

MORALITY OVER SANCTION



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THE IDEA OF RULE BY VIRTUE
IN THE CHINESE SYSTEM

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Publisher's Notes

China is the only large nation to have risen through peaceful means, accomplishing in just decades what it took developed nations centuries to do in the aspect of industrialization. The people of China have made the historic leaps from liberation to prosperity, and thence to a strong nation, creating what is known as the "Chinese Miracle." While there was widespread poverty when the PRC was founded in 1949, diligence over just a few decades has pushed the nation's economy to become the second largest in the world, causing people around the globe to marvel.

In his book *When China Rules the World*, the British academic Martin Jacques keenly pointed out, "It is banal, therefore, to believe that China's influence on the world will be mainly and overwhelmingly economic: on the contrary, its political and cultural effects are likely to be at least as far-reaching." Today, as China is continually making its way to the center of the global stage, its governance, spirit, wisdom, and solutions are gaining more attention from the international community. In the end, China's success is attributed to the success of the Chinese system and governance model, which is why more and

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more scholars around the world are starting to study the features and merits of the model. During the formation of this system, numerous factors have played roles, the most foundational and most important being China's millennia-old cultural legacy. Thus, in order to comprehend the Chinese system, one must understand the nation's fine traditional culture.

The governance and other state systems of any nation do not simply form out of thin air; they have their historical and cultural backgrounds. During the 4th Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee, President Xi Jinping stated in an important address:

China's socialist system and state governance system have a profound historical background. Over several thousand years of history, the Chinese nation has created a splendid civilization, and developed a wealth of ideas on state systems and governance, including:

·the ideal of great harmony believing that "When the Great Way rules, the land under Heaven belongs to the people";

·the same tradition across the country so that all areas follow similar customs and all people are of the same family;

·the idea of prioritizing morality over sanctions in governance and guiding people with virtue;

·the people-centered philosophy holding that the people

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have primacy over the ruler and the aim of governance is to ensure and improve the people's wellbeing;

·the idea of equality among all people in terms of social status and wealth, and taking the wealth of the rich to help the poor;

·the idea of justice and impartiality of the law;

·moral standards advocating filial piety, fraternity, loyalty to the country, good faith, propriety, justice, integrity, and conscience,

·standards for the appointment of officials based on virtue and competence;

·the reformist spirit as exemplified by such adages as: "Although Zhou is an ancient state, its destiny binges on reform";

·the principle of good neighborliness and harmony in relations with all other countries; and

·the belief in the primacy of peace and opposition to bellicosity.

China's adoption of the Chinese socialist system is a result of its 5,000 years of history and culture.

Understanding the Chinese System is divided into volumes with titles based on the 11 ideas President Xi spoke of. On the basis of stories on governance from ancient Chinese historical writings, the books also describe governance in the present day as it relates to these ancient

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principles. By tracing the governance experiences and wisdom of ancient Chinese people, the books show how the Chinese socialist system inherited and carried forward in an innovative way the fine traditional culture, allowing readers to understand not only the historical legacy inherited by the system but also its unique Chinese features.

The strength of China's traditional culture lies in its pursuit of the *dao* (the way), which is the order of life and the entire universe. According to the great philosopher Laozi, pursuing the *dao* differs from the pursuit of knowledge: "In the pursuit of learning one knows more every day; in the pursuit of the way one does less every day. One does less and less until one does nothing at all, and when one does nothing at all, there is nothing that is undone." The sages of old empowered themselves through non-action and ignorance to the point that nothing was impossible and nothing was unknown to them, which is quite different from the method through which Westerners pursue knowledge. In the pursuit of knowledge, no matter how much knowledge one obtains, as long as he possesses knowledge in one area, he is destined to lack it in others, which means he will be unable to reach the realm of

omniscience. But the ignorance of the sages is like a mirror which, though having no image of its own, allows all images to be seen through reflection. That is why Buddhists often say, "Be silent and thus illuminate

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others, and illuminate others while remaining silent." The ancients of China believed that everyone could transcend to the realm of the sage emperors Yao and Shun, that is, become sages and worthy (omniscient) by pursuing the *dao*. But in Western culture, only God can be omniscient. Thus, trying to understand the wisdom of ancient China's sages and its worthy people through the Western methodology of pursuing knowledge is quite problematic.

Differences in methodology have led to a divergence in worldviews and theories of knowledge.

The major feature of the Western worldview and theory of knowledge is dichotomy, as seen between the subjective and the objective, the subject and the object, the self and the other, and humankind and nature. This mode of thought pervades every aspect of Western thought, which is why there is a dichotomy between father and son, husband and wife, employer and employee, brothers, friends, companies, and nations. Such concepts and theories as competition, game theory, and the Thucydides Trap are products of this mindset. Misunderstanding and misjudgment are inevitable when looking from the angle of the Western mindset at the traditional Chinese values of loving fathers and dutiful sons, upstanding husbands and virtuous wives, benevolent rulers and loyal subjects, the love and respect among brothers, integrity in collaboration, mutual benefits in cooperation, rapport

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among nations, and harmony between humankind and nature.

In contrast, the Chinese of long ago formed a worldview of everything in the world being united as one and believed that the benevolent are united with all in the world. Therefore, it was believed that relationships of harmonious unity should exist between father and son, husband and wife, brothers, friends, the ruler and his subjects, and nations, which would result in glory for one leading to glory for all and loss for one implying loss for all. Such a mindset allowed harmony in China to be maintained among the people, between the people and nature, between people and society, and with other nations in the country's long history, making the Chinese civilization the world's only civilization to endure unbroken for so long. This is because Chinese people have almost always held to the direction given by the sages and the worthy: the pursuit of the *dao*. They have maintained the worldview of harmony with nature and the overall mindset that the benevolent are united with all in the world, and they have held fast to the moral concept that all living things are kin. This worldview, mode of thought, and moral concept permeate every aspect of governance and the social system in China. From different perspectives, *Understanding the Chinese System* provides an interpretation of how China's unique cultural traditions are made manifest

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in China's systems of politics, economics, culture, education, law, and diplomacy. It is thus a bridge for readers around the world to better understand China.

Of course, whether the reader is from a Western background or from China, understanding the Chinese system is by no means a simple task, though it is a necessary one because it is highly significant in promoting harmony within Chinese society and peace between nations.

This series is an effort at telling the story of China through Chinese discourse. I believe its publication will produce a positive and far-reaching influence, allowing readers to better understand the historical context of the Chinese socialist system and state governance system. It will also help reinforce confidence in China's path, its theories, its system, and its culture, promote exchanges and mutual learning between Chinese and Western cultures, and boost the influence of the Chinese culture on the global stage.

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Foreword

Since the beginning of the 21st century, humanity has undergone major changes while the international landscape has seen subtle transformation. Western countries have begun to express much greater interest in China's direction and methods of development. Though some suspicion is embedded in such interest, the CPC-led endeavors in building Chinese socialism are so successful that the Western countries have to seriously search to answer the question of just what lies behind China's tremendous achievements.

Despite the confusion expressed by the Western countries, the answer to this question is self-evident to the Chinese: The Chinese socialist system, under the leadership of the CPC, is a fundamental system that befits the nation and ensures it will reach the Two Centenary Goals, initiate a new journey in building a modern socialist country in all respects, and on this basis realize the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. A basic prerequisite to understanding China is understanding its system and the cultural traditions and ethos underlying that system. As President Xi Jinping has repeatedly stressed,

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the Chinese socialist system, which is guided by Marxism, is deeply rooted in the Chinese soil and in the Chinese culture and enjoys the full support of the people. It combines Marxism and the best of our millennia-old cultural traditions and values that our people inherently hold to in everyday life. To understand the Chinese system and the underlying ethos, one must not only proceed from the reality, but also look at our fine cultural traditions and the ancient wisdom that thrives and transforms with the times.

In his essay "Uphold and Improve the Chinese Socialist System and Modernize State Governance," President Xi summarizes the historical background of the Chinese system, and brings together ancient ideas on state systems and governance in 11 aspects, including the advocacy of virtuous governance, the people-centered philosophy, the concept of equality, the standards for appointment to office, the reformist spirit, and the principle behind diplomacy. The essay shows people the cultural traits and ethos underlying the Chinese system, its major advantages and unique appeal, delivering a message of confidence in the culture and system.

Inspired by President Xi's essay, this series of books seeks to explore the Chinese system

from the perspective of China's traditional culture. Relating the stories about

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the state system and governance from China's historical writings, these books demonstrate the ancient wisdom and experiences in the hope of helping people apply the wisdom and learn from the past. This will serve to support the current governance endeavors. The compilation of this book series indicates a clear awareness of the problems that are of practical relevance today. Even though the people and events described here are from history, they are analyzed from a modern perspective to give readers a unique inspiration. The series explains the longstanding cultural tradition behind the Chinese system, helping readers understand the fine legacy of traditional culture and innovative elements within the Chinese socialist system.

Whether the Chinese system is good or bad is no longer a topic of debate, because history has given us the best answer with evidence. But where does its strength lie? How does one extrapolate on the clear merits of the Chinese system in an appropriate, convincing and easy-to-understand way? These are no easy questions to answer. A unique perspective is especially needed in interpreting and explaining China's traditional culture. President Xi once said that China's fine traditional culture is the lifeline of the Chinese nation, and is highly significant for the efforts of building Chinese socialism. It is

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also an important resource for thought, good practices and wisdom on governance. The cultural traits and ethos endowed by the best of the traditional culture makes the Chinese nation what it is. This holds true for the Chinese system too, as the key to understanding it is understanding the fine cultural tradition behind the Chinese system.

China's traditional culture advocates a holistic approach to the *dao*. Everything in the world must comply with the *dao*. It is the highest principle and standard which cannot be defied; if anyone defies it, corresponding retribution will follow. As is said in the *Doctrine of the Means*, "The *dao* cannot be separated from us for even one moment; that which can be separated from us is not the *dao*." Therefore, the ancients followed the model of the *dao* whether in handling their relationships with the nation or with nature. By following the *dao*, people can come to understand the laws of the universe and make the best use of their inherent goodness so as to serve the country and its people. From this, the ancients formed an extensive system of thought on governance, which involved the way a ruler and ministers should govern (the human aspect) and the way administration should be conducted (the institutional aspect).

Specifically, the human aspect is embodied in such ideas as people-centeredness, the people having primacy

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over the ruler, good neighborliness and harmony. The institutional aspect is manifested in such ideas as prioritizing morality over sanctions, selecting the worthy for office, and the belief in the primacy of peace. In short, the nation must be governed through virtue. These ideas, constitute an essential part of ancient wisdom on governance, are embodied in the

Chinese socialist system. President Xi has said, "The essential attribute of our state and governance systems is that they always represent the fundamental interests of the people, safeguard the people's status as masters of the country, reflect the people's common will, and protect the people's legitimate rights and interests. This is precisely why the operation of the systems in our country is so effective and dynamic." His remarks point to the optimal way to carry on and develop China's fine traditional culture and neatly encapsulate the cultural traits and ethos underlying the Chinese system.

It was said in ancient times, "While looking at a matter, the benevolent see benevolence and the wise see wisdom." The Chinese system and the cultural traits and ethos underlying it can and should be expounded from different perspectives. In seeking the answer to the question posed earlier, we should not restrict ourselves to just one answer. Building and improving the Chinese socialist system is a dynamic process and thus must be viewed in

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the context of changes in the times. I believe the publication of the series will provide readers with a unique angle from which to holistically examine the Chinese system, a broad topic which is worthy of careful consideration.

Liu Yuli
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Introduction

"Morality given priority over sanction and education of people through morality" are the dezhi (德治, governance by morality) ideology consistently advocated in China throughout ages. The two characters, de (德, virtue) and zhi (治, governance), present unusual significance in ancient Chinese culture. Ancients began almost every conversation by mentioning sages, because sages, to them, represented the utmost morality and wisdom, while ordinary people were not essentially different except for their different academic attainments. For common people, to cultivate "morality" is to follow sages' teachings and keep understanding and developing their own conscience and essence until they become one with the truth of cosmic life. Zhi (治) not only means governance but also has the underlying significance of being as smooth-flowing as water, thus pleasantly good. In terms of governance methods, ancient Chinese followed the enlightenment from the Way of Heaven; in terms of governance effects, they strove to realize the ideal state of good social law and order, where people lived in peace and harmony. De and zhi demonstrate the dialectical relationship between the two, implying the holistic thoughts

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of the Chinese culture. The veneration of morality and sages and the pursuit of supreme goodness are distinctively manifested in the dezhi tradition of "morality given priority over sanction and education of people through morality."

The origin of “morality given priority over sanction” (De Zhu Xing Fu, 德主刑輔) and “educating people by virtue” (Yi De Hua Ren, 以德化人) can be traced back more than 4,000 years ago in the teaching of Emperor Shun, “integrate punishment with education, and have virtue penetrate the minds of the people” (“Counsels of the Great Yu” in *The Classic of History*). Emperor Shun was the most filial person, a spirit-like sage with virtues celebrated among the Four Seas. He regarded morality as the foundation of the people, and made the five principles regarding the relations of humanity: how, between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity. He also stipulated the principle of punishment and showed it to people according to the signs of Heaven, as an aid to moral education. Regardless of the severity of the punishment, the awe of justice and the compassion for the people were always discerned in Shun's teaching. Gao Yao was the Minister of Justice then, who assisted

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Emperor Shun in examining cases and making fair judgment, which convinced all the people. Because the benevolence, loyalty and virtue of the monarch and his officials reached the peak of perfection, their glorious and grand virtue moistened the hearts of the people like a clear spring, and people were all so contented that they were unwilling to break the law.

Such mindset and approaches of governance were always followed by subsequent sages and wise kings. By the Zhou Dynasty, King Wu of Zhou defined the way of governance that “carries forward the moral excellence in men and exercises prudence in administering punishment,” which was not only observance and development of the governance experiences of Emperor Shun in remote antiquity and his father King Wen not long ago, but also profound needs of venerating Heaven, protecting the people and consolidating social stability.

Whether Emperor Shun's instruction that we should “integrate education with punishment and let morality bring order to the people,” or the idea of King Wen and King Wu of Zhou that we should “carry forward the moral excellence in men and exercise prudence in administering punishment,” ancient sages, despite their different circumstances, shared the same mindset and offered the same solution to cultivating oneself, regulating the family, governing the state, and realizing world peace. Mind is

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the source of all cultures, and the decisive mindset behind these ideas and approaches for state governance is veneration. *The Classic of History* as “Founder of Political Philosophy and Source of Historical Books,” records the major philosophy and approaches of governing the world by sage kings like Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu and Duke Zhou. The book starts with a description of veneration, and words and deeds admonishing that people would be reverent. The longstanding culture of veneration in China originates from this book, and the source of “morality given priority over sanction and education of people through morality,” by nature, is the mindset of veneration.

Veneration means veneration of the Heaven, cosmic laws, sages, the people, history and the responsibilities assigned by the Heaven, and the whole-hearted acceptance, observance

of and dedication to the Great Way (*dadao*, 大道). Among so many targets of veneration, the law of cause and effect manifested by the Heaven is in the central position. The law of cause and effect is an invisible law, just as *The Classic of History* notes, “High Heaven feels no emotion and helps only the virtuous. The people have no constancy but support only those who bring benefits to them. Good deeds may vary but they all lead to order; evil deeds may vary but they all result in chaos.” Mencius also writes, “Benevolence generates prosperity;

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mercilessness brings shame; and no disaster or blessing is not caused by one’s own conduct.” Heaven, earth and people are indeed an integral whole. Auspiciousness will result from the observance of the cause and effect law; while ill omen will ensue from violation of the law. Only with a profound knowledge of the law can one cultivate morality and secure life and fortune. Only by securing life and fortune not only for oneself, but also for the people can a man of virtue develop his own morality. In addition, with action there must be reaction, and the influence of reaction resides in the mind of the actor, becoming a cause for his good or bad fortune. Therefore, ancient sages deem that one’s fate is with no exception caused by oneself.

Just as sages in the past have profoundly realized, all things in the world, from the change of individuals’ fortune in the micro aspect to the stability or turmoil, survival or perishing of a country in the macro aspect, are governed by the cause-and-effect law. Therefore, they laid special emphasis on the education and moral teachings. In terms of personal cultivation, people are naturally required to stop doing evil and start doing good; in terms of state governance, leaders are naturally required to advise to be good and penalize the vicious; in terms of specific principles of governance, it is advocated to prioritize morality over punishment and educate people by virtue,

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which is an inevitable choice following nature’s justice and human feelings and respecting historical experience.

In the principle of “morality given priority over sanction,” morality is a mindset instead of a means, which means having morality and benevolence govern all political measures, especially with regard to the prudent exercise of punishment. The Way of Mankind (*rendao*, 人道) originates from the Way of Heaven (*tiandao*, 天道). As the Way of Heaven prefers the preservation of life to killing, the idea of benevolent governance is derived from the imitation of the Way of Heaven. The relationship between morality and penalty in governance is to employ penalty to supplement moral education, use punishment to reinforce morality, make punishment measures based on morality, and exercise penalty for upholding morality. Without clarifying the relationship between penalty and morality, cruel officials may abuse their power to hurt the people and violate the Way of Heaven for private gains. In Chinese books of history, from the Han Dynasty, historian-officials of all dynasties would record cruel officials and write special biographies for them, listing their cruel deeds and evil consequences they suffered to warn the posterity. Just as “Biographies of Cruel Officials” in *The Old Book of Tang* writes, “Since they perpetuated evil, they must end up in ill fortune.”

To educate people with morality refers to the emphasis

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on statesmen's great moral strength in that they are able to persuade common people to do good by their own moral influence, thus leading them to voluntarily transform their moral character. Human hearts are interconnected. To educate people with morality is to inspire benevolence with benevolence, which is the genuine conscience of the people. As "The Doctrine of Great Mean" of *The Book of Rites* has noted, "It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity under heaven, who can transform," and "the individual possessed of the most complete sincerity is like a spirit." The nature of education through morality is the miraculous and genuine effect of education arising from a heart of the utmost sincerity; without a genuine mindset of altruism, all measures of penalty and civilized intercourse would be but nominal.

As an ancient Chinese saying goes, "The most encompassing thing in the world is no other than people's minds," and President Xi Jinping has remarked, "people's minds are the greatest politics." Historical lessons have taught people that the stability or chaos, prosperity or decline of a nation is all caused by people's minds. A nation is in good order when people's minds are rectified, while a nation is in disorder if people's minds go astray. To inspire people's conscience, a sound legal system alone is inadequate, because law alone cannot inoculate

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the world against evils, and many social problems may arise. For example, it may lead to "people's sense of shame" (*The Analects*). People dare not do evil for fear of being punished, but without a sense of shame, they may go so far as to congratulate themselves for being smart after being exempted from punishment after doing evil. Consequently, "the more display there is of legislation, the more thieves and robbers there are." (*Tao Te Ching*). Although legal terms become more and more rigorous and specific, penetrating every aspect of life, numerous people still violate laws and regulations; sages or men of virtue cannot be cultivated; this would not reach the realm of governance, where "people cannot bear to have misconduct." (*Records of the Grand Historian*) In a word, we must strengthen sages' way of education to truly realize people's wellbeing and social stability.

Over the long history of practicing sage education in China, valuable productive experience, wisdom and methodology have been accumulated, which not only win popular support but also are proven effective in practice, as summarized into the following eight characteristics:

First, there should be a clearly defined vision. "On Learning" of *The Book of Rites* writes, "The ancient kings, when establishing states and governing the people, made instruction and schools a primary object." To build a nation and lead the people of a nation, education is paramount.

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The purpose of education is to carry forward people's good nature and remedy people's defects. Education, which only attaches importance to the imparting of knowledge and skills and does not put people's moral cultivation in the first place, would give rise to many social

problems such as “Hollow Heart Disease,” and sophisticated self-seekers.”

Second, moral norms should be concisely summarized. As early as the period of Yao and Shun in remote antiquity, people were educated with “Five Classics” and “Five Teachings,” that is, the five ways of human relationships, “between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity.” In the period of the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties, the school education system was also based on “elucidating the relations of humanity” *Mencius*, for the purpose of edifying morality and carrying forward the honest and sincere mores. The “Five Relations of Humanity” education as highly refined social ethic education served as the beginning for the moral education of all the following emperors and kings in Chinese history. Additionally, the ancient Chinese society also regarded the “Five Constants”(wuchang,五常) as the foundation for governance, that is, the five principles for human

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conduct, “benevolence, righteousness, rites, wisdom and fidelity.” The world would be naturally peaceful if everyone could follow these five principles in their conduct.

Third, moral education should have rich contents. Ancient moral education included not only education on morality and ethics but also ubiquitous education on cause and effect. The cause- and-effect law was vigorously advocated to cultivate people’s awareness of the natural law in the universe so that people would voluntarily constrain their hearts, actively refrain from doing evil and take initiative to do good. This has proven to be the best way to inspire goodness. The concept of cause-and-effect education in traditional culture is an inevitable supplement to social politics and law, addressing the root causes of legal and public security challenges resulting from people’s wrong world views about indulging in worldly pleasures.

Fourth, moral education should take diverse forms. Moral education in ancient China was a complete system consisting of family, school, social and religious education. Family education was a start, running through a person’s whole life from the stress on prenatal education to careful attention to performing the funeral rites to parents. School education was the continuation of family education, with the first content of instruction being about filial piety, respecting teachers, and honoring truth. Social education served as extension. Sage kings of China all

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attached great importance to the role of rites and music for educating the people. Rites, by nature, are veneration. Only music advocating morality in line with the Way could be called music. Rites and music work on people’s body and mind, able to imperceptibly guide people to steer away from evil and approach good, thus becoming civilized and upright. Ancient Chinese civilization is therefore also called “Rite and Music Civilization.” Religious education is called the sublimation and completion of moral education. The mainstay of traditional Chinese culture consists of the scholarship of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. Native Confucianism stressing the education of ethics, Buddhism that spread into China in the Western Han Dynasty focuses on exploring the ultimate truth of the universe, and Taoism

that is between the former two.

Fifth, there should be a reasonable order. Chinese culture is a culture of filial piety. "Filial piety is the most important of all virtues." Mencius has observed, "The Way of Yao and Shun is no other than filial piety and fraternal respect." The traditional Chinese values are based on filial piety and fraternal respect to cultivate people's gratitude and charity. Filial piety and fraternal respect, to be upgraded, is mutual love, that is, "within four seas all men are brothers." (*The Analects*) Mutual love, to be upgraded, is mutual help, that is, "treat with the reverence

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due to age the elders in your own family, so that the elders in the families of others shall be similarly treated; treat with the kindness due to youth the young in your own family, so that the young in the families of others shall be similarly treated." (*Mencius*) Mutual love and help, to be upgraded, is a world of Great Harmony. All the matters concerning self-cultivation, family regulation, state governance, and world peace are no other than the extension and implementation of filial piety and fraternal respect.

Sixth, vigorous support should be supplied to moral education. Ancient people's stress on moral education was not just empty talk but adjusted according to human nature. An effective system was built to ensure that talents with both capability and integrity be employed and promoted, so as to develop an excellent social morale of venerating morality and doing good. The ideal political institution in Chinese history was the politics of sages, which balanced the two aspects of justice and benevolence. In this political system, all institutional construction and reform were centered on how to cultivate people into good people, realizing the ideal effect of achieving good governance without interference.

Seventh, there should be effective methods. Effective moral education is achieved through good examples set by leaders for the people to follow. This is the original meaning of the word "jiao" (教, education), and also an

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actual situation. Confucius has observed, "If you lead on the people with correctness, who will dare not to be correct?"; "When a prince's personal conduct is correct, his governance would be effective without the issuing of orders. If his personal conduct is not correct, he may issue orders, but they would not be followed." (*The Analects*) Different from the instruction of ordinary knowledge, moral education depends on leaders' personal conduct to mobilize instead of verbal instructions. Leaders and educators must be educated first and set an example; otherwise, the people would not believe in them and would resort to arguing and fighting instead.

Eighth, key points should be highlighted. Ancient people believed that "when we do not, by what we do, realize what we desire, we must turn inwards, and examine ourselves in every point," (*Mencius*) which was considered to be an inevitable way of improving one's moral cultivation, scholarship, and problem-solving capability. Mencius has observed, "If a man loves others, and no responsive attachment is shown to him, let him turn inwards and examine his own benevolence. If he is trying to rule others, and his government is unsuccessful, let him turn inwards and examine his wisdom. If he treats others politely, and

they do not return his politeness, let him turn inwards and examine his own feeling of respect. When we do not, by what we do, realize what we desire, we must turn

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inwards, and examine ourselves in every point. When a man's person is correct, the whole kingdom will turn to him with recognition and submission," When people become riotous, the causes can be traced in the government; when the government is chaotic, the rulers should examine themselves. If the rulers act correctly, all the people would follow them.

"Know the enemy and know yourself, and you can fight a hundred battles without defeat," (*The Art of war*) a wise saying by Sunzi, a famous statesman and military strategist in ancient China, can still be referred to as the guideline of education reform in China. In terms of science and technology, Western countries have advanced science and technology and developed economies, while China is relatively backward. Therefore, we should modestly absorb the essence, "adapt foreign things to Chinese needs," and revitalize our country with science and technology. As far as culture is concerned, the philosophy in excellent traditional Chinese culture and the traditional moral concepts of China as a country of ceremonies and decorum are better than those of the West. Accordingly, education reform we are conducting now should preserve and carry forward the essence of our excellent traditional culture, "adapt ancient thoughts to current needs." Ideal moral education should not only make people settle down but also purify their minds; remove their mental pollution

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and guide them to happily get on with their pursuit, jointly engaged in the way of cultivating oneself and pacifying others with their own moral self-consciousness. This will not only benefit the people but also achieve the vision of governing a country through inaction.

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Chapter One

Governance by Sage Kings

The word "morality" is of paramount importance in the Chinese culture, which, derived from human nature, represents the lifelong practice of the unity of knowing and doing. Premised on the belief that to engage in political activities is to engage in moral practices, it means respecting life, focusing on moral cultivation, and working for the improvement of oneself and others would become a voluntary inner need. The monarch is deemed as governing the people on behalf of Heaven, integrating the three functions of King, Relative and Mentor. In the remote antiquity, the country was governed by selfless sages, thus realizing the ideal state of governance by doing nothing that goes against nature. Wise kings of later generations could also emulate the meritorious services of sage kings Yao and Shun. They not only cultivated morality themselves but also advocated education and culture, followed ancient practices, carried forward sages' teachings, appointed men of virtues as officials, and illustrated illustrious virtues to the world based on self-cultivation.

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Integrate Education with Punishment and Let Morality Bring Order to the People: Dialog Between Emperor Shun and Gao Yao

The Classic of History stands out among Chinese cultural classics as “Founder of Political Philosophy and Source of Historical Books,” records the major philosophy and approaches of governing the world by sage kings like Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu and Duke Zhou. Among the common laws and principles demonstrated by the ancient sages in their governance experience, an important principle is “to integrate education with punishment and let morality bring order to the people,” from which the proposition of “morality given priority over sanction and education of people through morality,” as the rule of virtue, originated.

Shun, born into a common family, went through great tribulations from his childhood, but he was by nature a very filial person, noted for his many virtues such as being wise, agile, peaceful, respectful, honest and sincere. He not only transformed his ignorant and stubborn

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parents and arrogant younger brother through his virtues but also changed people around him from disputes and contention to modesty and comity and from poverty and misery to prosperity and wellbeing wherever he went. Emperor Yao selected Shun as a candidate to succeed to his throne. The first thing that Yao ordered Shun to do was “prudently advocate the five codes and let the people strictly abide by them.” The five codes refer to the five principles regarding the relations of humanity: how, between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity. Emperor Yao commanded that Shun should prudently educate the people so that the five principles of conduct would be solidly practiced among the people and that the people would be happy to follow.

After Emperor Yao completed the mission assigned by Heaven to him and handed over the crown to Shun, Emperor Shun also clearly defined the principles of penalty. According to the signs from Heaven, he stipulated relevant standards for punishment of felonies, minor crimes, misdemeanors and very minor crimes. Regardless of gravity of penalty, stress was laid on prudently administering punishment. “Fear, fear, we must be thoughtful and fearful when administering punishment!”

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Sages believe that humanity originates from the Way of Heaven, which has the virtue of preserving life and crusading against criminals. On the one hand, there is a hard-won theorem for the least bit of difference in the severity of sentence. Causes and effects are all called upon by people’s own mind and deeds. Sages are impartial and selfless, and they just follow the laws of Heaven, without the least bit of selfishness. On the other hand, sages’ care for people’s livelihood is also clearly reflected in their consistent compassion. The following story highlights the principle, organization and effect of sages’ administration of punishment.

One day, Emperor Shun convened a meeting of ministers including Yu and Gao Yao to discuss the major policies of governing the country and the people. Emperor Shun noted,

“Gao Yao, none of the officials and people now dares to go against my decrees. Since you became a judge, you have been able to judge cases fairly. All kinds of punishments are administered in accordance with the gravity of offense, and the people are convinced by the proper trials. The rule of sages advocates the education of people based on morality, and we vigorously promote the teaching of the five principles regarding the relations of humanity. In places inaccessible to education, you can use punishment as an aid to realize our ideal politics. Although punishment will inevitably be resorted to at the beginning

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of governance, we are in fact expecting to achieve the state of no need for punishment. It is such a mindset and practice that have enabled people to walk on the right path. These are realized all thanks to your efforts! Please make persistent efforts in this direction!

Gao Yao

Gao Yao: Born in today's Qufu, Shandong, and buried in Lu'an, Anhui. He was a great statesman, thinker and educator in remote antiquity, the first great judge in the history of China, known as “Sage Minister.” Having assisted three emperors, Yao, Shun and Yu, Gao Yao rendered meritorious services for the stability of the world and harmonious coexistence of all peoples. He was esteemed by later generations as one of the “Four Sages in Remote Antiquity,” the other three being Yao, Shun and Yu. Gao Yao was also celebrated as the “Founder of Judiciary” in China.

Hearing Emperor Shun's praise, Gao Yao did not think that the good governance was a result of his own services, but attributed it to Emperor Shun, “This originates from the faultless virtues of you the Emperor. You condescend to your ministers with a kindly ease; you presided over the multitudes with a generous forbearance. Punishments do not extend to (the criminal's) heirs, while

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rewards extend to (succeeding) generations. You pardon inadvertent faults, however great, and punish purposed crimes, however small. In cases of doubtful crimes, you deal with them lightly; in cases of doubtful merit, you prefer the high estimation. Rather than putting an innocent person to death, you would run the risk of irregularity and error. This life-loving virtue has penetrated the minds of the people, and this is why they do not render themselves liable to be punished by your officers. Probably the laws made by sages, no matter how elaborate they are, still fail to cover everything. But the mind of sages can transcend the finite to reach the infinite. Therefore, when you have doubt in administering punishments or rewards, you would temporarily let the laws give way to mercy, instead of letting law enforcement prevail over your life-loving virtue, because your majesty's original mind cannot be obstructed and is able to transcend common law. This virtue transcending finiteness, shedding opposition and thus becoming brilliant and magnanimous is like the sun and clear spring water, able to penetrate people's hearts wherever you go. Consequently, no one under the sun would not admire you or follow your example. Becoming kind, no one would be willing to violate any law.”

Upon hearing these, Emperor Shun complimented Gao Yao again, “My wish is that people would not offend the law and that officials do not have to use punishments.

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You are able to assist me in governing the world according to my wish so that culture and education spread to all directions, like everything obeys the sway of wind. This is your great merit!”

From Emperor Shun's experience of governing the state, “to integrate punishment with education, and have virtue penetrate the minds of the people,” we can understand the mind of sages and the rule of virtue (*dezhi*, 德治) they have advocated as well as the outcome of the rule of virtue. We can also infer how sincere people's hearts were before the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties, and how clearly people could observe Heaven's promotion of kindness and resentment of evil. When sages established the reward and punishment system in the world, they were not just for the convenience of admonishing the world. The mind of sages conforms to the mind of Heaven. The Way of Heaven is manifest and should be unquestionably followed.

“To integrate punishment with education” is the principle and approach of governing the world, while “to have virtue penetrate the minds of the people” is the original aspiration and end goal of governance. What is the psychological mechanism underlying the advocate for the rule of virtue? What necessity has given rise to such a tradition of state governance in China, such mindset, principle, approach and conception? We could discover

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while reading *The Classic of History* a kind of psychology permeating all words and paragraphs, that is, the psychology of reverence. The stories in *The Classic of History* start with Emperor Yao, relating to his virtues and meritorious services, and the book opens with reverence. Words and deeds admonishing reverence are ubiquitous in all relations as among ancient sages, kings, and their ministers, and between brothers. The long-standing reverence culture of the Chinese nation originates from this book.

“Canon of Yao” in *The Classic of History* (《尚书·尧典》) opens with “*yue ruo ji gu di yao*” (曰若稽古帝尧). “Ji” (稽) means “to examine.” There are two ways to interpret this sentence in ancient books: one way is to understand “ruo” (若) as “respectful and dutiful,” and thus this sentence can mean “according to ancient historical records, Emperor Yao respectfully and dutifully examined the ancient rules and methods in his governance.” The other way is to understand “yue ruo” (曰若) as an interjection without substantial meaning, and thus this sentence can mean “before relating to the exploits of Emperor Yao, the historian first explained that by examining ancient historical records about Emperor Yao, his virtues were as follows.” Whatever interpretation we follow, we can obviously see the attitude of reverence to history. The phrase “ji gu” (稽古, to examine the past) can be frequently discovered throughout *The Classic of History*.

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Emperor Yao, by following the ancient practice of educating the people through morality, extended his meritorious services far and wide. “Canon of Yao” summarizes his

virtues as “being reverential, intelligent, accomplished, thoughtful, gentle and magnanimous” (钦, 明, 文, 思, 安安). The six orderly words extol the five virtues of Emperor Yao, which can be interpreted as: reverence, wisdom, compliance with rules of propriety, being sagacious and quick-witted, original nature and creating harmony. Of the virtues, the first one is “reverence” (qin, 钦).

“钦” not only covers the meaning of “reverence” but also “awe,” that is, “holding something in awe due to reverence.” “Reverence” means seriousness and prudence, while “awe” means being fearful, daring not to disobey. For example, Emperor Rao told his ministers, “*qin ruo hao tian*”(钦若昊天), that is, they should act in reverent accordance with (their observation of) the wide heavens, modestly accept the decree of Heaven as if standing on the brink of a deep gulf or skating on thin ice. “Tian” (天) refers to the cosmic life *per se*, that is, the natural laws and principles of Heaven and Earth. Confucius exalted Emperor Yao, “*Wei tian wei da, wei Yao ze zhi*” (唯天为大,唯尧则之), meaning “it is only Heaven that is grand, and only Yao corresponded to it naturally.” The virtues of Yao were so great and endless that common people could hardly describe them with words. The only descriptions

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can only be found in various classics and canons compiled by Yao. The education of the people through morality by Emperor Yao, as extolled by Confucius, was quiet and imperceptible like Heaven fostering all things in the world. Emperor Yao’s virtues benefited common people so naturally that they could not discern the bounties bestowed by him.

In *The Classic of History*, the narration of emperors’ virtues is headed by Emperor Yao, while the description of Emperor Yao’s virtues is preceded by the word “qin” (钦), including the reverence towards Heaven, towards cosmic rules, towards sages, towards common people, towards history, and towards the responsibilities assigned by Heaven, which represents whole-hearted acceptance, observance of and dedication to the Great Way. Confucius has remarked, “There are three things of which the man of virtue stands in awe. He stands in awe of the ordinances of Heaven. He stands in awe of great men. He stands in awe of the words of sages. The mean man does not know the ordinances of Heaven, and consequently does not stand in awe of them. He is disrespectful to great men. He makes sport of the words of sages.” (*The Analects*) “*Tian ming*” (天命, ordinances of Heaven) may be understood as the law of cause and effect as ordained by Heaven. For example, in *The Classic of History*, Sage Minister Yi Yin of the Shang Dynasty instructed Taijia, who

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had succeeded to the throne, “*Wei shangdi buchang, zuoshan xiang zhi baixiang, zuo bushan xiang zhi baiyang* (惟上帝不常, 作善降之百祥, 作不善降之百殃).” That is to say, the ways of God are not invariable: on the good-doer he sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer he sends down all miseries. Yi repeatedly admonished Taijia, “*De we zhi, fou de luan. Yu zhi tong dao, wang bu xing; yu luan tong shi, wang bu wang* (德惟治, 否德乱。与治同道, 罔不兴; 与乱同事, 罔不亡).” That is to say, when there are (those) virtues, good government is realized; when they are not, disorder comes. To maintain the same principles as those who secured good government will surely lead to prosperity; to pursue the courses of disorder will surely lead to ruin. The wise king knowing the Way should be careful for the

end at the beginning. To realize good governance, we should act according to circumstances. The system of social etiquette may decline or rise, and things may vary, but the Way is the same. What leads to the fall of a nation or a family is no other than greed, lust, sloth, tyranny and indiscriminate killing. Doing the same thing always leads to the same result. Prosperity or ruin depends on your company. If in the beginning, a nation prospers for following the right way, but later is governed by a bad king, the nation will also suffer from fall. Only those maintain virtues from beginning to end are wise kings. For another example, when King Cheng of Zhou conferred

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the title to duke to Cai Zhong, he said, "Great Heaven has no partial affections; it helps only the virtuous. The people's hearts have no unchanging attachment; they cherish only the kind. Acts of goodness are different, but they contribute in common to good order. Acts of evil are different, but they contribute in common to disorder. Be cautious!"

Therefore, to "stand in awe of the ordinances of Heaven" is to revere such laws of cause and effect. Einstein has observed that "there is a strict law of cause and effect in the universe," exerting an effect on all the people. Disbelief in this law is not equivalent to escape from the law's sanction, because with action there is always reaction, and all the fate, ill or good, is called upon by oneself. Ancient people thought that follow the ordinances of Heaven, one would have good fortune; while one would incur misfortune by going against the ordinances of Heaven. Only those have a profound understanding of the ordinances of Heaven are willing to cultivate virtues and establish meaning for their life. They would not only lead a fulfilling life themselves but also lead the people to pursue a meaningful life, thus becoming men of virtues. To "stand in awe of great men" is to venerate people with virtues and authority. For example, tianzi (天子, emperor) is a great man assigned by Heaven to enforce justice on behalf of Heaven and maintain the stability of the nation

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with his authority, and therefore should be not offend. We should "stand in awe of the words of sages," because sages, having accomplished perfect moral character, have passed down words for the world to follow, which are recorded in classics to educate later generations, and should not be obeyed. On the other hand, mean men without moral principles or knowledge, are not aware of the law of cause and effect, and do not know that even if evildoers can evade punishment of the nation for the time being, he would never be able to get away with the punishment of Heaven. This idea also corresponds to Laozi's remark that "meshes of the net of Heaven are large; far apart, but letting nothing escape." Those who disregard great men, treat sages' words and classics disrespectfully would inevitably suffer from disasters.

Therefore we can conclude that reverence is an indispensable part for personal cultivation. It is a hub for people to reach the truth, a psychological foundation for connecting with Heaven, Earth and Nature, and a spiritual support for the Chinese civilization to be passed on and flourish in the future. The reverence awareness of the Chinese nation can be traced back to the virtuous model of Emperor Yao in remote antiquity. Deng Xinwen, a scholar has noted in his "Study on the Origin of Reverence in China from 'Canon of Yao' in

The Classic of History that “being reverential, intelligent, accomplished,

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thoughtful, gentle and magnanimous (钦, 明, 文, 思, 安安)” are the genes of Chinese culture, exerting far-reaching effect on the formation of the character of the Chinese nation and the founding of the scholarship system of Chinese culture. The Chinese people, born gentle and contented, value brotherhood and righteousness over material gains, treasure peace over war, which have all been determined by the cultural genes founded by Emperor Yao. If these six characters are deemed as the source of Chinese culture, the character “钦”(reverence) should be the fountainhead of our cultural source, which opened up the excellent tradition of the Chinese nation for “venerating Heaven and respecting people,” “revering teachers and valuing the truth.” The self-discipline, respectfulness, modesty and prudence characteristic of Chinese people can all be dated back to the character “钦.” Ancient sages like Yao and Shun were early to conclude that human nature is good; Confucius studied and taught tirelessly, just to teach people to be humans and maintain human beings’ original good nature, without any other addition. All sages throughout the dynasties of ancient China, including Mencius, were all no exception. This is the right knowledge that must be clearly grasped before we study Chinese culture.

Thanks to their profound insight into the constraint of the cause-and-effect law over the world, from personal

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fortune in the micro aspect to the conditions of a country and the support of people in the macro aspect, ancient sages paid special respect to this constant rule in the world and gave special attention to education of the people through morality and ethics. This reverence, reflected in personal cultivation, naturally requires stopping evil doing and starting good deeds; reflected in social governance, naturally advising people to be good and penalizing the vicious, and encouraging people to do good, instead of doing nothing and being limited to fatalism. Until now, we can still hear some ancient wise sayings frequently spoken by people, for example, “Heaven is watching whatever you do,” “a kind person may be cheated by ordinary people but never by Heaven,” “human plans cannot catch up with God’s plans,” “I would rather be betrayed by others than betray any other person,” and “good deeds come back to help you, bad deeds come back to haunt you; it is not that they have not come back, but the time is not ripe; when it is time, all good deeds would yield good results, and all bad deeds would incur suffering.” Such timeless traditional moral concepts, seeing nature through phenomena, used to be household words in the society over thousands of years in China, enabling people to consciously constrain their mind and deeds and actively stop doing evil and start doing good, and playing an enormous role in educating people, maintaining social order and supporting national

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stability and unity.

Since state governance should realize the education function of persuading people to do good and punishing evil-doers, and guiding people to advocate morality and do good

deeds, in the way of administering governance, we should inevitably “integrate punishment with education, and have virtue penetrate the minds of the people,” in the words of later generations, morality should be given priority over penalty and people should be educated through morality. This is a real grasp of the natural law, which also reflects reverence and observance of historical experiences in state government. *The Classic of History* opens with the mindset of reverence, *The Book of Rites* starts with “wubu jing (毋不敬, always and in everything let there be reverence),” and the education of the Six Classics in Chinese culture, namely *The Classic of Poetry*, *The Classic of History*, *The Book of Music*, *The Book of Rites*, *The Book of Changes*, and *Spring and Autumn Annals*, are invariably based on reverence. Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty has also observed, “Administering people, we should be based on respect,” and that “scholarship passed down over thousands of years, to be summed up, is all encompassed by two words, sincerity and reverence.” Therefore, self-cultivation, governing the state and benefiting the people can be accomplished only with a sincere and reverent mindset.

President Xi Jinping has pointed out, “The Chinese




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civilization with a history stretching several thousand years presents a unique system of values. The fine traditional Chinese culture has grown into the genes of the Chinese nation, deep-rooted in Chinese people’s mind, exerting a subtle influence on their ways of thinking and behaving... As Chinese, our most fundamental feature is the unique spiritual world of Chinese with values that we unconsciously resort to every day.” Mr. Liang Shuming, a famous Chinese scholar, has also observed, “The majority of human culture consists of no other than the tools, methods, technologies, organizations and institutions in human life, but they are subordinate despite their predominance in volume. The central and commanding part of culture is life attitude and all one’s values. That is to say, the predominant part of culture consists of one’s choices, likes, dislikes, and goals. Once these things are set, all others follow them.”(*Highlights of Chinese Culture*)

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, China has braved numerous perils and challenges in the course of improving people’s livelihood and promoting peace and joint development. The CPC Central Committee with President Xi Jinping at the core, remaining calm and composed in uncertainties, has been leading 1.4 billion Chinese people to create many miracles to the amazement of the world, presenting a civilized, open and inclusive China, and demonstrating exceptional Chinese grace and strength.

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With China’s gradual development and approaching to the center of the world stage, sound governance in China has increasingly become a topic that draws world attention.

The character “治” has profound meaning in Chinese culture. Its small seal script is “,” of which the left part “” means water, meaning “as smooth-flowing as water”; and the right part “” means the same as “怡”(in small seal scrip), that is, “pleasant and harmonious.” “治,”

as ancient Chinese had it, not only means governance but also the purpose, approach and effect of governance. The purpose should accord with the Way of Heaven, the approach should follow sages' teachings; and the effect should be an ideal state of good social law and order, where people lived in peace and harmony. *Tao Te Ching* writes, "The highest excellence is like (that of) water. The excellence of water appears in its benefiting all things without striving." Water can shape itself as the Way directs. Similarly, to govern in accordance with the Way is also very smooth-going, leading to the supreme good. From the character "治," we can infer that it integrates actions and the direction and power of actions, plain but lofty, profound but approachable.

A tree has a root no matter how tall it is, and a river has a source no matter how long it is. Chinese culture originated from the teachings of sages in remote antiquity.

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The Book of Changes writes, "Heaven and earth exert their influences, and there ensue the transformation production of all things. The sages influence the minds of men, and the result is harmony and peace all under the sky." In this ancient, vast, fertile land of culture, thanks to sages' moral teachings, Chinese people have always regarded the Way (道, Tao) as the origin of all things, and believe that everyone should follow the Way. Only with the purification of the heart and the promotion of virtues can people's understanding of the truth of life in the universe be deepened gradually, and the inherent equality, openness and freedom of life be revealed steadily. As a result, Chinese people's attitude towards life, different from Western individualism or nationalism, is distinguished by close attention to ethics and constant self-improvement. The understanding of freedom is not individualized, but towards the ultimate, which transcends the constraints of sensory cognition and eliminates the difference between self and others. Chinese people's way of thinking is not a partial schismatic thinking, but a holistic inward-returning dialectical thinking... The infinite profundity and extensiveness of Chinese culture makes Chinese people's inheriting and carrying forward "governance by sage kings" today not only a spiritual dialog and cultural journey across time and space, but also the return of the soul, the awakening of life and the deep attachment to the "hometown of the Great Way."

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The Way of Illustrating Virtues and Be Careful in the Use of Punishments: King Wu of Zhou's Instruction for His Brother Prince of Kang

The fountainhead of the governance tradition of the Chinese nation, "morality given priority over sanction and education of people through morality" is Emperor Shun's idea that we should "integrate punishment with education, and have virtue penetrate the minds of the people," a mindset and approach of governance always followed by later sage kings. According to the records of "Kang Gao" in *The Classic of History* by the Zhou Dynasty, King Wu of Zhou, in his Announcements to Kangshu (Prince of Kang), proposed that we should "illustrate virtues and be careful in the use of punishments," which was crystallization and inheritance of governance experience of past sovereigns and also a need for-revering Heaven, protecting the people, and stabilizing the society. This idea has been exerting a

far-reaching impact on later generations. This article in *The Classic of History* relates to King Wu's teachings and entrustment to young and king

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Prince of Kang before the prince's governance of the old land of Shang with an order from his elder brother.

First, King Wu reviewed the reasons why his father King Wen was able to found the Zhou Dynasty and concluded, "Our greatly distinguished father, King Wen, was so wise, able to illustrate his virtue and be careful in the use of punishments. He did not dare to treat with contempt the disadvantaged people like the elderly, the disabled, the lonely and miserable people, but showed solicitude towards them. He employed the employable, and revered the reverend; he was terrible to those who needed to be awed. Whether putting talents to important positions, respecting men of virtues or punishing sinners or criminals, he all followed heavenly principles, never seeking self-interest. Therefore, he got distinction among the people, who regarded him like father and revered him like Heaven. The fame of him ascended up to the high God, and God approved. Heaven accordingly gave a grand charge to King Wen, to exterminate the Dynasty of Yin, and grandly receive its appointment, so that the various countries belonging to it and their peoples were brought to an orderly condition.

King Wu not only prudently carried forward his father's spirit, working hard to exercise the principle that we should "illustrate virtues and be careful in the use of punishments," but also wished that Prince of Kang could

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also promote this principle in his governance. For example, in terms of "illustrating virtues," he enjoined Prince of Kang, "The wellbeing of the people will depend on your reverently following your father Wen. You should carry out his virtuous words which you have heard, and his virtuous deeds that you have seen. Moreover, where you go, seek out the precious experience of the former wise kings of Yin and have a full understanding of the thoughts and needs of the old accomplished men from the Shang Dynasty. Further still, you must search out besides what is to be learned of the wise kings of antiquity, and employ it in tranquillizing and protecting the people. With such studious learning and sincere practice, your virtues will be developed so that you can comprehend all principles of ethics of the universe and duly exercise the mission as a prince. King Wu solemnly instructed Prince of Kang: Be respectfully careful. Seeing the unsettling state of the people, you should feel as if you were suffering from a disease. Awful though Heaven be, it yet helps the sincere. The feelings of the people can for the most part be discerned; but it is difficult to preserve (the attachment of) the lower classes. Where you go, employ all your heart. Do not seek repose, nor be fond of ease and pleasure. There is an ancient saying, 'Dissatisfaction is caused not so much by great things, or by small things, as by (a ruler's) observance of heavenly principle or the

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reverse, and by his energy of conduct on his duty or the reverse.'" That is to say, if you follow

principles and work diligently, people's resentment, no matter how grave it is, will be resolved; otherwise, people's resentment, no matter how minor it is, would cause a catastrophe. As leader of princes, minister of King, you must carry forward kingly virtues and protect the people. This is your responsibility for helping the king to stabilizing the kingdom and guiding the people to follow the right path.

In terms of prudently administering punishments, King Wu also enjoined Prince of Kang with awe, specially mentioning that he should "deal reverently and intelligently in infliction of punishments. When men commit small crimes, which are not mischances, but purposed, they of themselves doing what is contrary to the laws intentionally, though their crimes be but small, you may not but put them to death. But in the case of great crimes, which were not purposed, but from mischance and misfortune, accidental, if the transgressors confess their guilt without reserve, you must not put them to death. There must be the orderly regulation (of this matter). When you show a great discrimination, subduing (men's hearts), the people will admonish one another, and strive to follow law. Removing evil as if it were a disease in your own person, and the people will entirely put away their faults. Deal with the people as if you were protecting your own

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infants, and the people will be tranquil and orderly. Punishments, slight or serious, are essentially the retributions of Heaven for sinners and criminals. Even though you have power, you cannot punish or kill anyone, and you cannot act according to your own will."

Because Prince of Kang was conferred the land which used to be governed by the Shang Dynasty, King Wu ordered him to present the people with the principles of punishments and the offenses that must be punished, following the regular laws of the Shang Dynasty in issuing sentences. Afraid that Prince of Kang would be too rigid in practices, King Wu said, "In applying the regular laws of Yin, you must see that those punishments, and (especially) the penalty of death, be righteous and in accordance with the current situation (*yi xing yi sha*, 义刑义杀)." "Yi" (义) means "appropriate," that is, only those that should righteously punished or killed might be punished or killed. Also, afraid that Prince of Kang would blindly follow others and become subjective and arbitrary, King Wu again enjoined, "You must not let them be warped to agree with your own inclinations," Then, afraid that Prince of Kang would become complacent, King Wu said, "Your administration of punishments should be entirely accordant with right, and you may say, 'They are properly ordered;' yet you must say (at the same time), 'Perhaps they are not yet entirely accordant with right'.

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Because once one becomes complacent, one becomes indolent and the administration of punishments would not accord with the Way. You must take warning!"

With regard to offenses that should be punished, King Wu also gave very clear instructions, saying, "All who commit crimes, robbing, stealing, practicing villainy and treachery, and who kill men or violently assault them to take their property, being reckless and fearless of death-these are abhorred by all, and must be punished."

Next, King Wu noted, "Such vicious criminals are greatly abhorred, and how much more

abhorrible are the unfilial and unbrotherly! One who as the son does not reverently discharge his duty to his father, but greatly wounds his father's heart, and as the father can no longer love his son, but hates him; as the younger brother does not think of the natural order of respect for the senior, and refuses to respect his elder brother, and the elder brother does not think of the toil of their parents in bringing up their children, and is very unfriendly to his junior, If we who are charged with government do not treat parties who proceed to such wickedness as offenders, the laws given by Heaven to our people will be thrown into great disorder and destroyed. You must resolve to deal speedily with such according to the penal laws of King Wen, punishing them severely and not pardoning.

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"The sin of a person can be no more serious than being the unfilial and unbrotherly. Those who are disobedient to moral teachings are to be thus subjected to punishments of the laws; how much more the officers employed in your state as the instructors of the youth, the heads of the official departments, and the minor officers charged with their several commissions, when they propagate other lessons, seeking the praise of the people, not thinking of their duty, nor using the rules for their offices, but instigating the people to hate their sovereign! These lead on the people to wickedness, and are an abomination to me. It would be appropriate to penalize officials who are so disloyal? You should speedily, according to what is right, put them to death."

Supposing that you are yourself ruler of a state, and if you cannot manage your own household, or your ministers, but use only terror and violence, you will greatly go against the ordinance of the Son of Heaven. How could you properly regulate your state by going contrary to virtue? If you cannot observe the order of the Son of Heaven, how can you blame your ministers for hating their sovereign? You must reverently follow the regular laws set by King Wen and carry on his tradition to guide your people to take the right path.

You should often think and be keenly aware of how to lead people to the good; only by being and doing good

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can the people have peace and wellbeing. I often remember with gratitude the virtues of the former wise kings of Yin and hope to tranquilize and regulate the people like they did. Moreover, if one does not lead the people to the good and to happiness, one could not be said to exercise a government in their state or administer punishment!

At the end of this Announcement, King Wu reiterated his instructions by interjections like "be reverent," "Heaven's appointments are not unchanging," and "never disregard statues." He instructed Prince of Kang, "You must be reverent! Never do anything that may cause the people's resentment, never resort to bad strategy or measures that cannot stand test, but act with sincerity. You should sincerely follow the pure and agile morality of ancient people to tranquilize your heart, reflect on your virtues, broaden your wisdom, so that you become tolerant, profound, enriched and composed. In this way, your people will soon become happy and tranquil. The appointments of Heaven are never unchanging, and you can get them when you do good, and lose them if you do evil. Remember the instructions which you have heard, and diligently practice them. Go to your own state, and tranquillize and regulate

the people. You should never disregard the statutes of the Way of Heaven and the Way of Man that you should reverence.

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From the story told in "Kang Gao" of *The Classic of History*, we can see that King Wu, who had inherited his father's cause, so reverently and diligently followed King Wen's governance experience of illustrating virtues and exercising caution in administering punishments. In his instructions to his younger brother, who was about to take office, how sincerely he expressed his benevolence, reverence and prudence! Starting from illustrating virtues, he talked about exercising caution in giving punishments. In the matters about which punishments should be used, he traced people's offenses back to the offenses of officials in state governance, then admonished his brother Prince of Kang, who was about to become king of a vassal state, to cultivate virtues and exercise prudence, and finally returned to himself as Son of Heaven, who must bear in mind such admonishments. "Illustrating virtues" here, at a deep level, refers to "presenting all illustrious virtues inherent in people and letting them play their immeasurable role." To do this, one should be dedicated to a cause for the benefit of other people with a selfless, positive, bright, and enterprising attitude. That is what "to employ all the heart" (尽乃心) means in King Wu's instructions to Prince of Kang. The leaders should recognize the Way of Heaven by employing all the heart, witnessing the natural integrity of father and son, brothers, king and ministers, officials and people,

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and the whole cosmos. King Wu talked to himself, "The people are blaming me, the One man, for my delay." (*The Classic of History*) King Tang of the previous dynasty also remarked, "If, in my person, I commit offenses, they are not to be attributed to you, the people of the myriad regions. If you in the myriad regions commit offenses, these offenses must rest on my person." (*The Analects*). This community thinking of ancient sage kings and their magnanimous imagination, extraordinary courage and commitment to suffering for the people were not only the natural outflow of their sublime conception of the mind, but also the eternal pursuit of numerous men of lofty ideals and wise kings and ministers. Of course, such a mindset is also a prominent symbol of transcendence and inclusiveness of Chinese culture.

The Classic of History, as the first book of political science and history in China, is distinguished for the profound argumentations that it presents! The above quotations are but one or two pearls of the book, for a tentative exploration of the fountainhead and meaning of the tradition of the rule of virtue in China. Zhu Xi, a great scholar of the Song Dynasty, observes in his poem, "How can the pond be so clear and cool? For fresh water keeps sprouting from the fountainhead." The fountainhead of fresh water of "morality given priority over sanction and education of people through morality" is the

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mindset of reverence, from Emperor Yao's "veneration" (钦) of morality (he stood in reverence and awe of history, Heaven, the cause and effect principal prevalent in the universe), to Emperor Shun's "integrating punishment with education, and having virtue

penetrate the minds of the people,” to King Wen’s “carrying forward the moral excellence in men and exercising prudence in administering punishment,” to King Wu’s observation and carrying forward of his father King Wen’s way of governance, and to Confucius’ words that “there are three things of which the man of virtue stands in awe,” we can see that ancient sages shared the same mindset and way despite their different times and circumstances: They consistently followed the same idea of governance for cultivating the self, regulating the family, governing the state and benefiting the world.

Nowadays people often say that we should understand laws, grasp laws and learn to use laws. The greatest law is the constant cause and effect law in the universe. Using this law to guide society and life is to persuade people to do good and refrain from evil, from self to others. Being good is derived from conscience and genuine heart. Morality is to do things according to conscience, and constantly maintain and carry forward the conscience. To persuade people to do good is to advocate the education of people through morality, and prioritize moral teachings,

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that is, to inspire conscience through conscience. With a clear conscience, people would be good in their words and deeds. Etymologically, the original meaning of “教”(jiao, teach) is a junior following what a senior does. “化”(hua, change, education) means that when a senior changes, a junior changes accordingly, just like life-giving spring breeze and rain. No change or education would be achieved without utter sincerity. “化” is the moving, influence and vibration between hearts. “育” means to raise a child to be a good person. “感” means the touching of heart. Moral teaching and education is effected through the mutual correspondence of hearts between the ruler and the ruled, symbolizing the great importance attached by the ruling or educating party to people’s internal moral forces and real cultivation, and meaning that the educated party voluntarily changes their personality under the influence of good models. Therefore, ancient people paid close attention to moral teaching and education, and had them encompass everything as governance measures. Education refers to moral education; governance refers to governance through morality; punishment refers to punishment by morality. Morality is regarded as the commander, source, destination and spirit for stabilizing the state and governing the country. As an ancient sage has observed, “Morality is the root of governance; while governance is the footstep of morality.” It is the same case

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with the implementation of education and punishments.

Punishment is initiated because some people may go against their moral conscience and go to excesses to meet their desires. The purpose of punishment is to return immoral people to the track of morality, and to restore incontinent people to a good life with continence. Punishment, playing a role of deterrence with the rule of law, is nevertheless also moral teaching in the final analysis. For criminals, suffering from the punishment of state law or the penalty of Heaven, these are all inevitable results caused by their evil deeds. “As you sow, so shall you reap.” It is inevitable that one cannot be free from punishment if one does not take the right path. For the administrators, punishment is a strategy for deterrence that

they have to take, and punishment is also administered for protecting the good nature of offenders and considering their long-term well-being, lest they would commit a more serious crime due to their fearlessness born out of ignorance, thus suffering severer punishment. This is to do a harsh thing with a benevolent heart. Essentially, the administrators are also burdened with the duty of administering punishment on behalf of Heaven, that is, to present the bad consequence resulting from a criminal's crime. *The Classic of History* writes, "The work is Heaven's; men must act for it." (天工, 人其代之). That is to say, all the official positions have been set up to handle affairs

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and protect the people on behalf of Heaven. All officials must strictly follow this principle to exercise their duty for Heaven without seeking any self-interest. Otherwise, if they are blinded by lust for gain, as vehicles of the Way of Heaven, they would not reflect Heaven's morality of protecting the people and maintaining justice, and would inevitably do harm to the people and fail to fulfil the responsibility of guiding the people to take the right path. In such a case, the administrator would not match his position and similarly also suffer from punishment. As a saying goes, "if an official's morality does not match his position, he would inevitably suffer from a disaster." Therefore, ancients stood in awe of morality, venerated morality, and strictly disciplined themselves to seek unity with the Way in a selfless state.

On the whole, the relationship of punishment and morality in government, just as ancient people have remarked, is to use punishment to supplement moral education, and integrate punishment in morality, formulate laws of punishment according to morality, and administer punishments for carrying forward morality. If an administrator has high moral standards, the people under administration are influenced by him and happily do good, then punishment can be shelved. If an administrator is tyrannical and ruthlessly kills the innocent, morality is discarded, and people's happiness is gone. For death penalty,

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sages have clearly expressed that never shall anyone kill an innocent person. Sometimes, mercy to a villain is equal to cruelty to the world. Heinous people will cause an endless flow of disasters thereafter. It is just to execute criminals deserving the death penalty.

"帝" (di, emperor) and "王" (wang, king) in Chinese culture originally are words meaning morality. "帝," endowed with illustrious moral principles, can illustrate all the inborn virtues of mankind. "王" connecting Heaven, Earth and Man share the virtues of Heaven and Earth, and all the people admire him. Confucius described the morality of kings (王) as "selfless as Heaven and Earth?". From the words and deeds of wise kings and sages recorded in *The Classic of History*, we can see that none of them was not conscientious and reverent. They were only afraid that any of their actions did not accord with the Way and that they had not fulfilled their duty, and were not in the least proud of themselves. Thanks to such virtues, they became accomplished as sages. Confucius has observed, "How majestic was the manner in which Shun and Yu held possession of the empire, as if it were nothing to them! (巍巍乎! 舜禹之有天下也, 而不与焉。) It is maintained in the academic circles that this remark is used by Confucius the sage to praise the ancient sages in his mind. "巍巍乎" describes the magnificence and purity of the morality of Emperor Shun and King

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Yu. “与” means participation. Thanks to their morality, they accomplished meritorious services and took control of a big country; but the power they had could not be mentioned together with the morality they had cultivated. This means that they took possession of the country without any selfish intention. Confucius, by taking Shun and Yu as example, described sages as being magnanimous, whose equanimity would not be affected by gains, losses, honors or humility. Even if an ordinary person became the Son of Heaven, sages' serenity would not be disturbed. Confucius aimed to inspire ordinary scholars, who, unaware of the happiness from moral accomplishments, tended to be depressed in poverty and complacent in prosperity, which was blasphemy to their pure inner morality. Instead, they should cultivate their inner strength and enjoy the inborn genuine happiness, not to be encumbered by the constantly changing circumstances. Therefore, the sage kings and their Way of Governance esteemed in Chinese culture profoundly differ from imperialist invasions and annexation.

Cai Shen, a scholar in the Song Dynasty spent ten years writing about *The Classic of History*. In the preface of his book, Cai writes, “Rulers of later generations aspiring to govern the state like the two emperors and three kings cannot ignore their Way of Governance; those aspiring to follow their Way of Governance cannot afford to

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cultivate their mind like sages.” “With a mind like sages, rulers can know the Way and achieve good governance.” (Shu Jing Ji Zhuan) The two emperors refer to Emperor Yao and Emperor Shun. The three kings refer to King Yu of the Xia Dynasty, King Tang of the Shang Dynasty, and King Wen and King Wu of the Zhou Dynasty. According to the description of ancient books, ancient sage rulers had achieved such an excellent state of governance that politics was well-regulated and just, people were happy and contented, and even the natural environment was very beautiful, with auspicious phoenixes and kylins, and magic herbs, among others. If later kings aspire to realize such an ideal political state, they could not afford to ignore the methods and ways of the two emperors and three kings in governing the state. To learn from their way of governance, they must learn the mindset and their supreme moral cultivation behind their governance. Education through rites and music was naturally derived from the mind of the two emperors and three kings; while various codes and systems were crystalized from the mind of the two emperors and three kings. For example, their exceedingly reverent, benevolent, just and selfless mind, reflected in the design and application of the penalty system, naturally coped with Heavenly Principles, human feelings, and accorded with their circumstances, able to play an ideal role of education. Regulating the family,

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governing the state and benefiting the world were no other than the externalization of the mind of the two emperors and three kings, who constantly developed and carried forward their just and benevolent mind. These are essentially the reflection of their mind and good consequences of their frame of mind. If rulers did not deeply reflect on the source of the accomplishments of the two emperors and three kings, they still could not well learn and

apply the “magic instrument” if their mind had not been cultivated to the relevant level. They might turn systems into “rigid” institutions, causing chaos. Such cases frequently took place in history. Therefore, Cai Shen pointed out that after learning the basic knowledge of the mind of the two emperors and three kings, they could go further to study sages’ governance methods and results.

It is necessary to mention the same instruction given when Yao passed his crown to Shun and when Shun handed over to Yu, “允执其中” (Sincerely hold fast the due Mean of Heaven). The literal meaning of the sentence is to honestly hold the state of “due Mean.” This refers to the supreme level of cultivation matching the position of ancient sages and Son of Heaven, very sacred and also very substantive. This instruction has been acclaimed by later scholars as the mental cultivation method passed down by ancient sages for governing the state and benefiting the world, which is also the spirit of Chinese

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culture and political tradition. The orthodox culture in China is the unity of the Way of Human and the Way of Heaven, the unity of participation in political affairs and detachment from worldly affairs, and also the unity of politics and education.

Mr. Martin Palmer, a British sinologist, “is eager to understand the magic and profound culture of China.” In an interview by Party Construction magazine and www.dangjian.cn Website, he remarked that the Western society had “neglected the profundity of Chinese culture.” “*The Classic of History* is very important... It has disclosed to the West the continuity of the Chinese history from the times of Yao, Shun and Yu to the Xia and Shang dynasties, to today’s China. Unless you read *The Classic of History*, I would not think that you could understand today’s China.” Also, he mentioned, “The British royal family and the British government all require that they should read the version of *The Classic of History* I have translated (*The Most Venerable Book*), because they want to understand the source of thinking and spirit for President Xi Jinping’s state governance.”

“Great Learning” of *The Book of Rites* opens with “大学之道，在明明德，在亲民，在止于至善” (What the “Great Learning” teaches, is to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence). The meaning of “learning” is the awakening

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of awareness. All sages from ancient times wish to enlighten later comers with their foresight so that all people can learn to become sages, able to perceive their inherent nature of the highest excellence, where measureless morality and wisdom are manifested. Just for the realization that sages and ordinary people differ only in their perception, state of mind and cultivation, Chinese people have been always aspiring to become sages and learning from sages in their pursuit of scholarship and state governance. Only this path would lead one to light.

With such rough understanding of the origin and gist of the principle of “morality given priority over sanction and education of people through morality,” perhaps it would not be difficult for us to understand why the Party always upholds “whole-hearted service for the people” as the basic tenet, and why the Party always holds to the mission of meeting people’s dream of leading a good life, focuses all the efforts on solving problems for the

people and helping them to lead a happy life, and cultivates the mental state that “I will put aside my own well-being for the good of my people.”; and it would not be difficult for us to understand why President Xi Jinping stresses “law for stabilizing the world and morality for edifying people’s mind,” sticks to strictly strengthening Party’s self-discipline, punishing corruption and misconduct inside the party with zero tolerance, upholds the

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combination of state government by law and morality, requires that cadres at all levels must be reverent and set up good examples to lead the whole society to embrace morality, do good, and observe laws and regulations; it would not be difficult to understand the many extraordinary achievements created in China under the leadership of the CPC Central committee with President Xi Jinping at the core, and the irreversible historical trend for China to prosper; and it would not be difficult to understand why President Xi Jinping’s words are so sincere, plain, cordial, far-sighted, and inspiring, which the people love to read and can always discern new meanings in every new reading. It would not be difficult to understand why President Xi Jinping teaches Chinese young people in the new era to “be concerned not only with our family and country but also with all mankind” The belief and vision of young people are vital to the future of a country. The lofty vision and firm belief of young people are the indomitable power of progress for a country and a nation, able to motivate them and inspire endeavor for progress. As a result, the years of their youth would not be adrift like a boat without a rudder.” Just as a saying goes, “One can become a sage if one aspires so, and one can become a man of virtue if one aspires so.”

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Administering a Benevolent Government with a Benevolent Heart: Benevolent Politics in Mencius’ View

Mencius lived in the Warring States Period, when the law of the jungle prevailed, the idea of benevolent government was not illustrated, and people’s mind was addicted to fighting. Kings of various states prided themselves on their belligerence, attempting to annex other states to become a power. Lobbyists from various states competed with each other to seek their own interest by appealing to the kings’ preference with the theory of utilitarianism. In academic thought, utilitarianism was popular. In political pursuit, the theory of hegemony was prevalent. King Hui of Liang, leader of the Wei State, recruited talents from all over the world with “courtesy and gold.” Mencius was recruited by the Wei State. At the first meeting, King Hui asked Mencius “what strategies could profit his country.” King Hui’s talk about profits was like a mirror, reflecting the prevailing ethos at that time. In such an era when kings of all states were seeking profit as their value orientation, Mencius pointed out the

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advantages and disadvantages for the rulers of the country and inspired their benevolence in the hope of guiding them to take the path of benevolent governance through his compassion, brilliant wit, and pertinent wisdom.

“*Wangdao*” (benevolent governance) in the Chinese history was proposed by Mencius

against these backdrops. Mencius, who consistently inherited Confucius' teachings, is often mentioned together with Confucius as "Kong Meng," representing orthodox Confucianism. Though it seems that no exact of "*wangdao*" can be found in *The Analects*, the meaning of the phrase is already covered. Mencius just followed the needs of the times to emphatically interpret and extend the ways of sage kings such as Yao and Shun inherited by Confucius, carry on the academic heritage of sages and address the problems prevalent in his times.

The "Distinction Between Kings and Hegemons" (王霸之辨) is an issue that must be clarified for an understanding of the political tradition of "education of people through morality," which is also a very important analysis of Confucianism. "霸" in "王霸" is originally a loan character of "伯." The ranking system of nobility in the Zhou Dynasty included five ranks, "公, 侯, 伯, 子, 男," "伯" was one of the ranks, originally a title below "王." However, during the Spring and Autumn Period, with the decline of the Son of Heaven,

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vassal states started to rise. Powerful feudal princes usurped the king's place and called themselves kings (王). They arrogated themselves the role of "王," and act in the capacity of "王," for the purpose of ruling the world, but they did not have the moral wisdom for them to call themselves "王." The meaning of "王," as stated by Dong Zhongshu, a major Confucian scholar in the Han Dynasty, "Ancient inventors of the Chinese writing system created the character '王' by using three horizontal strokes and one vertical one. The three horizontal strokes mean Heaven, Earth and Humanity, and the one who can unify the three may call himself '王' (king)." (*Chunqiu Fanlu*, "Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals") The Way of Heaven consists of yin and yang, the Way of Earth consists of gentleness and strength, the Wang of Humanity consists of benevolence and justice. Only the one able to integrate the three ways may call himself "王," who is endowed with sages' wisdom and supported by all people.

With regard to the substantive differences between "王" and "霸," Mencius directly pointed out: "He who uses external forces such as land, weapon and soldiers as a pretense of benefiting the world and pacifying people is a hegemon. Such a hegemon must have a large state in order to effectively oppress people with his power and instigate people with his allegation. The people obey him

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out of fear. The man who uses his virtue of justice and benevolence to practice humaneness is the true king. The king has the utmost sincerity to move the people. To be a real king you do not need an especially large territory and powerful military force. People naturally obey him. For example, the founding king of Tang managed to become king of Shang during the tyrannical rule of Jie at the end of the Xia Dynasty, even though he had only a territory of less than 70 *li*; and the founding king of the Zhou Dynasty, King Wen, was leader of western vassal states with the people's support during the tyrannical rule of Zhou at the end of the Shang Dynasty, even though he had a territory of only one hundred *li*. When you use your power to make people follow, they will never follow with their hearts; they follow only because they don't have enough strength to resist. When people follow virtue, they are happy from the bottom of their hearts, and they follow sincerely, the way the seventy

disciples followed Confucius. Not valued by vassal states, without a position or authority, Confucius was always royally followed by his disciples no matter how hard the circumstances were. The tradition of *Tao* (道) in China was carried forward without interruption from Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu, the Duke of Zhou to Confucius. Despite the lack of a throne in real life, Confucius has been esteemed as “Uncrowned King” in history, recognized as leader

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of spiritual culture and mentor for state governance by emperors, kings, generals, ministers and scholars in later generations. Therefore, Mencius specially referred to Confucius as a representative to support his argument that kings have the power to make people follow them for their virtues. Also lines were quoted from *The Classic of Poetry* to illustrate the education of kings, “From the west, from the east, from the south, and from the north, no one thought of not following.”

The influence of a king (王者之化) is to exercise benevolent governance with a benevolent heart, heart between a real heart, governance being solid governance. What a hegemon does seems to be benevolent governance in many aspects, but he is administering public affairs for his own private purpose. Therefore, the two rulers are incomparable in terms of their contribution and influence. Though the contrast between kings and hegemons can be described as the difference of their hearts and the radical difference of effects, yet in Mencius’s times, feudal princes’ ambition was to rise to Overlord of the Spring and Autumn Period. King Xuan of Qi (about 350-301 BC) was a typical example, who also overstepped his authority to declare himself king. King Xuan of Qi aspired to accomplish the rulership like that of Duke Huan of Qi and Duke Wen of Jin, who were the most powerful hegemons in the Spring and Autumn

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Period, known as “Qi Huan Jin Wen” in history. For this end, King Xuan of Qi specially sought advice from Mencius, thus leaving the following classical dialog that spread through the ages (“King Hui of Liang” in *Mencius*).

King Xuan of Qi asked Mencius, “Duke Huan of Qi and Duke Wen of Jin were the most famous of the hegemons in the Spring and Autumn Period. May I be informed by you of their stories?”

Mencius replied, “None of the disciples of Confucius spoke about the affairs of Huan and Wen, and therefore they have not been transmitted to later ages. I have not heard them, either. If you will have me speak, let it be about benevolent governance (*Wang Dao, King’s Way, or royal sway*).”

The king asked, “What virtue must there be in order to attain to royal sway?”

Mencius answered, “Cultivate virtues and act benevolently so as to protect people and they will love the king like they do their parents and teachers. With such virtues, there is no power which can prevent a ruler from attaining to royal sway.”

The king asked again, “Is such a king as I competent to protect the people and let them prosper?”

Mencius said, “Yes.”

The king asked, “How do you know that I am competent for that?”

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Mencius replied, "I heard the following incident From Hu He, one of your ministers: 'The king said he, 'was sitting aloft in the hall, when a man appeared, leading an ox past the lower part of it. The king saw him, and asked, 'where is the ox going?' The man replied, 'we are going to consecrate a new bell in the ancestral temple with its blood.' The king said, 'let it go. I cannot bear its frightened appearance, as if it were an innocent person going to the place of death.' The man answered, 'shall we then omit the consecration of the bell?' The king said, 'how can that be omitted? Change it for a sheep.' I do not know whether this incident really occurred."

The king replied, "It did."

Then Mencius tried to persuade the king to act benevolently, "The commiserating mind is sufficient to carry you to the royal sway. The people all supposed that your Majesty grudged the animal, but I know surely, that it was your Majesty's not being able to bear the sight, which made you do as you did."

The king said, "You are right. And some people indeed thought I was not generous enough. But though Qi is a small and narrow state, how should I grudge one ox? Indeed it was because I could not bear its frightened appearance, as if it were an innocent person going to the place of death, that therefore I changed it for a sheep."

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Mencius pursued, "Let not your Majesty deem it strange that the people should think you were grudging the animal. When you changed a large one for a small, how should they know the true reason? If you felt pained by its being led without guilt to the place of death, what was there to choose between an ox and a sheep, as both are living things?"

The king laughed and said, "What really was my mind in the matter? I did not grudge the expense of it, and changed it for a sheep! But I don't know why I didn't bear to see the ox being killed but I let the sheep be killed instead. There was reason in the people's saying that I grudged it."

Mencius said, "There is no harm in their saying so. Your conduct was an artifice of benevolence. You saw the ox, and had not seen the sheep. So is the superior man affected towards animals, that, having seen them alive, he cannot bear to see them die; having heard their dying cries, he cannot bear to eat their flesh. Therefore he keeps away from his slaughter-house and cook-room."

The king was pleased, and said, "It is said in the *The Classic of Poetry* 'The minds of others, I am able by reflection to measure.' This is verified, my Master, in your discovery of my motive. I indeed did the thing, but when I turned my thoughts inward, and examined into it, I could not discover my own mind. When you, Master, spoke

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those words, the movements of compassion began work in my mind. How is it that this heart has in it what is equal to the royal sway?"

Mencius replied, "If a man were to make this statement to your Majesty: 'My strength is sufficient to lift three thousand *jin*, but it is not sufficient to lift one feather; my eyesight is

sharp enough to examine the point of an autumn hair in a bird or animal, but I do not see wagon-load of firewood;' would your Majesty allow what he said?"

The king said, "No, I wouldn't."

Mencius proceeded, "Now here is kindness sufficient to reach to animals, and no benefits are extended from it to the people. How is this? Is an exception to be made here? The truth is, the feather is not lifted, because strength is not used; the wagon-load of firewood is not seen, because the eyesight is not used; and the people are not loved and protected, because kindness is not employed. Therefore, your Majesty's not exercising the royal sway, is because you do not do it, not because you are not able to do it."

The king asked, "How may the difference between the not doing a thing, and the not being able to do it, be represented?"

Mencius replied, "In such a thing as taking the Tai mountain under your arm, and leaping over the north sea

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with it, if you say to people 'I am not able to do it,' that is a real case of not being able. In such a matter as giving a massage to an elderly person, if you say to him "I am not able to do it," that is a case of not doing it, it is not a case of not being able to do it. Therefore, your Majesty's not exercising the royal sway, is not such a case as that of taking the Tai mountain under your arm, and leaping over the north sea with it. Your Majesty's not exercising the royal sway is a case like that of giving a massage to an elderly person. It is said in *The Classic of Poetry*, 'King Wen's example affected his wife. He respects his father and elder brothers, and others' father and brothers. He takes good care of his children and others' children. Therefore, he can govern the state easily.' These lines show how King Wen simply took his kindly heart, and exercised it towards his family and his state, and his family was regulated and his state was stable and peaceful. Therefore, the carrying out his kindness of heart by a ruler will suffice for the love and protection of all within the four seas, and if does not carry it out he will not be able to protect his wife and children. The way in which the ancients came greatly to surpass other men, was no other but this - simply that they knew well how to carry out their virtue of benevolence, so as to affect others. Now your kindness is sufficient to reach to animals, and no benefits are extended from it to reach the people.

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How is this? By weighing, we know what things are light, and what heavy. By measuring, we know what things are long, and what short. The relations of all things may be thus determined, and it is of the greater importance to estimate the motions of the mind. I beg your Majesty to measure it. You collect your equipment of war, endanger your soldiers and officers, and excite the resentment of the other princes - do these things cause you pleasure in your mind?"

The king replied, "No. How should I derive pleasure from these things? My object in them is to seek for what I greatly desire."

Mencius said, "May I hear from you what it is that you greatly desire?"

The king laughed and did not speak.

Mencius resumed, "Are you led to desire it, because you have not enough of rich and

sweet food for your mouth? Or because you have not enough of light and warm clothing for your body? Or because you have not enough of beautifully colored objects to delight your eyes? Or because you have not voices and tones enough to please your ears? Or because you have not enough of attendants and courtiers to stand before you and receive your orders? Your Majesty's various officers are sufficient to supply you with those things. How can your Majesty be led to entertain such a desire on account of them?"

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The king said, "No, my desire is not on account of them."

Mencius added, "Then, what your Majesty greatly desires may be known. You wish to enlarge your territories, to have Qin and Chu wait at your court, to rule the Central Plains, and preside over the land surrounding them. But doing what you do to seek for what you desire is like climbing a tree to seek for fish."

The king said, "Is it so bad as that?"

Mencius replied, "It is even worse. If you climb a tree to seek for fish, although you do not get the fish, you will not suffer any subsequent calamity. But doing what you do to seek for what you desire, doing it moreover with all your heart, you will assuredly afterwards meet with calamities."

The king asked, "May I hear from you the proof of that?"

Mencius said, "If the people of Zou should fight with the people of Chu, which of them does your Majesty think would conquer?"

The king said, "The people of Chu."

"Yes, and so it is certain that a small country cannot contend with a great, that few cannot contend with many, that the weak cannot contend with the strong. The territory within the four seas embraces nine divisions, each of a thousand *li* square. All Qi together is but one

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of them. If with one part you try to subdue the other eight, what is the difference between that and Zou's contending with Chu? For, with such a desire, you must turn back to the proper course for its attainment. Now if your Majesty will institute a government whose action shall be benevolent, this will cause all the officers in the kingdom to wish to stand in your Majesty's court, and all the farmers to wish to plough in your Majesty's fields, and all the merchants, both travelling and stationary, to wish to store their goods in your Majesty's market-places, and all travelling strangers to wish to make their tours on your Majesty's roads, and all throughout the kingdom who feel aggrieved by their rulers to wish to come and complain to your Majesty. If your Majesty can exercise benevolent governance, who will be able to prevent you from unifying the Nine Divisions?"

The king said, "I am stupid, and not able to advance to this. I wish you, my Master, to assist my intentions. Teach me your wisdom; although I am deficient in intelligence and vigor, I will essay and try to carry your instructions into effect."

Mencius replied, "They are only men of education, who, without a certain livelihood, are able to maintain a fixed heart. As to the common people, if they have not a certain livelihood, it follow that they will not have a fixed heart. And if have not a fixed heard, there is nothing

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Shi

A *shi* scholar is generally regarded as an ancient intellectual, who undertook an important cultural mission and specific moral requirements in traditional Chinese society. Ancient people were roughly classified into four categories: scholars (*shi*), farmers, workers and businessmen. Farmers, workers and businessmen were producers and profit-seekers; while scholars did not produce or make profits, but devoted themselves to seeking the truth. Scholars had times when they were valued and successful and times when they were poor and depressed. When valued and Successful, they participated in state governance with benevolence. When poor and depressed, they did their best to preach benevolent governance. As long as they lived, they would never stop advocating Confucianism. According to the ancient system, *shi* scholars were also the titles of nobility and officials. Shi scholars, as a unique group of intellectuals played a very important role in shaping culture by getting involved in the politics, education and propaganda of the ruling class and the cultivation of mores among civilians.

which they will not do, in the way of self-abandonment, of moral deflection, of depravity, and of wild license. When they thus have been involved in crime, to follow

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them up and punish them - this is to treat the people entrapping animals. How can such a thing as entrapping the people be done under the rule of a benevolent man? Therefore, an intelligent ruler will formulate policies for the people, so as to make sure that, for those above them, they shall have sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and, for those below them, sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children; that in good years they shall always be abundantly satisfied, and that in bad years they shall escape the danger of perishing. After this he may urge them, and they will proceed to what is good, for in this case the people will follow the king's instructions with ease. Now, the livelihood of the people is so regulated, that, above, they have not sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and, below, they have not sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children. Notwithstanding good years, their lives are continually embittered, and, in bad years, they do not escape perishing. In such circumstances they only try to save themselves from death, and are afraid they will not succeed. What leisure have they to cultivate propriety and righteousness? If your Majesty wishes to exercise benevolent governance, why not turn to that which is the essential step to it? Let mulberry-trees be planted about the homesteads, and senior citizens may be clothed with silk. In keeping fowls, Pigs, dogs, and swine, let not their times of breeding be

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neglected, and the elders may eat flesh. Let there not be taken away the time that is proper for the cultivation of the farm with its hundred *mu*, and the family of eight mouths that is supported by it shall not suffer from hunger. Let careful attention be paid to education in schools, the inculcation in it especially of the filial and fraternal duties, and grey-haired men will not be seen upon the roads, carrying burdens on their backs or on their heads. It never

has been that the ruler of a State where such results were seen, the old wearing silk and eating flesh, and the black-haired people suffering neither from hunger nor cold, did not attain to the royal dignity.”

As an ancient saying goes, “The greatest truths are the simplest.” In Mencius’ opinion, the gist of royal sway is just to carry forward the commiserating mind and implement policies protecting the people. The commiserating mind refers to benevolent mind, conscience, intuitive knowledge, and empathy. Ancient sage kings exercised benevolent governance just because they had a benevolent mind. To exercise benevolent governance with a benevolent mind, it would be easy to govern the world.

Mind is the source of all transformations. The benevolent mind is not exclusive to sages but is found in every person. Sages have been repeatedly teaching people to understand this point. For example, King Xuan of Qi, at the sight of the ox shuddering with fears before death,

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naturally had commiseration. He did not commiserate deliberately for a utilitarian purpose, but he was criticized by his own conscience. Therefore, he immediately acted, his genuine mind emerged, and the power of action came out, issuing an order of releasing the ox. As to King Xuan’s puzzle about why he didn’t bear to see the ox being killed but he let the sheep be killed, Mencius attributed this mental mechanism to the fact that “he saw the ox but not the sheep.” That is to say, the life of the ox at that moment was vivid for King Xuan and he saw its frightening appearance, and intuitively felt that he did not bear to see it killed. This was the natural presentation of the genuine mind; while the sheep was not seen by King Xuan in person and it was but a conceptual presence, not as real as the image of the ox, and therefore he did not have the feeling like he had for the ox. The implication was that if King Xuan saw the sheep he would also not bear to see it killed.

King Xuan, who aspired to be a hegemon, did not think that he had the ability to have the King’s Way (royal sway). Therefore, Mencius first let him realize his own benevolence, then solved the puzzle for him, making him happy. Next he pointed out that he could not have the royal say not because he did not have ability of benevolence but he did not do it. If he extended his commiserating mind to benefit the people “Treat with the reverence

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due to age the elders in your own family, so that the elders in the families of others shall be similarly treated; treat with the kindness due to youth the young in your own family, so that the young in the families of others shall be similarly treated - do this, and the kingdom may be made to go round in his palm.” Considering that King Xuan’s desire for material gains blinded his genuine heart too much, Mencius continued to analyze the pros and cons, pointing out that he should first love his family, and then love the people, and further to cherish all things. The three levels are naturally extended with a temporal sequence. King Xuan was able to love the ox but did not love the people; he could not bear to see the death of an ox, but went so far as to send many people to death to realize his desire of becoming a hegemon. This was retroactive, and Mencius pointed out that if he went on this way he would suffer from disasters. On the contrary, if he could return to his genuine mind, and

extend his love for the ox to benevolent governance for protecting the people, he would not only feel happy for knowing that the people of his state were protected but also people of other states would support him as king and become his people; not only he could disregard the size of territory, the strength of military force and the power of influence, but also his aspiration to unite the states could be realized. Why should he declare war, incur resentment, and

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act against the way of Heaven?

At the end of the conversation, King Xuan sincerely sought advice, and Mencius provided him with the outline of the King's Way, pointing out that benevolent governance should start with the protection of the people, the protection of the people should start with the provision of livelihood so that all people had sufficient supplies to support their family; with a livelihood people would have a fixed heart. Then education should be promoted to guide people to actively do good based on the principle of filial piety and fraternal respect. In this way, all people would follow moral principles and the state would be properly governed. The measure of benevolent governance was mentioned repeatedly throughout the book Mencius to underline its importance. Mencius observed: The principles of Yao and Shun, without a benevolent government, could not secure the tranquil order of the kingdom. That is to say, even sage kings like Yao and Shun should have their benevolence reflected in appropriate institutions and measures, set up benevolent governance to guarantee people's material life, promote education to edify their moral quality. Only by so doing did they win support all over the world and pass down their statues to later ages. Now some princes had benevolent hearts and a reputation for benevolence, while yet the people did not receive any benefits from them, nor

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would they leave any example to future ages—all because princes did not put into practice the ways of the ancient kings. "Ways" here refer to the wisdom, concepts, methods, experiences and results of ancient sage kings such as Yao and Shun in governing the state. As an ancient saying goes, "Virtue alone is not sufficient for the exercise of government; laws alone cannot carry themselves into practice." A state can be well governed only when the ruler has benevolence as the foundation for good governance and then take benevolent governance as the approach of good governance. None of the two is dispensable. Sages are the supreme paragon of the world. Their virtues follow the ways of Heaven and Earth, and their governance follows Heavenly principles and people's situation. Never has any one fallen into error, who followed the laws of the ancient kings. Therefore, to raise a thing high, we must begin from the top of a mound or a hill; to dig to a great depth, we must commence in the low ground of a stream or a marsh. Similarly, can he be pronounced wise, who, in the exercise of government, does not proceed according to the ways of the former sage kings?

The policy of benevolent governance pointed out by Mencius for King Xuan centers on the priority given to supporting the old, that is to say, to support the people, first we must support to the elderly. Mencius mentioned

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that a highlight of benevolent governance exercised by King Wen of Zhou when he was chief of the west was that he was good at nourishing the old, and not any old person among his people ever suffered from cold or hunger. Mencius pointed out that if there were a prince in the kingdom, who knew well how to nourish the old, all men of virtue would feel that he was the proper object for them to gather to, like King Wen. With regard to nourishing the old, there should not only be clear policy guarantee but also the national education should be based on this.

In national education the focus is to bring into play the principle of cause and effect, with “promoting students’ virtues and correcting their defects” as the standard, and moral and ethical education of “five relationships” and “five constants” as the main contents. Mencius has remarked, “Men possess a moral nature; and if they are well fed, warmly clad, and comfortably lodged, without being taught how to behave at the same time, they would backslide almost like the beasts.” Therefore, as early as the times of Yao and Shun in the remote antiquity, “Five Classics” and “Five Teachings” were used to educate people. According to ancient books, the five teachings mean “father should be benevolent, mother should be loving, elderly brothers should be friendly, younger brothers should be respectful, and

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children should be filial.” Or they can be extended to mean that “between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity.” The ethical relationships in human society, whether ancient or modern, in China or other countries, are no other than parents and children, sovereign and minister, husband and wife, old and young, and friends. Ethical spirit is reflected in valuing the other people in life, and being active, selfless and altruistic. The education about the five human relationships is to guide people to comprehend the principles of conduct while doing their ethical part, thus creating a harmonious society. In the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties, the school education system also aimed to “illustrate human relations,” teaching by precepts and examples and letting people know how to get along with each other. Thus morality is edified and honest and sincere mores are carried forward. The importance of the education on the five human relationships has been illustrated by Qiu Jun in his work *Daxue Yanyi* Bu (*Supplement to the Exposition of the Great Learning*), “The good governance of sage kings must be based on education, which is no other than the teaching of the five human relationships,” and “which has served as the beginning for the moral education of all the following

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emperors and kings in Chinese history.”

The education of the five moral principles follows a natural order, with the most fundamental principle being “loving parents and filial children.” Confucius has observed, “Now filial piety is the root of (all) virtue, and (the stem) out of which grows (all moral) teaching.” (*The Classic of Filial Piety*) Filial piety serves as the foundation of moral conduct,

from which the education of Kingly Way is derived. Mencius has observed, "The Way of Yao and Shun is no other than filial piety and fraternal respect," and pointed out that "if each man would love his parents and show the due respect to his elders, the whole land would enjoy tranquility." As a Chinese saying goes, "Even a mother 100 years old is constantly worried about her 80-year-old son." Parents are always concerned with their children, hoping that they would guide their children, through their own words and deeds, to grow healthily and be kind so that they would inherit their family tradition and contribute to the society. Children, on the other hand, think that they would never be able to repay their parent's favor, because "a drop of water in need, shall be returned with a spring in deed; while a spring offered can never be returned." A true filial child would never bear to see his parents suffer from any moral blemish on himself, and pursue the development of moral virtues until the perfection of his life, because

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he is deeply convinced of the connection between virtue and happiness and the integrity between parents and children. Without the perfection of self-cultivation and morality, one's endless innate virtues and wisdom would not be developed to repay one's parents so that they would enjoy true and eternal peace and happiness because of their moral perfection. Everyone has only one mind, and spirit unifies one's conducts. Addressing other people and affairs with such a pure mind of gratitude would inevitably lead to compassion and magnanimity, which are what Chinese people deem as "Greater Filial Piety," with which one respects not only one's own parents but also all parents in the world, and is sincerely benevolent to all things in the world. To govern state with the principle of filial piety has been based on ancient sages' recognition of family ties as the most precious in the world. The warm affection and harmony between parents and children represents the highest happiness in the world. To maintain such affectionate family ties throughout one's life so that one has a soft and lively mind can only be realized by starting with filial piety, which is the protection and development of human nature and also an inherent requirement of human conduct. Sages have demand on fame or gain, and "filial piety" they advocate refer to good conscience, instead of external merits and achievements. Therefore, such an idea cannot be treated superficially

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from an external utilitarian point of view. The tendency of selflessness is naturally found in filial piety and fraternal respect. Therefore, all the matters concerning self-cultivation, family regulation, state governance, and world peace are no other than the extension and implementation of filial piety and fraternal respect.

As to the attitude of teaching, as early as the times of Emperor Shun, the principle of "respectfully giving those five lessons of duty with generosity" (敬敷五教, 在宽) was proposed. With regard to the two characters, "敬" and "宽," just Qiu Jun has observed, 敬 (respectful) means self-discipline, that is, the ability to cultivate oneself as an upright, disciplined and committed leader; 宽 refers to being generous and tolerant instead of being pressing when teaching the people. An educator should be good at patient and systematic guidance of the people so that their moral nature would be inspired and they would be

ashamed of doing evil. Former men of virtues thought that these two characters represent the essential ways that statesmen and educators of all generations should not alter. Sages' great learning started and was accomplished because of these two principles, especially the principle of being respectful. Never has there been anyone who is not himself/herself respectful but is able to educate others to be respectful. Therefore, whether kings who set up education or ministers who spread education,

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all should be respectful. Mencius has remarked, "When we do not, by what we do, realize what we desire, we must turn inwards, and examine ourselves in every point. When a man's person is correct, the whole kingdom will turn to him with recognition and submission." (行有不得者, 皆反求诸己, 其身正而天下归之). The way to educate others is to cultivate oneself, and the education of others is an effect of self-cultivation, the latter being realized by doing one's ethical duties. Everyone has the mind of a sage, and the key is to be good at developing the mind and learning the ways. Anyone following Yao in his/her thoughts or actions will become Yao, while anyone imitating Zhou will become Zhou. Sufficient seeds of benevolence are buried in human nature, but some people say that they are unable to be benevolent, and such people are doing harm to themselves. A minister who says that his king is unable to do good, but does nothing to assist the king is doing harm to his king.

Additionally, Confucianism also regards the "Five Constants" as the foundation for state governance, that is, "benevolence, righteousness, rites, wisdom and fidelity." If everyone follows the five cardinal principles, the world would be orderly and peaceful. The purpose of moral teaching is to guide people to stop doing evil and start doing good and to transform bad habits and customs by purifying, converting and building social consensus

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Sages engaged in moral teaching do not intend to change people's nature, but purify their heart by inspiring their genuine moral nature. By listing facts of cause and effect in history and social life, they attempted to awaken people's understanding of the truth, thus remedying the defects, following good examples, and leading an order and happy life.

As early as in 1924, Mr. Sun Yat-sen illuminated the difference between Eastern and Western cultures in his speech titled "Great Asianism," "To advocate the Kings Way is to maintain the moral principle of benevolence and justice, while to advocate the Hegemon's Way is to incite power politics. To advocate benevolence and justice is to influence people with the self-evident principle of righteousness; and to pursue power politics is to oppress people with guns and cannons." Chinese culture, on the other hand, always despises hegemony, "The nature of Chinese culture is to pursue virtue and morality. The culture of virtue and morality is to influence people instead of oppressing them; and tries to instill morality into people's mind instead of intimidating them with power. The culture of instilling morality, in the words of ancient Chinese, is to 'practice the King's Way'." Mr. Sun had insight into the trends of world culture then, maintaining that the culture of power politics should turn to the culture of virtue and morality, the Hegemon's Way should be

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subjected to the King's Way, that is, world culture should gradually turn to light.

In 2014, President Xi Jinping, in his speech delivered at the International Academic Symposium in Celebration of Confucius' 2,565 Anniversary, pointed out, "Some insightful people think that excellent traditional Chinese culture, including Confucianism, is a source of important enlightenment for challenges facing mankind now." An ancient philosopher commented, "Confucius was acclaimed for his benevolence and wisdom. His selflessness and messianic spirit made him a towering figure in the crowd... Mencius was known for the natural magnanimousness of his soul and stood out for his heroic mettle and his authentic recognition of the source of the absolute good." (Feng Da'an, *An Introduction to Buddhism*). Confucius and Mencius are great teachers venerated throughout the ages. Confucianism that they represent aims to inspire benevolence with benevolence, with a focus on resolving social and life problems of humanity. Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, as the main pillars of excellent traditional Chinese culture, focus on improving the cultivation of the person so that people can recover their inherent sacredness and light by following the nature of life. Chinese political philosophy or thought does not consist of principles "thought out" by ancient sages, but is only about their life, and the so-called

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philosophy or thought is no other than a byproduct of their cultivation practices. Thanks to the unique concepts, wisdom, vision and spirit of Chinese culture, its ideas, concepts, humanism, and moral codes not only form the core of Chinese people's thought and spirit, but also present important value to resolving problems of mankind.

Holding up history as a mirror, we can create a bright future. Just as a doctor has to diagnose a disease before curing it, to educate people with morality, we should first examine the source of people's misery and how to resolve it before we administer effective governance according to laws. Ancient sages thought that the two most painful things of the people were poverty and disease. To solve people's problems so that they can lead a happy life, on the one hand, we should promote the development of economy and health. Over a long period of time, the Party has been leading people of all ethnic backgrounds across China to make unremitting efforts in these aspects. By far, we have realized the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, bringing about a historic resolution to the problem of absolute poverty in China, and we are now marching in confident strides toward the second centenary goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects.

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On the other hand, given the powerful guarantee of economic and health development, we must further strengthen sages' way of education to truly realize people's wellbeing and social stability. Greed is the root of all evils, and the seed of poverty and disaster, while charity, protecting the people and supporting them in distress are seeds of prosperity, happiness, freedom, longevity and peace. Only by inspiring the illuminating source of happiness from people's heart can their fate be truly changed and their wellbeing be fundamentally guaranteed. As President Xi Jinping has stressed, "The Chinese civilization has always incorporated people's spiritual life into material life and social ideals." "Striving for

perfection is the constant pursuit of the Chinese nation. The great modern socialist country we are building should not only be strong in the material aspect but also excel in moral strength. Moral excellence is more permanent, profound and powerful.” Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core has been attaching great importance to the development of education, having clearly pointed out that the realization of the “Two Centennial Goals” and the realization of the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation depend on talents and education in the final analysis. In addition, from the strategic height of upholding and

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developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in new era, major arrangements have been made to prioritize the development of education, speed up the modernization of education and build a powerful count in education, and put forward a series of new thought, ideas and viewpoints on education reform and development, pointing out a new way forward for the socialist education with Chinese characteristics in the new era and providing fundamental guidelines. In particular, the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Promotion on Family Education has been formulated and implemented as the first law targeting family education in China, which upgrades, through institutional design, family education from the traditional status of “family affairs” to the status of important “state affairs” in the new era. As President Xi Jinping has observed, “The Chinese nation always attaches great importance to the family. As a saying goes, ‘The foundation of the world lies in countries, and the foundation of a country lies at families.’ Harmony in a family makes everything successful. The prosperity of the country and the rejuvenation of the nation, in the final analysis, are reflected in the happiness of millions of families and the constant improvement of the lives of millions of people. Only when every household is good can the country and the nation be good.”

With the advent of spring, flowers are ubiquitous,

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and mountains, rivers and the land are my mind. Since ancient times, sages have passed down lights of wisdom from generation to generation as a source of inspiration for all people to lead a good life. Nowadays, as China has stood out in the world as a thriving nation that is advancing with unstoppable momentum toward rejuvenation, the Chinese civilization in the new era should also gradually flourish, keep pace with the times, and join the mutual illumination of all prominent civilizations in the world.

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Chapter Two

Morality Given Priority over Sanction

Ancient Chinese thought that moral teaching and penalty, as ways of state governance, are inseparable like a bird’s two wings and a wagon’s two wheels. Moral enhancement plays an important role of supporting and promoting the formulation and implementation of law; on the other hand, moral education also relies on a sound legal system for support and

maintenance. The traditional Chinese society particularly stressed the role of moral education because ancient people realized that the state shall be governed according to the Way of Heaven upholding the virtue of preserving life and resenting killing. Meanwhile, ancient people identified the underlying reason for social problems as in the human mind. That is to say, when the people's mind is rectified, the state will be properly governed; when the people's mind goes astray, the state will be turbulent.

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The Way of Heaven Upholds the Virtue of Preserving Life and Resenting Killing: Cruel Official Yan Yannian Doomed to a Tragic End

Stories of Yan Yannian, a cruel official, are recorded in *The History of the Han Dynasty (Han Shu)*, Yan Yannian, stout, smart, tough, flexible and agile, even outshined Confucius' disciples Zi Gong and Ran You, who were famous for their mastery in handling government affairs. As governor of a prefecture, Yan Yannian was devoted to public services regardless of personal gains and losses, and treated his loyal subordinates like his own family, very considerate of them. In the areas under his governance, nothing happened without his knowing it. However, he hated bad people and evil deeds so much that many people were excessively punished by him. Yan Yannian was good at writing verdicts and official documents, and he personally wrote the memorial for anyone to be executed. The chief, who found his verdict reasonable, would soon approve the death sentence of the prisoner. In winter, when the execution was about to take place, Yan Yannian

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ordered all the counties under his governance to escort the prisoners to the prefecture seat and put them to death together in the prefecture government, and for a time blood would flow for several *li*. Therefore, people in the prefecture called him "Chief Butcher." In the areas under his jurisdiction, "all orders were followed and all bans were effected," and political integrity prevailed.

Once, Yan Yannian's mother came to visit him from Donghai and attend a sacrificial ceremony with him. Arriving in Luoyang, his mother happened to see Yan Yannian executing criminals. At the sight of blood overflowing, the mother was so astonished that she would not go inside the prefecture hall, and preferred to stay at a roadside inn. Yan left the city to meet his mother in the inn, but his mother would not open the door for him. He took off his hat and kowtowed for a long time before his mother let him in and scolded him, "You're lucky to become governor of a prefecture, governing a large region of 1,000 *li*; but I have not heard that you try to teach people with a heart of benevolence and protect them; instead, you recklessly kill many people to establish your authority. How can a local chief like a public parent of the people act this way?" Yan Yannian apologized to his mother immediately, kowtowed to beg her pardon, then personally drove his mother to his official residence.

After the completion of the sacrificial ceremony,

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Discourses on Salt and Iron

Discourses on Salt and Iron: In 81 BC, Huo Guang, a powerful minister of the Western Han Dynasty, followed the suggestion of Du Yannian and requested Emperor Zhao of Han to issue an edict to summon over 60 men of virtue and scholars around the state to the capital city and to learn about the people's problems, and to hold a debate among officials headed by Prime Minister Tian Qianqiu and Imperial Censor Sang Hongyang. At the meeting, the two parties held an intense debate over a series of problems, including financial policies such as the official operation of salt and iron, exclusive sale of wine, unified collection, distribution and transportation of goods, stabilization of prices, and unification of coins, as well as cultivating wilderness and guarding the frontier, and peace or war with the Xiongnu. This debate was known in history as "Discourses on Salt and Iron." Three decades after the event, in the reign of Emperor Xuan of Han, Huan Kuan, based on the official meeting minutes and the recollections of Zhu Zibo, a meeting participant, gave a detailed description of the meeting as well as the debates after the meeting, resulting in *Discourses on Salt and Iron*.

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his mother warned him, "Heaven above is watching everyone closely. How can one who recklessly kills not be punished? I have never imagined that I would have to see my son in his prime suffer punishment when I am old." His mother was far-sighted to see that Yan Yannian would meet a disaster. She added, "I'm going. If you go on like this, I would first prepare your burial ground in your hometown." One year later, Yan Yannian indeed fell into disgrace.

Ancient people called local officials as "public parent." "Parents of the people" should love the people like their sons. *Discourses on Salt and Iron* writes, "As public parent of the people, officials should treat the people like parents their sick children, and what they should be doing is no other than giving benefit and tolerating them." How could a public parent kill people? If the people and criminals were regarded as opponents, and the number of people arrested, killed and sentenced were taken as one's achievements, which were eulogized without any mercy. this would go against the Way of Heaven, surely causing bad consequences. Therefore, an ancient could judge a person's success or failure by seeing whether his conduct is in accord with the Way of Heaven.

This story tells us that an official, even if he is discriminating in his rewards and punishments and very honest and upright, would arouse discontent and complaints

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among the people if he treats the people too harshly. Because such conduct is far away from the requirements of benevolent governance.

Discourses on Salt and Iron mentions, "The Master said, 'The man who is not virtuous, when you carry your dislike of him to an extreme, will also proceed to insubordination.' In case of an insurrection among the people, the cause should be traced back to the court; when the court was riotous, the ruler should examine himself. Only when the ruler himself was upright would the kingdom be stable. Therefore, men of virtue encouraged good deeds while showing sympathy to people could not do good; those punished should also be shown kindness, and the poor should be treated benevolently. Feeling happy when doing favor and sad when administering punishment, this was the benevolence of a public parent. If an

official did not have the least sympathy when a criminal was being executed, or even felt complacent or sought credit, could this be what a public parent supposed to do? The law enforcer should follow the Way of Heaven, treating the people gently and benevolently, instead of being too severe.

The Sayings of Confucius in Qunshu Zhiyao (compilation of Books and Writings on the Important Governing Principles) records: Confucius' disciple Jigao acted as a prison keeper in the State of Wey, and he personally sentenced a person

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to a penalty of being crippled. Later, as the State of Wey was in turmoil, Jigao took refuge. It happened that the person he punished was responsible for keeping the city gate. But this man, instead of taking this opportunity to take revenge, assisted Jigao in escaping from the danger. When he was about to leave, Jigao asked about the reason. The man said, "You sentenced me to a crippling penalty because I deserved it, and you had no alternative. Also, you had other people convicted before convicting me in the hope that my punishment would be mitigated. When I was convicted and to be penalized, you showed sorrows and pains. You behaved this way not because you were partial to me, but because you are a man of virtue, who would naturally feel sad at the sight of people committing a crime. That is why I support and help you." After hearing of this incident, Confucius commented, "You do a good job as an official! Your practice is consistent. You establish a good example of morality when you exercise benevolence; you incur resentment when you punish excessively. Zigao has indeed done a good job in keeping justice and showing virtue!"

The plot of the story is very simple, but its meaning is profound. Also as a law enforcer, Jigao's different moral conduct and mindset naturally led to different results. Some people treat the people with cruel penalty to establish his own authority and they even take pride in it; but

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some people are benevolent and generous, who not only receive different attitude from the people but also achieve different results of governance and state of governance. *The History of the Han Dynasty* notes, "Those who govern the state with rites and righteousness accumulate rites and righteousness; and those who govern the state with penalties accumulate penalties. With the excessive use of penalties people would hold grudges and betrayal; and with the accumulation of rites and righteousness people would get along with each other and live in peace. Rulers of all generations shared the same good wish of cultivating virtues of the people, but they adopted different approaches. Some guided the people with moral teachings, while some drove the people with laws and orders. Guided with moral teachings, people were happy when a harmonious society was created; and driven by laws and orders, people harbored resentment and sorrows under severe rule.

The comparison of the above two stories presents important enlightenment on understanding why we should combine rule by law and rule by virtue and how to realize such integration in contemporary China.

As it has been pointed out in *Fu Zi* of *Qunshu zhiyao*, a wise king must follow a good system to realize the results of good governance of the society. On the other hand, important

as a good system is, it cannot play its

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Fu Zi

Fu Zi: Written by Fu Xuan in the Western Jin Dynasty, the book is a comprehensive work on politics and history, with comments on the three religions and the nine schools of thought on state governance, as well as important events in history. Consisting of three volumes, the book is divided into four sections and six records, including 140 articles with several hundred thousand words. The book has been passed down to later generations with a collection of the author's other writings.

role of ensuring social stability and order without the support of capable talents, who should also be men of virtue. A good system and men of virtue to implement the system are both indispensable.

President Xi Jinping, when participating in the deliberation of the Jiangsu Delegation of the First Session of the Twelfth National People's Congress on March 8, 2013, stressed, "I have noted on a plenary session of the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection that we should restrict power by a cage of regulations. We should persevere in carrying out this work, and do a good job in improving and developing regulations. Meanwhile, there is a saying in China, one can become Buddha by

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facing the wall and contemplating one's own doings. To become Buddha means to edify oneself and to elevate one's thinking." Because no matter how comprehensive and sound laws and regulations are, they have to be carried out by people. If the benevolence of heart, cultivation of righteousness, and self-improvement of law enforcers are neglected, a legal system, no matter how good it is, can be hardly implemented to realize good governance of the state. Just as Alasdair Chalmers MacIntyre, a famous Western ethicist, has pointed out, no matter how concrete and perfect moral or legal principles are, they would not play their due role if people do not have moral character or virtue. According to "Li Lou I" of *Mencius*, only the benevolent ought to be in high stations. When a man destitute of benevolence is in a leading position, he thereby disseminates his wickedness among all below him.

The Confucian thought of benevolence has rendered "benevolent governance" a distinctive characteristic of traditional politics in China. Therefore, in the governance system of rites-music and punishment-governance, Chinese leaders pay special attention to the educational role of rites and music. *The Classic of Filial Piety* writes, "For changing their manners and altering the customs, there is nothing better than music. For securing the repose of superiors and the good order of the people

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there is nothing better than the rules of propriety." *The Classic of Rites* writes, "When ceremonies, music, laws, and punishments had everywhere full course, without irregularity or collision, the method of kingly rule was complete." Chinese culture is thus acclaimed as "Culture of Rites and Music" because Chinese value the role of rites, music and education in

state governance.

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Moral Education Prevents the Occurrence of Crime: Chun Yukun's Sigh

"Huanzi Xinlun" in *Qunshu Zhiyao* records a story.

Chun Yukun visited his neighbor's house and saw that the chimney on their stove was very straight, while the firewood was piled up right beside the stove. So he reminded his neighbor that such arrangements would be likely to cause a fire hazard, and suggested that his neighbor bend the chimney a little and move the firewood farther away from the stove. But the suggestions

Chun Yukun

Chun Yukun: A statesman and thinker of the State of Qi in the Warring States Period, Chun Yukun was learned, talented and eloquent, having served as envoy abroad on behalf of Qi. As one of the most influential scholars of the Jixia Academy, he contributed significantly to the rise and prosperity of the State of Qi and the development of the Jixia Academy during the reign of King Wei of Qi and King Xuan of Qi.

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were not followed.

Later, a fire indeed occurred to the neighbor's house, burning the firewood beside the stove and then the house also caught fire. People around rushed in to put out the fire. After the fire was subdued, the neighbor's family killed a goat and set up a feast to thank the people who helped them. After the fire, the neighbor also learned a lesson to bend their chimney and remove the firewood from the stove. However, the neighbor was still unwilling to invite Chun Yukun to the feast. Therefore, someone said satirically that "the one who taught the neighbor to bend the chimney and remove the firewood was not appreciated, while only those braved the flames to put out the fire were honored as guests." That is to say, the rewards were not fair. An unwise person would not be able to identify what is more important or who should be thanked, but reject what is near at hand and seek what is far away and put the incidental before the fundamental.

This practice is indeed lamentable. The fundamental measure to put an end to a fire is preventative, instead to put out the fire after it occurs, because the disaster caused thereby would be irremediable. Just like Chun Yukun's neighbor thought that those who helped him put out the fire rendered him great services. Ordinary people tend to neglect the fundamental of things, while valuing the handling of a problem after it rises. This is short-sightedness

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in judging things, limited only to the present benefit.

"Is bending the chimney and removing the firewood the only way to eliminate disasters?" In fact, the preventive measure can be extended to all aspects, such as curing diseases and governing a state. Wise doctors cure a disease before it arises, and value prevention of

diseases. Truly sagacious kings should also put an end to turmoil fundamentally. As turmoil takes a long time to form, it would naturally not occur if the people are properly educated and guided to the right track before their mind goes astray. In fact, people tend to neglect the importance of checking erroneous ideas at the outset. After the rise of turmoil, a general leads soldiers to suppress it, and the king, ministers and ordinary people all think that the general has made the greatest contribution, while wise ministers who have suggested taking preventive measures are not rewarded. This shows people's inability to distinguish between the incidental and the fundamental.

Chun Yukun's story can be extended to the treatment of any problem in all trades of life. Taking preventive measures is the wisest and most cost-effective practice. *Shi Zi* in *Qunshu Zhiyao* cites another metaphorical example: If a person is imprisoned and someone rescues him from prison, this person's whole family would feel deeply grateful to the rescuer; but they would not appreciate those who teach people to be benevolent, righteous,

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kind and compassionate, tell them that a man of virtue should make money in a right way, and warn them they should not do any harm to the society so as not to suffer from imprisonment. Realizing the importance of moral education, ancient Chinese attached special importance to education on ethics and morality, with a focus on "prioritizing education in state governance." *Da Dai Li Ji* mentions that "those who advocate rites prevent evils before their occurrence, while those who advocate laws prevent evils after their occurrence. To educate people with moral principles so that they would never commit any crime would be much better than administering punishment through laws after the occurrence of crimes. However, ordinary people are not far-sighted enough, mistaking the

Golden Age of King Cheng and King Kang

The Golden Age of King Cheng and King Kang is the combination of the reign of King Cheng of Zhou Ji Song and King Kang of Zhou Ji Zhao. During this period of time, the world was peaceful, education prevails, people got along with each other harmoniously, no disaster occurred, no insurrection arose, so that prisons were empty for over 40 years. This period of time was historically called "Great Reigns of King Cheng and King Kang"

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Rule of Wen and Jing

Rule of Wen and Jing refers to the period of good governance during the reigns of Emperor Wen and Emperor Jing of the Western Han Dynasty. In the early Han Dynasty, economic depression was caused by years of wars and turmoil. The Han Court, which upheld the Huang-Lao thought of governance, adopted the policy of "reducing the burden of taxation and cost" and "recuperating and building up strength" with the people. Emperor Wen and Emperor Jing attempted to educate people with morality, and attached great importance to agriculture. As a result, production was gradually restored and saw rapid development, and people's living standard was upgraded significantly, giving rise to stability and prosperity that had been missing for many years.

Chinese way of governance as less efficient than Western way of governance.

During the reign of King Cheng and King Kang of the Zhou Dynasty, the Golden Age of King Cheng and King Kang was created, reaching the state of vacant prisons with no prisoners. What method did they use to reach such an effect of governance? They rely on moral and ethical education. Besides, other periods of prosperity in history, like the Rule of Wen and Jing, the Golden

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Golden Years of Zhenguan

Golden Years of Zhenguan refer to the times of peace and prosperity during the reign of Li Shiming, Emperor Taizong of the early Tang Dynasty, featuring political integrity, economic recovery and cultural prosperity. As the emperor styled himself "Zhenguan," this period was called "Golden Years of Zhenguan."

Golden Age of Kang and Qian

The Golden Age of Kang and Qian, when the Qing Dynasty was at the height of power and prosperity, includes the reign of three emperors, Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong, covering a period of 134 years. This period, featuring social stability, rapid economic development, and fast population growth, was the last golden age of the feudal society of ancient China.

Years of Zhenguan and the Golden Age of Kang and Qian, also resulted from the importance attached to moral and ethical education.

As to the effect of moral education in preventing problems before they arise, ancient Chinese had profound understanding and used the metaphor of "a good doctor cures before a disease falls" to illustrate this point.

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Marquess Wen of Wei, learning that Bian Que was a brilliant doctor, sought instructions from him, "I heard that you have two elderly brothers, who are also doctors. Of you three, who is the best?" Bian Que replied, "My eldest brother is the most brilliant. Because he is able to give solutions when his patients' disease is still latent so that his patients would never suffer from a serious disease. But only the family of his patients know that he is a brilliant doctor. My second brother is the second best, because he is able to treat an illness when some small signs are discovered, and his patients' illness would not deteriorate. But his reputation is not beyond the street where his patients live. I am the worst of the three brothers, but my name is known all over the vassal state, because the patients that come to see are so seriously sick that I have to adopt some major measures to rescue them from death, like cutting open their blood vessel, give them acupuncture and then prescribe some herbal medicine with side-effect. People all admire me for my ability to effect a miraculous cure and bring the dying back to life. Therefore, my medical skills are the worst, but I enjoy the highest reputation." Ordinary people tend to judge the effect of an action from the results, and are therefore blind to the effect of traditional Chinese medicine for preventing diseases through health care. Only TCM experts like Bian Que know the brilliance of "the best

doctor curing

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a disease before it falls." Therefore, one piece of ancient Chinese wisdom is to take preventive measures and check erroneous ideas at the outset.

Therefore, it is much better to teach everyone to be good through ethical and moral education so that people refrain from crimes altogether than to punish people by law after they commit crimes. We propose to combine rule of law and rule of virtue so that they can complement each other and reinforce each other in state governance, promoting the modernization of the state governance system and governance capacity. This idea is drawn and developed from the thought of rule of law and rule of virtue in Chinese history under the new historical conditions. Law and morality, as ways of state governance, are inseparable from each other like the two wings of a bird and the two wheels of a bike. "The law is the very foundation of governance; while men of virtues are the very source of law." ("Kingly Way," *Xunzi*) Thus, a legal system is indispensable for state governance, which is also an important reason why we attach special importance to improving our legal system and supervision mechanism in the process of fighting corruption and building a clean government. Meanwhile, we should also see that only leaders of virtue can make just laws, and that the supporting role of morality in the rule of law must be strengthened.

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Through Punishment There May Come to Be No Punishments: Confucius Administers Justice

The Sayings of Confucius in Qunshu Zhiyao records: When Confucius served as Minister of Crime (Dasikou) in the State of Lu, a father and his son brought a lawsuit, and Confucius imprisoned them in the same cell, not holding a court hearing after three months. Later the father requested the withdrawal of the lawsuit, and Confucius pardoned them. Jisun, upon hearing this matter, was very unhappy, saying, "The minister has cheated me. He has told me, 'In state governance we must prioritize the advocacy of filial piety.' Isn't it a good chance

Dasikou

Dasikou, as an official title in ancient China, was one of the six ministers taking charge of criminal cases in the Zhou rites. In later generations, a minister of crime was called "Dasikou," and an assistant minister of crime "Shaosikou."

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to kill an unfilial son to teach the people to observe filial piety? But you have pardoned both the father and son. Why?"

Confucius said with a sigh, "If those in the upper position do not follow the right way, the people below would commit crimes. It would not be reasonable to kill a person because he has committed a crime. If the people are not guided to cultivate their filial piety and a case is judged by the standard of 'filial piety', that would be killing innocent people. Foot soldiers cannot be slayed when the whole army is defeated, and people cannot be punished

when there is judicial confusion. Because when moral education is not implemented by the governing party, the blame is not on the people. If a ruler leaves the people in their native ignorance, yet punishes their wrong-doing with death and gives slack and slow orders, this is cruelty. If a ruler requires the immediate completion of tasks imposed without previous warning, this is oppression. If a ruler gives vague orders and then insists on punctual fulfillment without warning and education in advance, this is ruthlessness. These above three circumstances should be ended before punishment can be used.

Then, how should moral education be conducted? There are steps and laws. Confucius said: First, people should be taught the filial piety, brotherhood, loyalty,

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trust, propriety, righteousness, integrity, and sense of shame. People, after learning the standards for the right, the wrong, the good, the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, would not readily do evil. Moral teaching is not enough, and people should be guided to admire men of virtue and do good. If these measures are not adequate, immoral people should be removed so that people would have fears. When all the above measures are taken, the people would naturally become upright. Should there be any treacherous and evil people who obstinately refuse to rectify themselves, criminal punishment should be administered. In this way, the people would learn the principles and develop a sense of shame and would be deterred from crimes. Accordingly, no severe orders have to be given, and criminal punishment can also be shelved.

Confucius continued to say: But the world now is not like this. Education is so disorderly and punishments are so numerous that people get puzzled and commit a crime, who are then penalized. Consequently, the number of punishments increases, so does the number of thieves. It has been a very long time since the social mores started to decline, and therefore even with the criminal law, people would still attempt to trespass it. Confucius reminded that the people should be first taught morals, knowing their own duties in ethical

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relationships, before punishments may be imposed. If people go astray before they are educated, they should be pardoned. After pardoning, they must be enlightened about ethics and morality.

Han Shu in Qunshu Zhiyao notes, "Now if you cancel the moral teachings of previous kings and attempt to govern the people with law-enforcing officers, you would hardly realize your aspiration of influencing all the four seas with your morality." Sage kings all should govern the state according to the Way of Heaven, which prefers the preservation of life to killing. Therefore, sage kings must prioritize moral education and have very simple rules for punishment. Now that the moral teachings of ancient sages and deceased kings have been abandoned, and people are controlled by law enforcers, it would be very difficult to let moral education influence all places in the country.

Neishi

Neishi: An official title, belonging to the category of "Spring Officials" in the Zhou rites. A *neishi* official assisted the Son of Heaven (emperor) in managing laws of nobility,

emolument, abolition, installation, granting life or death and giving or seizing properties.

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The Sayings of Confucius records that when Min Ziqian, a disciple of Confucius, served as a governor in Fei, he asked Confucius how to govern. Confucius said, "You should govern with virtues and rites. If the state is a horse-drawn carriage, the king is the one driving the horse. He takes *neishi* officials as his left and right hands of governance, morality and rites as snaffles and halters, officials as reins, penalties as whips, and common people as horses. A man good at driving horses puts snaffles and halters on the horses, have bridles and spurs ready, uses horsepower in a balanced manner, and soothes the horses' sentiments. Therefore, without yelling, the horses move with the movement of the bridles; without the use of a whip, the horses can run beyond one thousand miles. A king good at governing the people unifies standards of morality, rites and laws, rectifies officials' words and deeds, uses human resources coordinately, and creates a harmonious and peaceful society for the people. Therefore, without repeated orders and injunctions, the people would follow; without penalties, the state can be governed through education with morality. The king's virtues can move Heaven and Earth, and all the people in the state submit to him. A king unable to govern the people discards morality and rites and uses penalties alone. This is like the discard of snaffles and halters and resort to whips alone in driving horses.

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In this way, the horse-drawn carriage would inevitably go out of control. Without a snaffle or halter, and controlled solely with a whip, the horse would inevitably get hurt and the carriage would be damaged. Similarly, in state governance, if morality and rites are discarded and penalties are the only means of control, people would inevitably go away and the state would perish. In a state, where moral codes and rites are missing, the people would not have the basis for emulation and learning and would become puzzled and go astray. Kings ruling the whole country from the ancient times governed the state with six officials, the control of whom resembled a driver grasping the master bridle. Therefore, a good driver must first rectify himself, control the bridle, let the horses use forces evenly, unify their minds, and may go the way he wishes even on a zigzagging path. In this way, the driver can not only travel a thousand miles but also run fast. This is the principle followed by sages to handle affairs of Heaven, Earth and People. The Son of Heaven regards *neishi* officials as their left and right hands, six officials as their bridle, and then have three ducal ministers manage the six officials, promoting the education of the Five Constants for handling human relationships, that is, 'benevolence, righteousness, rites, wisdom and fidelity'. There is nothing that the king could not accomplish if he wishes to guide."

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Six Officials

Six Officials: In the Zhou Rites, Heaven Official was in charge of the interior affairs, Earth Official in charge of territory and demographics, Spring Official in charge of rites, Summer Official in charge of politics, Autumn Official in charge of justice, and Winter Official in charge of state affairs. They were called "Six Officials" or "Six Ministers."

Confucius presented a vivid metaphor for illustrating the relationship between punishments and moral education: The penal law for state governance is like the whip to driving a carriage. A good driver would not drive a carriage without a whip, but would not easily use it. Sages resort to the penal law to realize education, and once education succeeds penalties may be shelved. The penal law is established to warn and deter, of which the ultimate purpose is to prevent people from violating the law, achieving the result that “through punishment there may come to be no punishments” envisioned in *The Classic of History*.

Confucius said, “In hearing litigations, I am like any other person. What is necessary, however, is to cause the people to have no litigations!” Confucius, like other judges, convicted a person according to the details

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of a case, but differed from others in that his purpose was to put an end to litigations. Why would people have no litigations? Because moral education rises and everyone has been educated into a good person, aware of their duty and pursuing the virtues of filial piety, fraternal respect, loyalty, faith, propriety, righteousness, and integrity.

Tao Te Ching also writes, “The sage has no invariable mind of his own; he makes the mind of the people his mind. To those who are good (to me), I am good; and to those who are not good (to me), I am also good; - and thus (all) get to be good. To those who are sincere (with me), I am sincere; and to those who are not sincere (with me), I am also sincere.” From this remark, the sage’s mindset can be discerned. The sage invariably regards the people’s mind as his own mind, the people’s will as his will. Following the way of nature, the sage teaches the people, doing good with the people, and not opposing the people when they are not good, but educating them to make them good. When the people are sincere, the sage is sincere like them; when they become insincere, the sage never gives them up, but educates them to become sincere. As a result, everyone can be good and sincere, and a world of great harmony can be realized.

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Chapter Three

Educating People Through Morality

The Chinese cultural tradition, different from Western religious culture, is a sage-oriented culture valuing the education through moral and ethical principles of cause and effect. Efforts are focused on training people with moral integrity and professional capabilities as candidates of government officials. In the appointment, evaluation, inspection, incentive, training and management of officials, “those recommending men of virtue to the state should be rewarded most magnanimously, those who enviously suppress men of virtue should be most severely punished by Heaven.” Such measures make sure that people of moral excellence and leadership skills are appointed as leaders. In other words, this political system takes into consideration equality, justice, benevolence and fraternity. Therefore, the ideal political system in Chinese history is sage politics, in which all institutional building and

reform are designed around the aim of training a person into a good person, and the result is the ideal state of governance by doing nothing that goes against nature.

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Family Education: King Cheng of Zhou's Education for All-Round Development

"Bao Fu" of *The Book of Rites of Dai the Elder* records that Yi Jiang, King Cheng of Zhou's mother, attached great importance to prenatal education when she was pregnant. She did not stagger when she was standing, she was upright and serious when she was sitting, she did not make any noise when she was talking and laughing, she did not slack off and indulge herself when she was alone, and she did not swear casually when she had a temper. As a matter of fact, the mother of King Wen, the grandfather of King Cheng, she already attached great importance to prenatal education. When she was pregnant, she did not look at any ugly scenes, or watch any lewd songs and dances, and spoke gently without arrogance. Just because his mother was a saint, King Wen of Zhou was also a saint. It can be concluded that Chinese people attached great importance to prenatal education thousands of years ago.

The first three years after the birth of a child mark the most critical period for education. We should pay

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special attention to words and deeds and give children a good education. Especially for the education of the heir of the country, the prince, we should pay more attention to it. As soon as the prince of an ancient king was born, he should be taught etiquette. The requirements of the ceremony are strict and specific: the prince should wear the top coat and top hat, let the virtuous adult men carry him to the ceremony of offering sacrifices to heaven, and there are special officials dressed neatly and standing on both sides. If you pass by the palace gate, where the monarch deals with state affairs, you should put the prince down; when you pass by the ancestral temple, you have to run in small steps to show your respect for your ancestors. Therefore, the prince has been receiving filial piety education since he was born.

The History of the Han Dynasty IV of Qunshu Zhiyao records the early childhood education received by King Cheng of Zhou. When King Cheng was still a baby, Duke Shao, Duke Zhou and Duke Tai were invited to be his Grand Guardian, Grand Mentor, and Grand Preceptor respectively. Grand Guardian (Taibao) was responsible for protecting the crown prince's physical health, teaching him the way of keeping fit and maintaining physical and mental harmony with a regular diet and daily schedule. Grand Mentor was responsible for coaching the prince moral principles of benevolence

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and justice; and Grand Preceptor was responsible for aspiring the prince through sages' teachings. These were the duties of the Three Dukes (*San'gong*). This ancient structure of education practically means that three positions should be set up in a school: one for protecting students' mental and physical health, one for conducting education of ethics and morality, and one for training students on professional knowledge and skills. Nowadays

schools mainly play the role of “teaching” but lack guidance in “physical exercise” and “moral development,” which is especially reflected in the course of “Ideological and Political Education.” Over a long period of time, this course has not been paid due attention to. This is why President Xi Jinping specially stressed the course of “Ideological and Political Education” as a very important matter at the Symposium of Teachers of Ideological and Political Education Course on March 18, 2019, requiring that we should recognize the importance of Ideological and Political Education Course from the height of state governance, because strengthening moral education indeed concerns the lasting political stability of the state.

Besides the “Three Dukes,” there were “Three Assistants” (*sanshao*), that is, Assistant Guardian, Assistant Mentor, and Assistant Preceptor, who lived together with the crown prince and acted out the contents

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taught by the “Three Dukes,” so that the prince could learn ubiquitously. When the crown prince started to understand things, the Three Dukes and the Three Assistants taught him the principles of filial piety, benevolence, rites and righteousness, guided him to implement these principles in life, and expelled any evil or dishonorable person so that the prince would not see any misconduct. Therefore, the Three Assistants were also very prudently selected, who must be men of virtue distinguished for their filial piety, fraternal respect and uprightness, as well as being knowledgeable, learned and virtuous. They received sages’ teachings, lived and studied with the crown prince from a young age like kindred spirits. In this way, the crown prince would be ensured to live and grow up in an environment of upright people, where what he saw was all good work, what he heard was all correct words, and what he did was all righteous things.

Confucius said, “Habits developed from childhood are like second nature.” Virtues cultivated at an early age are as natural as born attributes. As what he had contact with was all correct guidance, the crown prince’s behaviors were naturally fair and just. This record reflects the great importance attached by ancients to the cultivation of inheritors. *The History of the Han Dynasty* also mentions: The Xia Dynasty lasted for over ten generations,

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Yin Dynasty went on for over twenty generations, and the Zhou Dynasty was carried on for over thirty generations. By the Qin Dynasty, however, the Son of Heaven perished in the second generation. Human nature did not differ so much, but why did the kings of the three dynasties of Xia, Shang and Zhou followed the right way and lasted a long time, while the Qin Dynasty perished violently for following an unprincipled course? The reason was attributed to their different ways of educating their inheritors and their varying attention to education. In the Zhou Dynasty, in particular, the crown prince received the best education from childhood, for whom the best guidance was given by Grand Guardian, Grand Mentor, and Grand Preceptor, who were the most virtuous and capable person in the nation.

“King Wen, the Heir” in *The Book of Rites* also specially points out that the crown prince should “take his place in the schools according to his age” (*chi yu xue*). “Chi” refers to sequence in order of age. “*Chi yu xue*” means that when the heir started school, he should follow the seniority rules according to his own age. Despite being crown prince, the heir

could not meet any people in the capacity of a future king before he ascended the throne. In this way, the heir could not only get close to the people, learn about their hardships and develop sympathy to their needs, but also cultivate his virtue of modesty and

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knowledge about the seniority rules. Once he was enthroned, he would be so occupied by political affairs that he would have fewer opportunities to have contact with the common people. More importantly, such education could cultivate the heir's virtue of modesty and deference, which became his habit of interaction with others. If the heir was modest and polite to everyone and treated worthy men with courtesy, he would not be condescending. Respecting men of virtues, the heir would be able to summon talented people noted for moral integrity to assist him in state governance.

The History of *Jin (Jin Shu)* in *Qunshu Zhiyao* records that Crown Prince Minhuai was intelligent and diligent in his childhood, which was a lucky thing for the state. However, in the environment where he grew up, there were no unpretentious, loyal and prudent commoners. His Grand Preceptor, Grand Mentor and followers were all from rich and powerful families. As a result, the crown prince picked up the bad habit of cynicism, indulging in extravagance and dissipation. He even neglected the etiquette of being filial to his parents and respectful of his teachers, and following the seniority rules, let alone being prudent and concerned with people's conditions. Later, Empress Jia, who resented the Crown Prince out of jealousy, called him in, intoxicated him and made him write a letter of revolt. Consequently, the Crown Prince

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was deposed and eventually murdered. Such was a case of fatal disaster caused by the absence of good education and the virtue of modesty. Therefore, *The History of Jin* concludes, "Son of Heaven does not have to worry about not being rich and renowned or being disrespected but should worry about being complacent and ignorant of his own shortcomings or the hardships of the common people." Before his enthronement, the Crown Prince had won great distinction and riches, but lacked the virtues of modesty, self-cultivation and concern for people's welfare. He did not have to worry about himself but should be concerned about the possibility of indulging in complacency, ignorant of his own fault, and even becoming a little parasite-like emperor. How can such a person take on the great responsibility of governing the state and protecting the people?

Though ordinary families cannot choose the most virtuous and learned people to teach their offspring like the Crown Prince, yet they should also do their best to give the best education to their children by selecting virtuous and learned teachers. If a family can maintain its wealth and distinction for over three generations, that must result from reading sages' classics and receiving sage-oriented education.

As a Chinese saying goes, "there are three ways of being an unfilial son, the most serious one is to have no

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heir." "Having no heir," under certain circumstances, refers to having no son; and under other

circumstances, it refers to the inability to pass on the good family business and tradition because several sons have been born but are all profligate, who even bring calamity to the country and people, which can be considered as “the most serious offense” of an unfilial son. Only by properly fostering the younger generation can the sustainable development of a family be realized.

On the eve of the Second World War, some European scholars had been discussing why only China, of the four major ancient civilizations, still remained flourishing in the East of the world then. Finally they attributed the long-standing Chinese civilization to the importance attached to family education. This is an insightful conclusion. Ancient Chinese attached tremendous importance to the cultivation of successors and heirs, a tradition which has been passed down to the present. The Qiao Family Courtyard in Shanxi, a key cultural heritage under state protection and a national second-class museum, is located in Qiaojiabao Village, Qi County. Built in 1756, this courtyard used to be the residence of an extended family. Visitors there can find quotations from Confucius' *The Analects* everywhere, such as “Let the will be set on the path of duty. Let every attainment in what is good be firmly grasped. Let perfect virtue be accorded with. Let

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relaxation and enjoyment be found in the polite arts.” Such instructions can even be found in pavilions. The wedding and funeral ceremonies are conducted exactly in accordance with ancient rites, which are highlighted by the education of being grateful and repaying the kindness of others. These features illustrate that the Qiao family can preserve their wealth for several generations not by luck but due to their traditional cultural education. The fundamental reason for the phenomenon that fortune not going beyond three generations or the present generation is inadequate attention to ethical, moral and sage-oriented education.

The ancient Chinese society was based on traditional extended families, and family stability was the foundation of social stability. In maintaining family stability and educating children, family rules, education, paternal instructions and family ethics play an extremely important role. Some famous family precepts handed down through the ages, such as *Yan's Family Precepts* and *Zhu Zi's Family Maxims*, are well-known to this day. *Disciple Regulations*, written in the Qing Dynasty, is a classic of Chinese traditional family rules. Strict family education to foster children's respectfulness and politeness can lay a good foundation of their ethics and morality and future academic achievements.

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Yan's Family Precepts

Yan's Family Precepts is a book of family precepts created by Yan Zhitui in the Southern and Northern Dynasties. Completed after Emperor Wen of Sui's overthrow of the State of Chen and the enthronement of Emperor Yang of Sui (about the end of the sixth century), the book is Yan Zhitui's work recollecting his personal experience, thought and scholarship for the purpose of teaching his offspring. The contents of the book cover education, encouragement of diligent study, and valuing harmony in family and social relationships, with attention focused on the cultivation of children's moral quality, exhorting them to be

frugal, prudent in making friends, polite to guests and to love books.

Zhu Zi's Family Maxims

Zhu Zi's Family Maxims is a beginner's book on family ethics, written by Zhu Bolu, an educator in late Ming and early Qing dynasties. With only 524 characters, the book is a famous work on family education, concisely outlining the principles of self-cultivation and family management, such as respecting teachers, frugality in family management, and harmonious neighborhood relationship.

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Disciple Regulations

Disciple Regulations is a primer compiled by Li Yuxiu, an educator in the Qing Dynasty, based on Confucius teachings. The book consists of three-character sentences, with one rhyme for every two sentences, amounting to 360 sentences and 1,080 characters in total. The core thought is Confucian filial piety, fraternal respect, benevolence, and love.

As an ancient saying goes, "Women's quarters are where sages emerge, mother's teachings are the source of world peace." From this remark, we can discern Chinese people's far-reaching thoughts, which elevate the status of mind regulation to the height of state governance. Mind regulation starts as early as prenatal education, which is state governance from the very foundation. If a person has not developed a peaceful mindset and a polite attitude at home since childhood, he will naturally be unable to live in harmony with others when leaving home after growing up.

On October 31, 2013, President Xi Jinping noted in a collective conversation with the members of the new leadership team of the All-China Women's Federation, "Chinese people have always been praising good wives

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and mothers, who care for their husbands and children, and maintain their families frugally and diligently, which are important components of the fine traditional culture of the Chinese nation." President Xi also stressed the importance of giving full play to women's unique role in social life and family life, and their unique role in promoting the family virtues of the Chinese nation and establishing a good family tradition. Indeed, Confucius, Mencius and other sages emerged because they had received good maternal education in their families since childhood. Good family education teaches people to learn the virtues of comity, respect and humility, one way to fundamentally solve contradictions and conflicts.

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School Education: Emperor Ming of Han's Respect for Teachers

The following picture tells the story of Emperor Ming of Han's respect for teachers. Emperor Ming studied *The Classic of History* from Huan Rong since he was appointed Crown Prince. After he became emperor, he still honored Huan Rong with the etiquette towards teachers. He once personally visited the Taichang Mansion where Huan Rong resided. He

had a seat specially set up for his teacher in the east, called in hundreds of officials and Huan Rong's disciples, and took the lead in offering disciples' ceremony to the master. The officials and disciples left their seats to ask the emperor difficult questions, but Emperor Ming humbly declined, "My master is here." Every time Huan Rong fell sick, Emperor Ming would send attendants to visit him, and send his imperial officials and doctors to treat him. When seriously ill, Huan Rong presented a memorial to thank the emperor, returning the title and fief endowed by the emperor. Emperor Ming of Han personally visited Huan Rong's residence to inquire about his illness. As soon as

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he entered the street where Huan Rong's residence was located, the emperor got out of the carriage, came forward with scriptures in hand, stroked Huan Rong crying, presented him beddings, curtains, swords and clothes, and did not leave until after a long time. From then on, princes, generals and doctors who came to visit Huan Rong all got off their carriage before it reached his residence, and they all bowed down in front of Huan's bed. After Huan Rong's death, Emperor Ming personally put on mourning

Huan Rong

Huan Rong was a famous Confucian scholar and minister in the Eastern Han Dynasty. In his early years, he went to Chang'an to study under Dr. Zhu Pu, working hard and completing his studies. When he was in his 60s, he was recognized by Liu Xiu, Emperor Guangwu, and appointed as *yilang* (Court Counselor), teaching Prince Liu Zhuang (later Emperor Ming of Han), and was later appointed as a doctor. In the 28th year of the Jianwu era (53 AD), Huan Rong was promoted to Assistant Mentor of Crown Prince. In the thirtieth year of the Jianwu era (55 AD), he was appointed Minister of Ceremony. After Liu Zhuang was enthroned as Emperor Ming, he treated Huan Rong courteously as his teacher, and was very respectful to him.

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clothes for the funeral, and had his master's tomb built in the east of Shoushan, a noble place of burial.

Why did the emperors in ancient China respect teachers so much? Because ancient Chinese people realized that moral education is a fundamental reason for people's kindness and social harmony, and the fundamental guarantee for long-term stability of the country. Therefore, we must attach importance to moral education. Since we attach importance to moral education, special respect must be paid to teachers undertaking the task of "preaching, teaching and dispelling doubts." Therefore, if family education is the beginning of moral education, school education is the continuation of moral education. As is recorded in *History of the Han Dynasty II in Qunshu Zhiyao*, all kings in ancient times regarded people's education as an important task of governing the state, set up Imperial College to promote education all over the state, and set up local schools to educate the people. With the promotion of education, good customs were developed, people bent on doing good and never violated law, and all prisons in the state were empty for a time.

In school education, first of all, we should develop the ethos of respecting teachers and

honoring morality. If teachers are not respected, the Great Way would not be comprehended, people's good nature could not be

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developed, and the result of "illustrating illustrious virtues" could not be achieved. "Record on the Subject of Education" in *The Classic of Rites* writes, "In pursuing the course of learning, the difficulty is in securing the proper reverence for the master. When that is done, the course (which he inculcates) is regarded with honor. When that is done, the people know how to respect learning." "严(yan)" means respect, and "学(xue)" is explained in *Analytical Dictionary of Characters* as enlightenment. Teachers are those enlightened earlier and disciples are those enlightened later. The purpose of disciples to learn from teachers is to seek enlightenment. Enlightenment and

Analytical Dictionary of Characters

Analytical Dictionary of Characters (*Shuo Wen Jie Zi*), *Shuo Wen* for short, was written by Xu Shen, a Confucian scholar and philologist in the Eastern Han Dynasty, as the first dictionary arranged by radicals in China. According to the forms of Chinese characters, Xu Shen created 540 radicals and classified 9,353 words into 540 parts respectively. The 540 parts are further classified into 14 categories according to the forms and relationships. The main body of the dictionary is divided into 14 chapters according to these 14 categories. In addition to the last chapter, the dictionary has altogether 15 chapters.

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wisdom are inherent in nature and can only be obtained with a sincere and respectful mind. So it is particularly important to respect teachers in the pursuit of learning.

To ensure that people respect teachers and honor morality, the ancients set up various forms of etiquette. For example, when a student started school, he should be led by his parent to give the most solemn salutation to the Confucius statue, the most holy teacher, that is, the ceremony of kneeling three times and kowtowing nine times. Then the teacher was requested to be seated, and the parent would guide the student to kneel three times and kowtow nine times to the teacher to show their respect. Seeing his parent treats his teacher with such great courtesy, the child would certainly show respect for the teacher and naturally dare not despise his teachings. Only when one respects one's teacher can one honor ethics. On the other hand, afraid that their virtue and knowledge would be so inadequate that they would fail to fulfill their responsibilities as teachers and live up to students' parents' and students' expectations, teachers must do their best to teach students conscientiously and responsibly, and always remind themselves to live up to their parents' great trust. Therefore, the ancient ceremony of honoring teachers played an enlightening role for both students and teachers, which still has important reference significance today.

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According to "Summary of the Rules of Propriety" in *The Classic of Rites* writes: A man at twenty goes through the capping ceremony, that is, the coming-of-age ceremony, his friends of the same generation give him an appellation (*zi*). From then on, he will be called

by his appellation by all his friends and relatives except for his parents to show respect, even including the emperor. Besides his parents, only his teachers can call him by his name throughout his lifetime. This means that teachers' grace is of the same level of parents', as parents give us our physical life, while teachers give us spiritual growth.

Besides, emperors also set good examples of honoring their teachers. When an emperor met his ministers, he always faced south and backed north, receiving them with the courtesy of monarch and minister. However, when the emperor met his teachers, he must demote himself and receive them with the courtesy of host and guest. This was to remind the emperors that although they were sons of heaven heading a state, their teachers would always be their teachers. The emperors' example better than their precept was followed by all people in the country. Ministers and common people, witnessing the emperors' respect for teachers, developed a good tradition of respecting teachers and honoring morality in the society. Therefore, in history, all enlightened emperors could take the lead in setting a good example of respecting teachers.

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During the Golden Age of Three Emperors, emperors Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong invited teachers noted for both their scholarship and moral integrity as state preceptors to constantly deliver lectures on scriptures and set this as a national system. The emperors personally came to listen to state preceptors' lectures together with officials of civil and military affairs, and revered these preceptors with the courtesy of honoring teachers. In this way, in the whole society there arose an influential trend of moral education, which led to the emergence of a prosperous age.

The System of Rites in China: A History records that the Manchu people had already performed the ceremony of offering sacrifices to Confucius before they entered the Shanhai Pass. After the entry, the system of offering sacrifices to Confucius was more clearly established. For example, in the twenty-third year of Emperor Kangxi's reign, during his return from his southern tour, the emperor went to Qufu to worship the Ancestral Teacher Temple and the Confucius Temple, and performed the ceremony of kneeling three times and kowtowing nine times, the highest ceremony for the emperor at that time. Kangxi also left the crank yellow canopy to the Confucius Temple, that is, the ceremonial flag used by the emperor was offered to the Confucius Temple.

Qing Zhi records, "In the first year of the Yong-

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zheng reign, an edict was issued to confer the title of lordship to five generations of Confucius; in the fourth year, in the ceremony of offering sacrifice to Confucius, the rite of standing was changed to kneeling." This reflected Emperor Yongzheng's reverence for Confucius. "In the eighth year, the Confucius Temple in Qufu was rebuilt with yellow tiles and painted pillars in the form of the royal palace." "In the thirty-second year of the Guangxu reign, sacrifice to Confucius was upgraded to Grand Ceremony of the state." It is especially noteworthy that in the second year of the Yongzheng reign, the Confucius Temple of Queli, Qufu was damaged by a fire, and Emperor Yongzheng immediately offered sacrifice to Confucius and dispatched officials to Queli to recover the temple. In October of the eighth

year of the Yongzheng reign, the Confucius' Temple was repaired, and the emperor ordered his princes to visit Queli and offer sacrifice to Confucius. In November, officials were specially designated to take charge of all affairs of the Confucius Temple. From these records, it can be discerned that emperors of the Qing Dynasty were highly reverent of Confucius, even surpassing emperors of previous dynasties.

The king of a state was responsible for practicing the Way of Sages, while teachers were responsible for carrying on the Way of Sages. Therefore, the king should be particularly respectful of those preaching the Way of

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Sages. Only in this way could morality be cultivated, the Way be illustrated and the state be peacefully governed. With a review of the rise and fall of dynasties in Chinese history, a pattern can be concluded: All periods in which teachers and morality were honored and education was stressed were periods of political integrity and even golden ages; all periods in which teachers and morality were despised would see dynasties doomed to decline and demise. Just as stated in "Great Digest" of *Xunzi*, "A state that will prosper will surely value teachers and honor preceptors. With teachers and preceptors valued and honored, laws and rules prevail. A state that will decline will surely despise teachers and scorn preceptors. With the despise and scorning of teachers and preceptors, people indulge themselves, which will lead to the destruction of laws and rules."

Lüshi Chunqiu (Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals) in Qunshu Zhiyao records, "Of the teachings of ancient sage kings, nothing is more glorious than filial piety, and nothing is more commendable than loyalty." Loyal ministers and filial sons are what kings and parents most desired; honors and glory are also what ministers and sons want the most. But the problem is that kings and parents often cannot get the loyal ministers and filial sons they want; while ministers and sons cannot obtain the glory and honors they desire. This is caused by their ignorance

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of rites and justice. Officials, who wish to be gloriously promoted and leave posthumous fame, may see their career ended and themselves imprisoned because of their corruption caused by their ignorance of righteousness. Such ignorance is caused by the lack of learning. Therefore, ancient sage kings all revered their teachers and attentively listened to their teachings.

Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals also cited ten sages and six men of virtues famous for their reverence of teachers in history and commented, "Now, we are not as prestigious as ancient emperors, or as wise as ancient sages, but we do not respect teachers. Then how can we realize the Way?" The disrespect of teachers was why the kingly way finally came to an end after the Great Age of the Five Emperors and Three Dynasties (Xia, Shang and Zhou).

Through a review of China's history we can find that in three to five years after the founding of a new dynasty, the country could be turned from turmoil into peace and prosperity, because moral teachings were valued. Therefore, the great significance of moral influence to state governance cannot be underestimated. Today, our state leaders are taking

the lead to study traditional culture and practice the traditional virtues of filial piety, fraternal respect, loyalty, faith, sense of propriety, justice, honesty and honor, reverently advocating and practicing

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sages' teachings. Ordinary people are also following their examples, giving rise to the ethos of prizing virtues. Just as Confucius has concluded, "The relation between men of virtues and people of low positions is like that between the wind and the grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it." (*The Analects*)

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Social Education: Zixia on Music Education

"Records of Music" in *The Classic of Rites* records a conversation between the marquis Wen of Wei and Zixia, which explains the difference between music and sound.

The marquis Wen of Wei asked Zixia, saying, "When in my square-cut dark robes and cap I listen to the ancient formal music, I am only afraid that I shall go to sleep. When I listen to the music of Zheng and Wei, I do not feel tired; let me ask why I should feel so differently under the old and the new music." Zixia replied, "What you ask about is music; and what you like is sound. Now music and sound are akin, but they are not the same." The marquis Wen inquired, "What is the difference between music and sound?"

Zixia replied, "In antiquity, Heaven and Earth acted according to their several natures, and the four seasons were what they ought to be. The people were virtuous, and all the cereals produced abundantly. There were no fevers or other diseases, and no apparitions of other prodigies. This was what we call 'the period of great order.'

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With stability prevailing in the society, they checked and rectified the degrees of musical notes, and gave harmony to the five notes (of the scale), and the singing to the lutes of *Feng*, *Ya*, and song; constituting what we call 'the virtuous airs.' Such virtuous airs constituted what we call 'Music.' True music reflects the nature of harmony of Heaven and Earth, political integrity, and peace and happiness of people. What you like now, I am afraid, is vile airs that make people indulge in indolence? For example, the airs of Zheng go to a wild excess, and debauch the mind; those of Song tell of slothful indulgence, and drown the mind; those of Wey are vehement and rapid, and perplex the mind; and those of Qi are violent and depraved, and make the mind arrogant. The airs of those

Feng, Ya and Song

Feng, Ya and Song are three parts of *The Classic of Poetry*. *Feng* consists of music from different parts of the country, mostly folksongs. *Ya* consists of elegant and standard music, referring to music played in court banquets or meetings in the capital area of the Zhou Dynasty, also divided into *Daya* and *Xaoya*. *Song* consists of music played for sacrificial ceremonies in ancestral temples, mostly for eulogizing ancestral achievements.

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four states all stimulate libidinous desire, and are injurious to virtue; they should not be called Music and therefore not be used at sacrifices, because these tones will damage the air of harmony and justice."

Finally, Zixia reminded the marquis Wen, "A ruler has only to be careful of what he likes and dislikes. What the ruler likes, his ministers will practice; and what superiors do, their inferiors follow. This is the sentiment in *The Classic of Poetry*, 'You min kong yi.' That is to say, it is quite easy to lead the people, because the below follow the behavior of the above. What those in superior positions like will guide the whole society to develop a trend of pursuing this like.

Music guided by the Way is conducive to improving human nature. The *Classic of Rites* comments, "Superior men rejoice in attaining to the Way; and smaller men are happy in obtaining the things which they desire. When the objects of desire are regulated by a consideration of the Way to be pursued, there is joy without any disorder. When those objects lead to the forgetfulness of the Way, there is delusion, and no joy." Therefore, music and sound differ. Music at the lower level, which goes against the principle of Golden Mean, will mislead people to the extremes of depravation or brutality, while music at the higher level is the gate to virtues, because such music reflects the principle of Golden Mean, which can cultivate

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listeners' moral character while they enjoy music. In other words, only the virtuous airs can be called Music.

"The Records of Music" concludes, "Let music attain its full results, and there would be no dissatisfactions (in the mind); let ceremony do so, and there would be no quarrels. When bowings and courtesies marked the government of the kingdom, there would be what might be described as music and ceremony indeed." In the remote antiquity, when sage kings governed the state, rites and music played a very important role. Good music comes from within, producing the tranquility of the mind; ceremonies, respectful behaviors coming from without, can in turn affect the mind. Ceremonies and music can both exert a subtle influence on people's inner thoughts and outer behaviors, steering people away from evils and making them refined in manner. Therefore, ancients concluded that the culture of rites and music can play the role of "putting an end to evils before they sprout and planting the seeds of respect from little things."

"The Record of Music" also elaborates on the subtle influence of music education on people's mind. Dedication to music is to cultivate people's mind; dedication to rites is to regulate people's bodies, words and deeds. If the heart of a person be for a moment without the feeling of harmony and joy, meanness and deceitfulness enter it, giving rise to greed. If the outward

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demeanor be for a moment without gravity and respectfulness, indifference and rudeness show themselves. The result of music is a perfect harmony, and that of ceremonies a perfect

observance (of propriety). When one's inner man is (thus) harmonious, and his outer man thus docile, the people behold his countenance and do not strive with him; they look to his demeanor, and no feeling of indifference or rudeness arises in them. Good music is produced to regulate people's mind to reach harmony and tranquility.

When educating future state leaders, people in ancient China invariably resorted to musical education. "King Wen, the Heir" in *The Book of Rites* records, in the education of heirs, special attention was attached to the education of rites and music, "In the education of the crown princes adopted by the founders of the three dynasties the subjects were the rules of propriety and music. Music served to give the interior cultivation; the rules served to give the external cultivation." This approach to education returns people to their pure and harmonious nature, with the purpose of training people's natural love for truth, kindness and beauty, and the natural affinity to nice and harmonious people and things.

In *The Republic*, Plato, in the words of Socrates, specially stresses that music education is much more important other aspects of education in that rhythm and

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melody have the strongest power, able to pass through the inmost soul of him who hears them. A child rightly educated will become graceful as rhythm and harmony take roots in the innermost soul; on the other hand, a child ill-educated will become ungraceful. In addition, a well-educated child will resent ugly things, instinctively rejecting and reprimanding them; meanwhile, he will admire beautiful things and draw inspiration and nutrition from them to make his soul grow beautiful and kind. With a correct distinction between beauty and ugliness, even if a person only knows the distinction but is ignorant of the reason behind it as a child, he will be naturally drawn to goodness and steer away from ugliness after he grows up and becomes intelligent, because his education enables him to seek kindred spirit. He who has received this true education of music has an inner spiritual beauty, reflected in physical forms as a corresponding harmonizing beauty. In social interaction, due to the unifying role of spirit, he will recognize and salute the friend with whom his education has made him long familiar, and give a wide berth to those without inner harmony. Correct love is temperate and harmonious love of fair and orderly things, in sharp contrast to intemperate love. The purpose of music education is to guide people to love beauty. Plato's argument clearly illustrates the reason for the great importance of music education to the growth of soul.

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In fact, music education is not alone for realizing the love of beauty. All fine artistic education is for achieving love of beauty. All fine artistic education is for achieving love for beauty.

Pu Yi, the last emperor of the Qing Dynasty, and Wang Guowei were friends. Once, Wang Guowei invited Pu Yi to his home. Wang presented his collection of paintings, calligraphy and crafts to Pu Yi, and asked him to distinguish the authenticity of these works. Pu Yi found the fake ones in a short time. Wang Guowei did not believe it at first, so he went to find someone else to appraise these works. As a result, it was discovered that what Pu Yi said was true. Wang asked Pu Yi, "How could you tell these are fakes?" Pu Yi said, "Because

they are somewhat different from what I have seen." Pu Yi grew up in the imperial palace, and all he saw were genuine antiques. With frequent exposure to genuine products, he had already accumulated the experience of "beauty," and therefore was able to tell fake products. It shows that "the habits one has developed since childhood are like second nature." In the same vein, through quality education such as music, we can achieve the state of being clear-minded and by the observation of different cases elevate our accomplishments, realizing the effect of "responding with the same voice and seeking for kindred spirit." Therefore, whether one has made efforts in self-cultivation can be seen from how one can identify with or recognize others.

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When one's self-cultivation reaches a certain level, one can recognize people of the same level and avoid disharmonious people.

Confucianism also attaches great importance to music education. Of the "Six Classics" employed by Confucius in the education of his students, one was *The Classic of Music*. Confucius, who was most familiar with the characteristics of music, and strict at the distinction between good and evil, advocated banishing the songs of Zheng and adopting the orthodox Shao dance, "I returned from Wey to Lu, and then the music was reformed, and *Ya* and *Song* all found their proper places." After the Qin and Han dynasties, *The Classic of Music* was lost, but important theories on music are extant in *The Classic of History*, *The Classic of Rites*, and "Book of Music" in *Records of the Grand Historian*.

According to the records in "History of Yu" of *The Classic of History*, Emperor Shun appointed Kui as director of music and teacher of eldest sons so that they became "straightforward and yet mild; lenient and yet stern; firm, yet not tyrannical; and simple, yet not arrogant." Through music education, a person can become straightforward and yet mild. Some people are indeed very righteous, but they tend to lose their mild attitude if they are too bold. A person can become lenient and yet stern. A lenient person tends to lose their

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reverence for being too casual. With the education of rites and music, a person can become both lenient and authoritative, solemn and respectful. A person can become firm, strong and just, and yet not tyrannical. A person can become simple but not arrogant. These are all results of music education.

Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals also points out characteristics of music of troubled times: In music typical of troubled times, the sound of playing wooden and leather instruments is like thunder, the sound of playing metal and stone instruments is like thunderbolt. and the sound of singing and dancing accompanied by stringed and woodwind instruments is like shouting. It is possible to disturb people's spirit, shake their eyes and ears, and cause debauchery with such sounds, but it is impossible to bring harmony to people if it is used as music. Therefore, the more luxurious and indulgent music is, the more depressed people are, the more chaotic the state is, and the more humble the status of monarch is. As a result, the original significance of music is lost.

Confucius also attached great importance to the influence of music on politics. Whenever he reached a place, without investigating into the local political affairs, just by listening to the local popular music, he would know the public morals of the place. Therefore,

“for changing their manners and altering their customs, there

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is nothing better than music.”

The Spring and Autumn Annals of Master Yan records that once Duke Jing of Qi did not appear in the morning meeting. Master Yan saw Du Jiong waiting in the meeting hall and asked him, “Why is the duke absent?” Du Jiong replied, “The duke was sleepless all night and so he is not present.” Master Yan then asked, “Why was the duke sleepless all night?” Du Jiong replied, “Liang Qiuju offered a musician named Yu, who has changed the ancient music of Qi. The duke listened to the new music all night long, and therefore he is absent now.” Master Yan, upon his return, immediately imprisoned the singer according to law.

Hearing of this, Duke Jing of Qi was furious and asked, “Why did you have Yu imprisoned? He sang for me yesterday. He sang very well. I was very happy,” Master Yan replied, “Because he played decadent music to ruin your heart.” Duke Jing of Qi said, “I’ve left all the affairs of vassal diplomacy and government affairs to you. Just take care of these things. As for what kind

Liang Qiuju

Liang Qiuju, an adulatory minister of Duke Jing of Qi, was good at gauging Duke Jing of Qi’s thoughts, and was thus favored by the duke.

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of wine I drink, what kind of music I listen to, you don’t have to interfere. Why do I have to listen to ancient songs?” Master Yan replied, “When ancient music perishes, etiquette and law will die out; when etiquette and law die out, moral education will die out. When moral education dies out, the country will die out, Music is therefore closely related to the rise and fall of the country. Listening to decadent music will lead to the decline of the national fortune, and I am afraid that Your Majesty will deviate from moral teachings.” Master Yan also cited historical figures for Duke Jing of Qi. As far as songs and music are concerned, King Zhou of Yin’s ‘Beili’ dance music, and the music composed by King You of Zhou and King Li of Zhou were all obscene music, which led to the fall of their respective dynasty. Why do you want to change ancient music so readily, My Majesty?” Thinking that Master Yan’s words were reasonable, Duke Jing of Qi immediately said, “An incompetent person as I am, I unfortunately has the state power. I was not careful enough and talked without thinking. What you said is reasonable, and I am willing to take your advice.”

Therefore, popular music in a country exerts a great influence on the national fortune. Frivolous music makes people restless, while elegant music brings tranquility and harmony. Therefore, music education is of paramount

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importance, and this is also the reason for which China’s wise kings and ministers and insightful people have been attaching great importance to education of arts including music.

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Effect of Moral Education: Even Prisoners on Death Row Released Honored Credit

As recorded in *Comprehensive History Retold as a Mirror for Rulers (Zi Zhi Tong Jian)*, in the sixth year of the Zhenguan era, Emperor Taizong personally checked and recorded the cases of prisoners on death row, and became so compassionate with them that he let them go home first and come back for execution next autumn. In the second year, of the 390 people released, all returned to the court on time and no one escaped, even without supervision. So Emperor Taizong pardoned them all. Emperor Taizong achieved the governance state of “not bearing to bully,” because he attached importance to moral education and was himself compassionate.

From the age of 16, Emperor Taizong began to lead troops to fight and suppress resurrections. After he ascended the throne, aware of his lack of experience in governing the country, he was eager to learn the wisdom of ancient sages on state governance.

As recorded in “On System of Government” of *Political*

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Discourses of Zhenguan (Zhen Guan Zheng Yao), in the early years of the Zhenguan era, Emperor Taizong said to Xiao Yu, “I liked to shoot arrows with a bow when I was young, and I thought I knew how to identify good or bad bows and arrows. Recently, I’ve got more than a dozen good bows, so I showed them to a bow and arrow master, who said that none of them was good. I asked why. The bow and arrow master said that if the center of the wood was not straight, the texture of the wood would be skewed. Although such a bow was powerful, the arrow it shot was not straight, so it could not be taken as a good

Yellow Gate Assistant Minister

Yellow Gate Assistant Minister, also known as Huang Men Lang, was an official post set up in the early Qin Dynasty. During the Qin and Han dynasties, the palace gate, painted yellow, was called the Yellow Gate. Therefore, the Assistant Minister of the Yellow Gate was an officer who worked in the palace gate, and he was an attendant close to the emperor and assigned to convey imperial edicts. After the Han Dynasty, this official position was kept. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Yellow Gate Assistant Minister was an official of the Second Class, responsible for assisting the emperor in handling the court affairs.

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bow. From this, I’ve learned a lot: I’ve used bows and arrows to pacify the world. I have used enough of them all my life, but I still don’t know the essentials of identifying good bows and arrows. I’ve been an emperor for a very short time and I certainly don’t know much more about governing the country than I do about bows and arrows. My understanding of bows and arrows is still partial, let alone my knowledge of essentials of governing the country?”

From then on, Emperor Taizong regularly summoned officials from the capital city and central government with above Class Five and sought their instructions about the wisdom of ancient sages in governing the country, and carefully inquired about things happening outside the court, so as to have a detailed understanding of the sufferings of the people and

the gains and losses of governance.

In the second year of the Zhenguan era, Emperor Taizong asked Yellow Gate Assistant Minister Wang Gui, "Modern emperors and ministers are mostly not as good as those in ancient times in governing the country. I wonder why?" Wang Gui replied, "In ancient times, emperors ruled the country with the people as the center not seeking self-interest. However, the kings of modern times compromise the interests of the people to satisfy their own selfish desires, and the ministers appointed by

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them are no longer scholars well versed in history. No prime minister in the Han Dynasty was not proficient in one type of scriptures. If the court had any puzzle, they would refer to the scriptures to make decisions. So everyone was versed in the moral codes, and the country was peaceful and stable. However, in modern times, martial arts were valued over Confucianism, or the state was ruled by criminal law, which led to the destruction of Confucianism and the disappearance of ancient pristine folk customs." Emperor Taizong felt the same way upon hearing this. From then on, all officials proficient in Confucianism and versed in how to govern the country were promoted and entrusted with important tasks.

Emperor Taizong as ready to accept counsels and paid special attention to govern the state with Confucian moral education. This was very valuable. Confucius said, "If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame. If they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good." However, ordinary leaders tend to neglect moral education because they see the rapid results achieved through cruel punishments. Emperor Taizong, however, deeply believed in sages' teachings, which was an important reason why he managed to create

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the Golden Years of Zhenguan.

Emperor Taizong hoped not only to discuss the way of governing the state with his ministers, but also to read the experience and lessons of governing the state from previous emperors at any time. So he ordered the remonstrators Wei Zheng, Yu Shinan, Chu Liang, Xiao Deyan, and others to review the historical data of governing the state for thousands of years from the Five Emperors to the Jin Dynasty, and to compile the essential materials of state governance into a series of books.

In the fifth year of the Zhenguan era, *Qunshu Zhiyao* was completed. Wei Zheng sang high praise of its historical value in the preface, "Used for reference, these books serve as mirrors of history; passed down to posterity, these books can serve as guides for their prosperity."

Wei Zheng

Wei Zheng was the Prime Minister of the Tang Dynasty, outstanding politician, thinker, writer and historian. When assisting Emperor Taizong of Tang, Wei Zheng bravely offered advice, promoted the king's way of governing the state, helped Emperor Taizong create the Golden Years of Zhenguan and became a famous prime minister, ranking fourth among the

“Twenty-four Meritorious Ministers of Lingyan Pavilion.”

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Therefore, *Qunshu Zhiyao* is a series of classics of state governance with which people can learn from the past and create a better future. Deeming the series of books extensive and essential, Emperor Taizong read them diligently every day in the hope of properly governing the Great Tang Dynasty with the wisdom of ancient sages and setting up an example of “good governance” for the world.

Influenced by *Qunshu Zhiyao*, Emperor Taizong was celebrated for his employment of men of virtues, readiness to accept wise advice, respect of Confucianism, diligent work style and love of the people. He governed the state by promoting civic education, practiced austerity, and levied light corvée and land tax. Soon, peace and prosperity prevailed in the Great Tang Dynasty, ushering in the famous “Golden Years of Zhenguan” in history.

The social order of the Zhenguan era was unbelievably good. Because the emperor took the lead in setting a good example, the officials were dedicated to the public, each conscientiously doing their duty, and abuse of power and corruption and dereliction of duty fell to the lowest point in history. This historical period illustrates that governing the state with the sage’s way is not only effective, easy to follow, but also fast.

As recorded in “On System of Government” of *Political Discourses of Zhen’guan*, in the seventh year of

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Zhenguan, Emperor Taizong and Wei Zheng discussed the gains and losses of state governance since ancient times, saying, “I’m afraid we cannot rush to seek great governance after the chaos.” Wei Zheng replied, “Not so. Ordinary people are afraid of death when they are in distress and hardship. If they are afraid of death, they hope that the world will be peaceful. If they hope that the world will be peaceful, it will be easy to educate them. Therefore, it is easier to educate people after the chaos, just as hungry people are more satisfied with their diet.”

Emperor Taizong asked, “It took a hundred years for sages to govern a state well, eliminate abuse and abolish killing. How can we do it in a short time after the chaos?” *The Analects* says, “If good men were to govern a country in succession for a hundred years, they would be able to transform the bad, and dispense with capital punishments.” Therefore, Emperor Taizong believed that it would take hundreds of years to restore peace, even by sages. But Wei Zheng said, “This remark targets ordinary people, not wise people. If wise men promote moral education and work with one heart, it will be as quick as a loud shout, readily responded to. Results can be seen in a year. If it takes three years to succeed, it would be too late.”

Emperor Taizong agreed with Wei Zheng. But Feng Deyi and others said, “After the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties,

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the people gradually became frivolous and treacherous. Therefore, the Qin Dynasty used severe punishment and law to govern the state, while the Han Dynasty used criminal law as

well as benevolence and righteousness. All of them tried to achieve good governance, but they failed. How can we say that they do want to achieve good governance even if they can? If you believe in Wei Zheng, I am afraid that you will lead the country to turmoil.”

Wei Zheng said, “During the period of the five emperors and three kings, the people were still the same, but they were properly educated. It can be concluded that with the implementation of the imperial way one becomes emperor, and with the implementation of the kingly way one becomes king. The key point is whether the governors at that time had implemented moral education. According to the records of ancient books, the Yellow Emperor fought Chiyou more than 70 times, and the world was in chaos. After the victory of the Yellow Emperor, the world soon became peaceful. During the Jiuli insurrection, Zhuan Xu sent troops to conquer it, and the country was still well governed after the victory. Xia Jie was tyrannical and rapacious, Shang Tang overthrew him, and peace soon prevailed during Tang's reign. Shang Zhou was profligate and devoid of principles, and King Wu of Zhou rose up to fight against him; by the reign of

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Jiuli

Jiuli: A tribal alliance in the remote antiquity, which lived in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River and the Yangtze River regions.

Zhuan Xu

Zhuan Xu: Leader of a tribal alliance in the remote antiquity, known as one of the “Five Emperors.”

his son King Wen, world peace was realized. If the people became gradually frivolous and treacherous, no longer simple and honest then, they would become no different from ghosts and monsters, how can moral education be implemented?”

Feng Deyi and others could not refute this argument, but still insisted that Wei Zheng's proposal could not be implemented. Wei Zheng finally managed to persuade Emperor Taizong by quoting from the classics. Emperor Taizong pursued moral education unremittingly. As a result, in a few years, the state became peaceful and stable, and Turks were defeated and surrendered.

Emperor Taizong said to his ministers, “In the early years of Zhenguan, some people had some objections, thinking that we couldn't practice the kingly way and moral education or promote sages' teachings then. Only

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Wei Zheng advised me to implement moral education. I followed his advice. In just a few years, stability of the Central Plains and subjugation of remote tribes were realized. The Turks had always been a strong enemy of the Central Plains, but now the Turkic leader acts as a guard with a sword for us, and other tribes also wear clothes of the Tang style. I attribute my present achievements to Wei Zheng.”

The realization of the Golden Years of Zhenguan was arguably closely related to Emperor Taizong's application of ideas from *Qunshu Zhiyao*, his personal example, his

attention to moral teachings, and establishment of a set of reasonable and legal political institutions. The conversations between Tang Taizong and his ministers recorded in *Political Discourses of Zhen'guan* prove that the emperor had indeed applied these teachings in his state governance.

According to "On Greed and Meanness" in *Political Discourses of Zhen'guan*, in the first year of the Zhenguan era, Emperor Taizong said to his ministers, "If a person has a priceless pearl, he must treasure it. Wouldn't it be a pity to shoot birds with the pearl? And people's lives are much more precious than pearls, but the greed for material gains even defies fear of legal punishment. That is, they don't know how to cherish their lives. A pearl, as a worldly possession, cannot be used to shoot birds; how

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can one exchange one's life more valuable than the pearl for property? If officials can do their duty faithfully, be upright and fair, and do good to the country and the people, then the official positions and titles can be obtained, and it is not necessary resort to bribing to seek prosperity and wealth." Emperor Taizong used the vivid metaphor of "shooting birds with pearls" to warn officials to cherish their official positions, as corruption, bribery and abuse of power for personal gain would end up ruining themselves.

In the second year of the Zhenguan era, Emperor Taizong said to his ministers, "I once said that greedy people don't know how to love wealth. For example, officials above Class Five are well paid, and their annual income is quite handsome. If one accepts bribes from other people, that would amount to above several ten thousand yuan. Once the scandal is exposed, the official will be removed from his position and lose his salary. How can they be deemed as loving wealth? Penny wise and pound foolish, they lose more than they gain."

To illustrate his idea, Emperor Taizong also quoted an allusion: Gongyi Xiu, Prime Minister of the State of Lu, was an honest official, being strict with his subordinates and never competing with the people for benefits. He especially liked eating fish, and some of his subordinates brought him a lot of fish. But he refused to accept

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them and sent the fish back. The fish deliverer asked, "I know you like fish, so I specially chose some good fish for you. Why don't you accept them?" Gongyi Xiu said, "Just because I love fish, I can't accept your fish today. I love fish. I can buy some myself. If I accept your fish today, I will be put in prison for taking bribes in a few days. If I was put in prison, how could I eat fish again?" The wisdom of Gongyi Xiu lies in not losing mind for immediate gains. Emperor Taizong also cited some other stories in history to remind his officials not to do things that did more harm than good. Emperor Taizong upheld the idea of "prioritizing education in the building of a state," always warning his ministers never to be slack.

In the fourth year of Zhenguan, Emperor Taizong said to the ministers, "I dare not slack off all day, not only do I care for the people, but I also wish that you would be prosperous for a long time. I have been cautious and stand in awe of Heaven and Earth all the time. If you can abide by the law carefully, you will always be as I fear Heaven and Earth. Not only will the people be in peace and contentment, but you will always be happy. The ancients said, 'The sage's wealth is detrimental to his ambition, while the fool's wealth gives rise to more faults.'

A virtuous man, once he has more wealth, might lead an extravagant and indulgent life and make no progress, and his will would not be as firm as before, People without

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wisdom, if possessing much money, might use it to do bad things. Therefore, as an ancient saying goes, "Since ancient times, ministers and officials have been brought up in a poor family." Many successful people lived in poverty when they were young, so that they could stay honest and temper their will.

In the sixteenth year of the Zhenguan era, Emperor Taizong said to his ministers, "The ancients said that birds inhabit the woods, and still fear that the trees are not tall enough, they would nest at the top of the trees. Fish hide in the water, and still fearing that the water is not deep enough, they would burrow in underwater caves. However, they are still captured by people. Why? Because they are too greedy to resist temptation. Now ministers accept appointment, hold high positions and enjoy great wealth. They should be loyal, upright, clean and selfless, so that they can stay rich! The ancients said: Fortune and misfortune are not destined, but people call it themselves. Those violating the law are all greedy for money. What's the difference between these people and those fish and birds? You should think about these words as a reference and warning."

The ancients reminded us that in the face of wealth, fame and fortune, we should have fears, as if facing the abyss and treading on thin ice. Do not be complacent when tempted with money and beauty. Actually, they are

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just baits to lure you off a cliff. If you do not control yourself well, unable to stand the temptation, you will slip into the abyss. This one slip will lead to eternal regret.

The ancients said: Study and know the rules of propriety, and feel at ease with the knowledge of rules. Rites, music, and moral education can arouse people's rationality, so as to limit people's desire to a reasonable range, not going to the excess of greed. To a greater extent, Emperor Taizong could become a truly sensible emperor because he had learned the fundamentals of social customs and education by reading *Qunshu Zhiyao*, which is a collection of the governing ideas, methods, experiences and lessons of ancient sages, and that governing the state should start with the self-cultivation of the monarch himself. Therefore, the emperor followed Wei Zheng's advice to promote the education of ethics, morality and sages' teachings. In a short period of time, the emperor witnessed peace and prosperity of his state and people, and received tribute missions from many nations.

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Classic Quotes

1. The ways of God are not invariable: on the good-doer he sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer he sends down all miseries.

——"Instructions of Yi," *The Classic of History*

2. Great Heaven has no partial affections; it helps only the virtuous. The people's hearts

have no unchanging attachment; they cherish only the kind. Acts of goodness are different, but they contribute in common to good order. Acts of evil are different, but they contribute in common to disorder.

——“Charge to Cai Zhong,” *The Classic of History*

3. Where (the sovereign's) virtue is pure, his enterprises are all fortunate; where his virtue is wavering and uncertain, his enterprises are all unfortunate. Good and evil do not wrongly befall men, but Heaven sends down misery or happiness according to their conduct.

——“Common Possession of Pure Virtue,” *The Classic of History*

4. It is virtue that moves Heaven; there is no distance to which it does not reach. Pride brings loss, and humility receives increase-this is the way of Heaven.

——“Counsels of the Great Yu,” *The Classic of History*

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5. When there are (those) virtues, good government is realized; when they are not, disorder comes. To maintain the same principles as those who secured good government will surely lead to prosperity; to pursue the courses of disorder will surely lead to ruin.

——“Tai Jia III,” *The Classic of History*

6. Then shall I, the One man, enjoy felicity; the people will look to you as their sure dependance.

——“Marquis of Lü on Punishments,” *The Classic of History*

7. Accordance with the right leads to good fortune; following what is opposed to it, to bad -the shadow and the echo.

——“Counsels of the Great Yu,” *The Classic of History*

8. Calamities sent by Heaven may be avoided, but from calamities brought on by one's self there is no escape.

——“Tai Jia II,” *The Classic of History*

9. Anxious thought about what will be best should precede your movements, which also should be taken at the time proper for them. Indulging the consciousness of being good is the way to lose that goodness; being vain of one's ability is the way to lose the merit it might produce. For all affairs let there be adequate preparation; with preparation there will be no calamitous issue. Do not open the door for favorites, from whom you will receive

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contempt. Do not be ashamed of mistakes, and (go on to) make crimes.

——“Charge to Yue II,” *The Classic of History*

10. The wise, through not thinking, become foolish, and the foolish, by thinking, become wise.

——“Numerous Regions,” *The Classic of History*

11. Practice them as virtues, and your minds will be at ease, and you will daily become more admirable. Practice them in hypocrisy, and your minds will be toiled, and you will daily become more stupid.

——“Officers of Zhou,” *The Classic of History*

12. Perfect government has a piercing fragrance, and influences the spiritual intelligences. It is not the millet which has the piercing fragrance; it is bright virtue.

——“Jun-chen,” *The Classic of History*

13. Ordinary men, while they have not yet seen a sage, (are full of desire) as if they should never get a sight of him; and after they have seen him, they are still unable to follow him.

——“Jun-chen,” *The Classic of History*

14. If, in my person, I commit offenses, they are not to be attributed to you, the people of the myriad regions. If you in the myriad regions commit offenses, these offenses must rest on my person.

——“Yao Yue,” *The Analects*

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15. Confucius has remarked, “There are three things of which the man of virtue stands in awe. He stands in awe of the ordinances of Heaven. He stands in awe of great men. He stands in awe of the words of sages. The mean man does not know the ordinances of Heaven, and consequently does not stand in awe of them. He is disrespectful to great men. He makes sport of the words of sages.”

——“Ji Shi,” *The Analects*

16. When one by force subdues men, they do not submit to him in heart. They submit, because their strength is not adequate to resist. When one subdues men by virtue, in their hearts' core they are pleased, and sincerely submit, as was the case with the seventy disciples in their submission to Confucius.

——“Gong Sun Chou I,” *Mencius*

17. Treat with the reverence due to age the elders in your own family, so that the elders in the families of others shall be similarly treated; treat with the kindness due to youth the young in your own family, so that the young in the families of others shall be similarly treated - do this, and the kingdom may be made to go round in your palm.

——“Liang Hui Wang I,” *Mencius*

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18. The ancient kings had this commiserating mind, and they, as a matter of course, had likewise a commiserating government. When with a commiserating mind was

practiced a commiserating government, to rule the kingdom was as easy a matter as to make anything go round in the palm.

——“Gong Sun Chou I,” *Mencius*

19. Mencius said, “It was by benevolence that the three dynasties gained the throne, and by not being benevolent that they lost it. It is by the same means that the decaying and flourishing, the preservation and perishing, of States are determined. If the sovereign be not benevolent, he cannot preserve the throne from passing from him. If the Head of a State be not benevolent, he cannot preserve his rule. If a high noble or great officer be not benevolent, he cannot preserve his ancestral temple. If a scholar or common man be not benevolent, he cannot preserve his four limbs. Now they hate death and ruin, and yet delight in being not benevolent - this is like hating to be drunk, and yet being strong to drink wine!”

——“Li Lou I,” *Mencius*

20. Mencius said, ‘If a man loves others, and no responsive attachment is shown to him, let him turn inwards and examine his own benevolence. If he is trying to rule others, and his government is unsuccessful, let him turn inwards and examine his wisdom. If he treats

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others politely, and they do not return his politeness, let him turn inwards and examine his own feeling of respect. When we do not, by what we do, realize what we desire, we must turn inwards, and examine ourselves in every point. When a man's person is correct, the whole kingdom will turn to him with recognition and submission. It is said in the *The Classic of Poetry* “Be always studious to be in harmony with the ordinances of God, and you will obtain much happiness.”

——“Li Lou I,” *Mencius*

21. Benevolence brings glory to a prince, and the opposite of it brings disgrace.

——“Gong Sun Chou I,” *Mencius*

22. A scholar, though poor, does not let go his righteousness; though prosperous, he does not leave his own path. Poor and not letting righteousness go - it is thus that the scholar holds possession of himself. Prosperous and not leaving the proper path - it is thus that the expectations of the people from him are not disappointed. When the men of antiquity realized their wishes, benefits were conferred by them on the people. If they did not realize their wishes, they cultivated their personal character, and became illustrious in the world. If poor, they attended to their own virtue in solitude; if advanced to dignity, they made the whole kingdom virtuous as well.

——‘Jin Xin I,’ *Mencius*

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23. The principles of Yao and Shun, without a benevolent government, could not

secure the tranquil order of the kingdom. There are now princes who have benevolent hearts and a reputation for benevolence, while yet the people do not receive any benefits from them, nor will they leave any example to future ages - all because they do not put into practice the ways of the ancient kings. Hence we have the saying: "Virtue alone is not sufficient for the exercise of government; laws alone cannot carry themselves into practice." It is said in *The Classic of Poetry*, "Without transgression, without forgetfulness, following the ancient statutes." Never has any one fallen into error, who followed the laws of the ancient kings.

—"Li Lou I," *Mencius*

24. The Master said, "The man who is not virtuous, when you carry your dislike of him to an extreme, will also proceed to insubordination" In case of an insurrection among the people, the cause should be traced back to the court; when the court was riotous, the ruler should examine himself. Only when the ruler himself was upright would the kingdom be stable. Therefore, men of virtue encouraged good deeds while showing sympathy to people could not do good; those punished should also be shown kindness, and the poor should be treated benevolently. Feeling happy when doing favor and sad when administering punishment, this was the benevolence of a

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public parent.

—"Hou Xing," *Discourses on Salt and Iron*

25. A wise king must follow a good system to realize the results of good governance of the society. On the other hand, important as a good system is, it cannot play its role of ensuring social stability and order without the support of capable talents, who should also be men of virtue. A good system and men of virtue to implement the system are both indispensable.

—Fu Zi, *Qunshu Zhiyao*

26. Those who govern with rites and righteousness accumulate righteousness; those govern with penalties accumulate penalties. With the accumulation of penalties, people complain and oppose the ruler; with the accumulation of rites and righteousness, people are peaceful and support the ruler.

—"Biography of Jia Yi," *History of the Han Dynasty*

27. Therefore only the benevolent ought to be in high stations. When a man destitute of benevolence is in a high station, he thereby disseminates his wickedness among all below him.

—"Li Lou I," *Mencius*

28. Those who advocate rites prevent evils before their occurrence, while those who advocates laws prevent evils after their occurrence.

—"Li Cha," *The Book of Rites by Dai the Elder*

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29. Law is the very foundation of governance; men of virtue are the source of governance.

——*Sun Qing Zi, Qunshu Zhiyao*

30. If people's evil thoughts are not removed, they will not be prevented from doing evil even if they are forbidden from entering with swords and saws or a criminal is killed and publicized every day.

——*Yuanzi Zhengshu, Qunshu Zhiyao*

31. The law can punish people, but cannot make them honest; it can kill people, but cannot make them benevolent.

——*Discourses on Salt and Iron, Qunshu Zhiyao*

32. If those in the upper position do not follow the right way, the people below would commit crimes. It would not be reasonable to kill a person because he has committed a crime. If the people are not guided to cultivate their filial piety and a case is judged by the standard of "filial piety," that would be killing innocent people.

——*The Sayings of Confucius, Qunshu Zhiyao*

33. If a ruler leaves the people in their native ignorance, yet punishes their wrong-doing with death gives slack and slow orders, this is cruelty. If a ruler requires the immediate completion of tasks imposed without previous warning, this is oppression. If a ruler gives vague orders and then insists on punctual fulfilment without warning and education in advance, this is ruthlessness.

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These above three circumstances should be ended before punishment can be used. First, people should be taught the moral standards. If moral teaching is not enough, and people should be guided to admire men of virtue and do good. If these measures are not adequate, immoral people should be removed so that people would have fears. When all the above measures are taken, the people would naturally become upright.

——*The Sayings of Confucius, Qunshu Zhiyao*

34. The sage has no invariable mind of his own; he makes the mind of the people his mind. To those who are good (to me), I am good; and to those who are not good (to me), I am also good; and thus (all) get to be good. To those who are sincere (with me), I am sincere; and to those who are not sincere (with me), I am also sincere.

——*Tao Te Ching*

35. Son of Heaven does not have to worry about not being rich and renowned or being disrespected but should worry about being complacent and ignorant of his own shortcomings or the hardships of the common people.

36. In pursuing the course of learning, the difficulty is in securing the proper reverence for the master. When that is done, the course (which he inculcates) is regarded

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with honor. When that is done, the people know how to respect learning.

—“Record on the Subject of Education,” *The Classic of Rites*

37. A state that will prosper will surely value teachers and honor preceptors. With teachers and preceptors valued and honored, laws and rules prevail. A state that will decline will surely despise teachers and scorn preceptors. With the despise and scorning of teachers and preceptors, people indulge themselves, which will lead to the destruction of laws and rules.

—“Great Digest,” *Xunzi*

38. The relation between men of virtues and people of low positions is like that between the wind and the grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it.

—“Yan Yuan,” *The Analects*

39. In the education of the crown princes adopted by the founders of the three dynasties the subjects were the rules of propriety and music. Music served to give the interior cultivation; the rules served to give the external cultivation.

—“King Wen, the Heir,” *The Classic of Rites*

40. If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame. If

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they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good.”

—“Governance,” *The Analects*