given our previous discussion on the integrating nature of sincerity, it is not surprising to see that Neo-Confucianism holds *shing/ch'engto* be the font of these Five Constant Virtues. As Chou Tun-i notes,

Sagehood is nothing but sincerity. It is the foundation of the Five Constant Virtues (humanity, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faithfulness) and the source of all activities. When tranquil, it is in the state of non-being, and when active, it is in the state of being. It is perfectly correct and clearly penetrating. Without sincerity, the Five Constant Virtues and all activities will be wrong. They will be depraved and obstructed. Therefore with sincerity very little effort is needed [to achieve the Mean].⁵¹

Because sincerity is the foundation of the virtuous aspect of human nature imparted by Heaven, each individual's own nature translates into his or her concrete embodiment of the Way. In this light Shao Yung (1011-1077) maintains that "Sincerity is the controlling factor in one's nature."⁵² Here again we see a bi-focal nuance: sincerity not only outlines each individual's unique path to sagehood, but it also provides the pedagogical parameters that will keep him or her on the straight and narrow.

Chang Tsai echoed a similar idea in his affirmation that "One's nature is the one source of all things and is not one's own private possession."⁵³ For him, Nature imparted by Heaven connotes what one can do through one's own individual natural endowment. Therefore, if one can fully develop his or her nature, then in the spirit of the Confucian notion of the extension of knowledge of all things, this person can also help develop the nature of others. Thus, the fundamental unity between Heavenly *to/tao* and nature is held together in each individual person.

⁴⁹ For a fuller discussion of Yi Yulgok see Ro Young-chan, *The Korean Confucianism of Yi Yulgok*, (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989).

⁵⁰ Cf. *Doctrine of the Mean*, 20:9.

⁵¹ *T'ung-shu*, ch. 2. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 466.

⁵² *Huang-chi ching-shih shu* [Supreme Principles Governing the World], 8B:25. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 493.

⁵³ *Cheng-meng*, ch. 6. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 508.

This unity is reflected in the saying, "Heaven is my father, and the earth is my mother, and even such a small creature as I find an intimate place in their midst."⁵⁴ Seen in this light, sincerity is shown to be a unifying bridge between the human and Heaven-- a unity which is effected by nothing less than the complete development of one's nature. From the point of view of human affairs this unity is attained through sincere dedication to learning. Thus, sincerity becomes the single most important practical principle of achieving the full development of one's nature, i.e., to become a sage, the idealized human being. This metaphysical realization of sagehood can be accomplished, however, only through the process of moral learning. In this sense we see the metaphysics of sagehood joined inseparably to the epistemological process of moral learning.

The distinction between nature in relation to the metaphysical principle of Heaven and nature in relation to the character of human virtue was already present in Chang Tsai, but becomes clearer in Ch'eng I. He insisted that there are two categories of Nature: Nature as the Principle of Heaven and Earth, and Nature as human character. In relation to human character, human emotions are the movement of human nature. Because of the superiority of the human being in relation to other form of existence, "Man's nature is the same as principle, and principle is the same from the sage-emperors Yao and Shun to the common man in the street."⁵⁵ The goal of the complete development of one's nature, as symbolized in sagehood, is co-terminous with the goal of Confucian learning. "Learning" in this sense is thus always ineluctably moral in nature.

As we have seen above for the Korean Confucian, Yi Yulgok, the nature of the human being is the real manifestation of the Heavenly *to/tao* in the subject. He paralleled, as did Chu Hsi, the four cardinal virtues of human nature with the four attributes of Heaven:

(From the point of view of) its substance, sincerity is tiny and mysterious. From (the point of view of) its function, it is clear and broad. (To be) the substance of all things, (it is said to be) the beginning and end of all things. Therefore, what is great and originating, penetrating, advantageous, correct and firm is the sincerity of Heaven; humanity [*in/jen*], righteousness, propriety, and wisdom are the sincerity of human nature.⁵⁶[Our trans-lation]

Since the sincerity of Heaven is imparted to human nature, the nature of Heaven and the nature of the human being are fundamentally one. Therefore, the actualization of the principle must be begun from the actualization of the original human nature. Only through the sincere human response to heavenly sincerity, only through the sincerity of the human response, can the Heavenly Way be actualized. In other words, in this Confucian view, human transcendence must always begin with the actualization of the principle which is immanent in human nature. Sincerity is the key for this moral actualization. To borrow a Western philosophical category, we might call this dynamic the Confucian version of the human participation in the natural law.

⁵⁴ *Hsi-ming* [Western Inscription]. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 497.

⁵⁵ *I-shu*, 18:17b. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 567.

⁵⁶ *Yulgok ch ŏ* , "Treatise on Sincerity," p. 1097. Quoted from Tsai Maosung, *T'oegye-Yulgok Ch rhak- i pigyo y ngu*, p. 159.

MORAL IMPORTANCE OF BECOMING A SAGE

From the Confucian perspective, the ideal of human moral possibility is symbolized in the notion of sagehood.⁵⁷ As Li Ao stated, the sage is the one who shares the attributes of Heaven completely:

Therefore utter sincerity (*ś ng/ch'eng*) means (the complete fulfillment of) the sage's nature. Silent is he and immovable, all embracing and purifying. He casts his light through Heaven and Earth, and, being acted on, penetrates to all phenomena under Heaven. Whether in movement or at rest, speaking or silent, he holds always the topmost place. As to return to the nature, this the worthy (*hy n/hsieh*) pursues unceasingly; unceasingly, and so he is able to return to the Source. The *Changes* says: "The sage shares the attributes of Heaven and Earth, the radiance of the sun and moon, the orderly progression of the four seasons, the auspicious and inauspicious (faculties) of supernatural beings."⁵⁸

Clearly the foundation of sagehood lies in one's own nature as imparted by Heaven, and thus this nature was sometimes referred to as the Heavenly Mandate (*ch' nmy ng/t'ien-ming*). The basic belief is that everyone is capable of becoming a sage, and therefore, as seen especially in Li Ao, learning consists primarily in making the effort to return to the original nature of the human being. When Chou Tun-i said that "sincerity (*ch'eng*) is the foundation of the sage,"⁵⁹ or "Sagehood is nothing but sincerity,"⁶⁰ what he meant is that sincerity is the highest state to which all learning processes should aim. With regard to his statement "the way of the sage is nothing but humanity, righteousness, the Mean and correctness,"⁶¹ we can see that by sincerity is clearly meant the Confucian Mean. According to Chu Tun-i, sagehood is a state of "having no thought and yet penetrating all."⁶² Another aspect of sagehood was introduced by Shao Yung who held that there are supreme principles governing the universe, and therefore the truest knowledge of these principles is the objective viewing of things from the viewpoint of the things themselves. In this light, then, the relation between sagehood and perfect sincerity indicates that the sage is the person who is able to observe things from the point of view of things as they really are.⁶³

⁵⁷ The literature on the Confucian notion of sagehood is vast, but two recent articles underscore the moral importance of this notion: see Rodney L. Taylor, "The Sage as Saint: *The Confucian Tradition*," in *Sainthood: Its Manifestations in World Religions*, ed. Richard Kieckhefer and George Bond, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988): 218-242; and Lee H. Yearley, "A Confucian Crisis: Mencius' Two Cosmogonies and Their Ethics," in *Cosmogony and Ethical Order: New Studies in Comparative Ethics*, ed. Robin W. Lovin and Frank E. Reynolds, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985): 310-327.

⁵⁸ *Fu-hsing shu*. Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, p. 416.

⁵⁹ *T'ung-shu*, ch. 1. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 465.

⁶⁰ *T'ung-shu* ch. 2., *Ibid.*, p. 466.

⁶¹ *T'ung-shu*, ch. 6., *Ibid.*, p. 468.

⁶² *T'ung-shu*, ch. 9. *Ibid.*, p. 469.

⁶³ See *Huang-chi ching-shih shu*, 6:26b. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 488.

As noted above, Chang Tsai conceived of sincerity as the state of unity between Heaven and Earth, which is actualized in sagehood. The sage is the one who attains unity with Heaven through the utmost sincerity. This unity is an alternate description of what it means to achieve “complete development of one’s nature.” What is implied here is that sincerity means one’s truthfulness to his or her own nature. The state of sagehood is summarized in the phrase “enlightenment resulting from the sincerity.” Because the sage is the person who fulfills his or her nature with ease, s/he also can arrive at a grasp of the principle of all things with ease. According to Ch’eng Hao, there is no partiality because the attributes of Heaven are employed as the qualities of sagehood in the fully developed nature of the sage. The sage is the one who is at ease and straightforward in following the principle of Heaven.⁶⁴ In other words, the sage is the one who follows the single principle, namely, the principle of sincerity. While Ch’eng Hao established the state of sagehood using the commentary of the first hexagram, *gon/ch’ien* (Heaven) of the *Book of Changes*, in his commentary on the second hexagram, *kon/k’un* (Earth), he proposed a methodology for sage-learning: “Seriousness [*ky ng/ching*]⁶⁵ is to straighten one’s internal life and righteousness is to square one’s external life.’⁶⁶ This is the way to unify internal and external life.”⁶⁷

More specifically, in Ch’eng I, sagehood is understood in terms of complete attainment of sincerity through the Mean and the rectification of mind. For him, sagehood is nothing other than the complete attainment of Heavenly *to/tao*. This idea is in complete agreement with the notion of sagehood in the *Doctrine of the Mean*. Because Ch’eng I saw that the sincere heart can influence the Heavenly Mandate, he interpreted “to think” in line of the Mencian “thinking sincerity” (*sas ng/ssuch’eng*) as the practice of self-examination. As Ch’eng I noted:

The way to learn is none other than rectifying one’s mind and nourishing one’s nature. When one abides by the Mean and correctness and becomes sincere, he is a sage. ... And if he knows his own nature, examines his own self and makes it sincere, he becomes a sage. Therefore, “Great Norm” says, “The virtue of thinking is penetration and profundity. ... Penetration and profundity lead to sagemess.” The way to make the self sincere lies in having firm faith in the Way. As there is firm faith in the Way, one will put it into practice with determination.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Cf. *I-shu*, 14:2a. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 542, reads: “The Sage extends his mind of impartiality and exhausts the principle of Heaven, Earth, and all things to the utmost, each according to its proper function.”

⁶⁵ While the ideogram *ky ng/ching* is often translated as “seriousness,” or “the task of seriousness,” but this term is perhaps better translated as “to reverence,” “to respect,” “to honor,” or “reverent attention to.” Thomas Metzger suggests that this term points to a Confucian work ethic, and thus might be rendered as “industriousness and frugality.” See his *Escape from Predicament: Neo-Confucianism and China’s Evolving Political Culture*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977): 39.

⁶⁶ Cf. *Book of Changes*, commentary on hexagram #2.

⁶⁷ *I-shu*, 11:2. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 538.

⁶⁸ *I-ch’uan wen-chi* [Collection of Literary Works by Ch’eng I], 4. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 548.

Therefore, according to Ch'eng I, because of the sage's own correctness and sincerity, he can give orderly coordination to all things, and enable all things to be what they ought to be. In this way, if sagehood is seen from the viewpoint of material force (*ki/ch'i*), as Chu Hsi saw it, the sage is the one who receives the material force in its purity, so what is learned is to make one's material force pure. If seen from the viewpoint of human nature, as in Wang Yang-ming, the sage is the one who is able to arrive at his innate knowledge of mind in its utmost state.

The Korean Confucianists saw sagehood as more intimately connected with sincerity. For Yi Un-juk, the sage is the one who keeps sincerity in his mind, and therefore, who fulfills the service for the *to/tao* of Heaven without any lack. He further explained the virtue of ancient sage-kings in the language of sincerity:

The sage kings of ancient times understood the mind of the ordinary people and penetrated the principle of Heaven and Earth. This was because of their sincerity. Sincerity is the foundation of governing the people, and faithfulness is the heavenly treasure of the kings. Though absolute sincerity and faithfulness could influence God [*kwisin/kuei-shen*, spiritual being], and rectify Heaven and Earth, how could sincerity and faithfulness not rectify the people? ⁶⁹ [Our translation]

For Yi Yulgok, in the same line as the Ch'eng brothers and Chu Hsi, the sage is the one who preserves sincerity in his or her nature. For him, the Confucian learning process of becoming sage results in one who is able to fulfill oneself as well as all other things. If one is truthful to him/herself, and truthful to every affair and thing, then there is nothing that cannot be achieved. Therefore, sincerity is the foundation for sagehood. According to Yulgok, the sincerity of Heaven is an attribute of a sage:

The inborn character of the sage is clear and pure, so following the way and the principle is smooth and natural. This substance is inborn and easy to enact. Through this the sage arrives at the (state of) "given sincerity, and there shall be enlightenment." This is what Men cius said, "All things are complete in myself." Therefore, the sincerity of the *Doctrine of the Mean* is the sincerity of the solid principle. ⁷⁰ [Our translation]

Following up on Yulgok's explanation of sincerity, another Korean Confucian, Han W njin (1682-1751), adds the following observation:

I heard that sincerity is the true reality and the absence of falsehood. When it is in Heaven, it is the concrete principle; when it is in the human being, it is the true mind. It is because of this concrete principle that everything has its true reality. From ancient times, the four seasons move and all things are born. The sage has this true mind from birth, he does not lack truthfulness in any single

⁶⁹ *Hoejae s nsaeng mujip*, vol. 8, "Eight Rules for Self-cultivation." Cited from Kim Kil-hwan, *Chos n-cho Yuhak Sasang Y ngu*, p. 42.

⁷⁰ *Yulgok ch n*, p. 1108. Quoted from Tsai Maosung, *T'oegy-e-Yulgok Ch' rhak- pigyo y ngu*, p. 159.

affair he deals with until his death, and stands firmly on the great Way.⁷¹ [Our translation]

In other words, the sage is the one who inherits the sincerity of Heaven by birth, therefore, the manifestation of sincerity flows naturally out of every affair in which s/he is engaged.

CONCLUSION

The concept of sagehood can hardly be exaggerated in Confucian thought. The life of moral cultivation which is epitomized in the sage is both the pathway and the goal of Confucian learning. In a real sense this is where Confucian philosophy always begins and ends. Confucian metaphysics never concerned itself much with abstract speculation on the basic elements and first principles of the universe in the way that Greek philosophy did. Rather, the particular genius of Confucianism has been to stress the teleological aspect of human nature. How a human person may learn to become truly human is the guiding insight of Confucian thought. Thus, the hermeneutical key for Confucian metaphysics is to discover how these metaphysical considerations can both ground and articulate what can be termed a moral epistemology. In this sense, we can label this hermeneutical key as “sagehood” itself. Thus, if we were to speak of an “epistemology of sagehood” the discussion would not center so much on a speculation on the conditions of possibility of knowledge itself, i.e., how one can learn, but rather the epistemology of sagehood would focus its concerns first and foremost with the content of moral learning as such. This is why Confucian learning is symbolized paradigmatically in the process of self-cultivation which in turn actualizes itself in the Five Constant Virtues. Seen in this perspective we can speak of Confucian virtue ethics as being both content-laden (a life of virtues concretized in a given individual), as well as process-directed, i.e., the virtue ethics also is the very path taken which guides both the individual in his or her project of moral self-cultivation, but as the *do/tao* becomes the “way” which also guides the entire moral community into harmony with one another (i.e., the Five Relationships) as well as with the entire universe, understood from a moral perspective and symbolized by the Heavenly Mandate (*ch' nmy ng/t'ien-ming*).⁷²

If sagehood does function in this fashion in Confucian thought, then the organizing concept for articulation of Confucian metaphysics should elucidate the inter-relationship between the sage and the metaphysical conceptual elements of nature (☿ *ng/hsing*, principle (†) and the moral universe (i.e., the *ch' nmy ng/t'ienming*). As we have indicated in this article, sincerity (*s ng/ch'eng*) fulfills this role well. A close reading and analysis of the Confucian canon, as well as the various commentaries and writings of the Neo-Confucian thinkers, show that sincerity is a rich concept which has nourished much of the Confucian thought in the past, and therefore bears great promise for continuing to be a lens through which Confucian metaphysics can be studied in the

⁷¹ *Namdang-chip* [Collected Works of Han W njin] vol. 3. Cited from Kim Kil-hwan, *Chos n-cho Yuhak Sasang Y ngu*, p. 206.

⁷² For a development of this point see James T. Bretzke, S.J., “The *Tao* of Confucian Virtue Ethics,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 35 (1995): 25-41.

future. Moreover, as we have suggested, employment of sincerity as the principal metaphysical concept has an important added advantage in that it serves to elucidate the natural progression which flows from the way things are (i.e., Heaven and human nature understood from the perspective of a metaphysical ground principle), into the way things ought to become (i.e., the dynamic fulfillment of the Heavenly Mandate as well as the process of moral self-cultivation of the sage) which in turn will highlight the teleological dimension of Confucian metaphysics. Understood in this light, sincerity functions not only as a metaphysical principle, but also as a key epistemological principle. Thus, sincerity focuses Confucian thought from a grounding in metaphysics, into an epistemology, which in turn issues forth into the concrete practice which has always been seen as the hallmark of Confucian moral cultivation.

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GLOSSARY OF KOREAN-CHINESE IDEOGRAMS

Korean/Chinese Transliteration	Meaning	Ideogram
<i>Ch' n/T'ien</i>	Heaven	
<i>Ch' nmy ng/T'ien-ming</i>	Mandate of Heaven	
<i>Ch' nri/T'ien-ri</i>	Heavenly Principle	
<i>Chi/Chih</i>	Wisdom, knowledge	
<i>To/Tao</i>	The Way	
<i>K n/Ch'ien</i>	Heaven	
<i>Kon/K'un</i>	Earth	
<i>Kunja/Chün-tzu</i>	Superior Person	
<i>Hy n/Hsien</i>	The Worthy One	
<i>i</i>	Righteousness	
<i>In/Jen</i>	Benevolence, humanity	
<i>Ki/Ch'i</i>	Material force	
<i>Kw isin/Kuei-shen</i>	Spirits	
<i>Ky ng/Ching</i>	Seriousness, reverence	
<i>Muwi/Wu-wei</i>	No action	
<i>O-Sang</i>	Five Constant Virtues	
<i>Ri</i>	Principle	
<i>Ilpunsu/Ri-i fen shu</i>	Principle is one	
<i>Sas ng/Ssu-ch'eng</i>	Thinking Sincerity	
<i>Sil/Shih</i>	Real, True reality	
<i>Sin/Hsin</i>	Faithfulness	
<i>S ng/Ch'eng</i>	Sincerity	
<i>S ng/Hsing</i>	Nature	
<i>T'aeg k/T'ai-Chi</i>	Great Ultimate	
<i>T'aeh /T'ai-hsü</i>	Great Vacuity	
<i>m-Yang/Yin-Yang</i>	Positive and negative	
<i>Ye/Li</i>	Propriety	
