

View of Moralization

Chenhong Ge

View of Moralization

Study on Confucian Moral Thought

 Springer

Chenhong Ge
Renmin University of China
Beijing, China

Supported by fund for building world-class universities (disciplines) of Renmin University of China.

ISBN 978-981-15-3089-0 ISBN 978-981-15-3090-6 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3090-6>

Jointly published with China Renmin University Press
The print edition is not for sale in China (Mainland). Customers from China (Mainland) please order the print book from: China Renmin University Press.

© China Renmin University Press 2020

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd.
The registered company address is: 152 Beach Road, #21-01/04 Gateway East, Singapore 189721, Singapore

Foreword by Zhang Dainian

The book *View of Moralization—Study on Confucian Moral Thought*, written by Comrade Ge Chenhong, raises the moral idea to the height of the overall quality of the Confucian thoughts and makes a deep and comprehensive elaboration to the Confucian moral thoughts, thinking that it is the basic idea of Confucianism to grasp the relations between man and nature, man and himself as well as man and society, thus forming an ideological system of Confucianism with morality as the core.

This book combines history and theory in line with the Marxist historical materialism, which is conducive to the critical inheritance of Confucianism. With detailed and reliable contents in an easy and fluent style, the book has reached a high academic level. In terms of the theoretical analysis and research on issues, it goes where no one has gone before with higher academic value.

On the whole, the book is a novel treatise.

Beijing, China

Zhang Dainian

Foreword by Luo Guojie

The book *View of Moralization—Study of Confucian Moral Thought* is a summary of the research by Ge Chenhong on Confucian morality in recent years. There have been a lot of papers and books about Confucian morality in Chinese academic circles, and some new progress has been made. This book by Ge Chenhong focuses on the overall understanding of the extremely important but very special status and function of the moral thoughts in the system of Confucianism. In a series of questions such as what the origin is, what principle is based on, and what method is employed in the Confucian moral thought, Ge Chenhong put forward her own views, so that people can have a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of the Confucian moral thoughts. Although such a grasp is more from the perspective of ethics, it constitutes a new angle. In my opinion, to grasp Confucianism from such a perspective is in line with the original meaning of Confucianism.

China's Confucianism, as a system of philosophical thoughts, does contain the contents of cosmology, epistemology, methodology, ethics, and the like, which is universally acknowledged. And we should also see that an important feature of Confucianism is that it is based on the ethical and moral relations between people. In other words, it is an ideological system that emphasizes the research of ethics and morality to achieve its goal of harmonizing interdisciplinary relations. To understand this is of great significance to our study and analysis of Confucianism, for even in the discussion about the cosmology and ontology and in the study on the relationship between the Heaven and man, Confucian thinkers also start with ethics in most cases. In elaborating the dialectical relationship between knowing and doing, cognition and practice as well as thinking and action, it highlights the importance of ethics and morality. We know that a very important proposition of the famous thinker Wang Yangming in the Ming Dynasty is the "unity of knowing and doing". For the reason why he particularly emphasized that the relationship between knowing and doing should be "unified", the most fundamental origin and purpose is the requirement of ethics and morality. Since many people cannot really understand the thoughts of Wang Yangming, he stressed many times that it is necessary to get his "claims of thought", that is, to understand the origin and the fundamental purpose of his thought Why should knowing and doing be

“unified”? He said, “If we say that a person honors his parents and brothers, then the fact must be that the person himself has conducted the act, so that we can say he knows honoring; otherwise, how can we say a person who just says some words about honoring knows such conduct?” In order to truly grasp the essence of Confucianism, we must also start from the “claims of thought” of Confucian thinkers and understand their original meaning in general when we study Confucianism. Also, for the “mind” in Lu Xiangshan and Wang Yangming’s philosophy of the mind, we should also fully notice their “claims of thought”. In quite a number of cases, they started with the initiative of the moral subject of man and the moral conscience of the people. Although they were bound to fall into the mud of subjective idealism when they crossed the line of ethics to talk about the issue of pure cosmology, we still need to pay attention to different meanings of the “mind” put forward by them in different places under different conditions.

As *View of Moralization—Study on Confucian Moral Thought* is a summary of Confucianism based on the analysis and summary made by previous thinkers on the representative figures of Confucianism in history, focusing on Confucianism’s long-term occurrence, development, and change on the whole by connecting the thoughts of many Confucian figures, the book presents us a better internal organic logical structure of Confucianism. Focusing on the relations between man and nature, man and himself as well as man and society, the author has deeply analyzed major problems that Confucianism must solve when facing the real life, which has new enlightenment for us to understand Confucianism.

The book *View of Moralization—Study on Confucian Moral Thought* tries to analyze Confucianism with the views and methods of Marxist historical materialism, and to give a correct and objective evaluation to Confucianism. Early in January 1940, Comrade Mao Zedong in his paper *On New Democracy* pointed out, “China created splendid ancient culture in the long feudal society. To comb the development process of ancient culture, remove its feudal dross and absorbing the essence of its democracy is the necessary condition for developing national new culture and improve national self-confidence; but we should never swallow anything and everything uncritically.” He also said, “The new politics and the new economy at present in China are developed from the old politics and the old economy in ancient times. Similarly, the new culture at present in China is also developed from the old culture in ancient times, so we must respect our own history and not cut it off.” He also stressed that we should inherit and develop ancient Chinese thinkers from Confucius to Sun Yat-sen. Comrade Ge Chenhong, in this book, has historically analyzed the occurrence, development, and inevitability of Confucian moral thought by virtue of the concept defined by Karl Marx on the “Asiatic mode of production” in the ancient oriental society, according to the social development characterized by blood ties and clan relations in ancient China, by comparing with the “classical antiquity” development in the West. Guided by the principle of “inheriting its essence and criticizing its dross”, she sought to carry out

the critical thinking while inheriting, to better carry forward the fine cultural and moral traditions of the Chinese nation. This book is worth reading for those who want to know about the culture and moral character of ancient Chinese Confucianism.

Luo Guojie
Renmin University of China
Beijing, China

Contents

1	Blood Foundation and Character of Moral Thought	1
1.1	Social and Material Conditions of Moral Thought	1
1.1.1	Material Conditions of Ancient “Asiatic” Road in China	4
1.1.2	The Same Structure of the Clan and State—Characteristics of a Patriarchal (Clan) State	10
1.2	Characters of Moral Thought	15
1.2.1	Proposal of the Moral Thought	15
1.2.2	Morality Characteristic with Man Orientation	18
1.2.3	Morality Characteristic Based on Practice	21
1.2.4	Morality Characteristic with Unity and Division as Methods	24
	References	27
2	Moral Thought in the Field of Nature	29
2.1	Moralization or Natural World	29
2.1.1	Matching Heaven with Virtue—Initial Form of Nature Moralization	30
2.1.2	Unity of Humanity and Heaven—“Heavenization” of Ethical Morality	34
2.1.3	Division of Heaven and Man—Humane Purpose of the Law of Heaven	37
2.1.4	Interaction Between Heaven and Man—Humanization of Heaven	41
2.2	Heaven and Man in the Same Justice—Noumenon of Moral Ethics	45
2.3	Practical Reason	49
2.3.1	Essence of Practical Reason	49
2.3.2	Temporalness of Practical Reason	51

- 2.3.3 Empiricism of Practical Reason 55
- 2.3.4 Morality of Practical Reason 59
- 2.4 Category of Righteousness (Power)-Destiny Relations 63
 - 2.4.1 Two Relations Between Man (Freedom) and Nature (Inevitability) 64
 - 2.4.2 Full Freedom of Moral Will (Righteousness and Destiny) 68
 - 2.4.3 Voluntary Obedience to External Inevitability (Power and Destiny) 72
 - 2.4.4 Relationship Between Subject and Object of “Power and Destiny”, “Righteousness and Destiny” 74
- References 78
- 3 Moral Thought in the Field of Man 81**
 - 3.1 Moralization of Human Essence 81
 - 3.1.1 Debate on Good and Evil—Human Nature and Human Essence 81
 - 3.1.2 Human Being Qua Human Being—Moral Essence of Man 85
 - 3.1.3 Nature Cultivation—Manifestation of Moral Essence 93
 - 3.1.4 Good Nature and Evil Emotion—Moral Essence and Naturality 96
 - 3.1.5 “Theory of Good Nature” and “Politics Advocating Good” 100
 - 3.2 Ideal Personality 103
 - 3.2.1 Inner Sageliness and Outer Kingliness 103
 - 3.2.2 Harmony Between “Benevolence” and “Etiquette” 108
 - 3.2.3 Transcendence and Immanence 112
 - 3.3 Scope of Temperament Relationship 117
 - 3.3.1 Traditional Meaning of “Nature” 117
 - 3.3.2 Nature of Justice and Desire 119
 - 3.3.3 Value Purpose of Conforming Desire to Righteousness 122
 - References 127
- 4 Moral Thought in the Field of Society 129**
 - 4.1 Moralization of Society 129
 - 4.1.1 Filial Piety for Putting Family in Order—Moralization of Blood Ties 130
 - 4.1.2 Governance by Morality—Moralization of Social and Political Relations 135
 - 4.1.3 Morality Given Priority Over Penalty—Moralization of Legal Relations 141
 - 4.1.4 State Equalization—Moralization of Socio-Economic Relations 145

4.2	Practice of Social Ethics	149
4.2.1	“Family” as Standard	150
4.2.2	“Benevolence” and “Rites” as Mode	154
4.2.3	“Loyalty” and “Forgiveness” as the Mechanism	158
4.3	Category of Righteousness-Benefit Relationship	163
4.3.1	Distinction Between Righteousness and Benefit	163
4.3.2	Moral Civilization	169
4.3.3	Public Interest Orientation	173
	References	178
5	Development of Moral Thought and Its Basic Value Orientation . . .	179
5.1	Historical Development Clue of Moral Thought	179
5.2	Humanistic Value Orientation of Unifying Heaven to Man	181
5.2.1	Development in Later Periods	181
5.2.2	Impact on Later Generations	184
5.3	Spiritual Value Orientation Unifying Emotion to Human Nature	188
5.3.1	Development in Later Periods	189
5.3.2	Impact on Later Generations	192
5.4	Social Value Orientation Unifying Benefit to Righteousness	194
5.4.1	Development in Later Periods	195
5.4.2	Impact on Later Generations	198
	References	202
6	Moral Thoughts and Chinese Traditional Culture	203
6.1	Rational Thinking Model on the Value in Traditional Culture	203
6.1.1	Confucianism and Two Kinds of Reason	204
6.1.2	Western Scientific and Chinese Value Rationality	207
6.1.3	Traditional Value Reason and Realistic Development	214
6.1.4	Model of Rule by Morality in Traditional Culture	218
6.1.5	Inner Principle of the Model of Rule by Morality —“Group Standard”	219
6.1.6	External Form of the Rule by Morality—“Ethical Law”	226
6.2	Belief Pattern of Traditional Culture	233
6.2.1	Idea of Unity of Heaven and Man and Religious Belief	233
6.2.2	Theory of Good Nature and Religious Belief	237
6.2.3	Ancestor Worship and Religious Belief	238
6.3	Historical and Modern Features of Traditional Culture	241
6.3.1	Inevitability of Tradition Inheritance	242
6.3.2	Critical Inheritance and Criticism in Inheritance	246
6.3.3	Orientation and Trend of Traditional Culture in the Era of Globalization	249
	References	252
	Closings	253