

Title	From sheng min 生民 to si min 四民 : social changes in late imperial China
Sub Title	
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Publisher	Global Center of Excellence Center of Governance for Civil Society, Keio University
Publication year	2012
Jtitle	Journal of political science and sociology No.16 (2012. 5) ,p.11- 31
JaLC DOI	
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Notes	Special Issue on the EAP Tokyo Workshop
Genre	Journal article
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=AA12117871-20120500-0011

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From *Sheng Min* 生民 to *Si Min* 四民: Social Changes in Late Imperial China

Tze-Ki Hon

Abstract

This article traces the changes in the meaning of *min* (people) in late imperial China. To elucidate the momentous changes, I focus on the tension of the Cheng-Zhu school of Neo-Confucianism as both a state orthodoxy and a grassroots movement of the literati. Particularly I discuss the socio-political background of the shift of the Cheng-Zhu school from the “Cheng-Zhu” paradigm in the Yuan and Ming periods to the “Zhu-Cheng” paradigm since the mid-Qing. I argue that this shift was a response to a new definition of “min,” especially in regard to the relationships among “the four groups of people” (*si min*)—scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchants. As the print market flourished since the late Ming, many literati were able to find employments in the culture industry, and thereby became less dependent on the imperial court. The new “Zhu-Cheng” paradigm since the mid-Qing, I contend, reflected the change in the social landscape where the literati became increasingly the free agents in Chinese society rather than civil bureaucrats in the government.

I. Introduction

In bold and elegant language, Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077) summarized the fourfold goal of Neo-Confucianism: “Make up your mind for the sake of Heaven and Earth. Establish the Way of the living men. Continue the learning that has been interrupted for the sake of past sages. And inaugurate great peace for the sake of the next ten thousand generations.”¹ In this succinct articulation, Zhang stressed the vast spatial-temporal scope of the Confucian revival. Spatially, it was intended to cover the entire universe including all natural and human beings; temporally, it was designed to make Confucianism relevant to the present as well as to the future. Together, this vast spatial-temporal scope distinguished Neo-

Confucianism from state Confucianism of early imperial period. Rather than focusing narrowly on the relationship between the emperor and the official, the ruler and the ruled, Neo-Confucians turned their attention to the everyday life of ordinary people. As Zhang emphatically stated, the assumed audience of Neo-Confucianism was “the living people” (*sheng min* 生民) whose concrete daily experience would be the foundation for spiritual awakening.

Historically, Zhang Zai made important breakthroughs in introducing the term “the living people.” The term was groundbreaking because it avoided a paternalistic and condescending tone that was often associated with *min* 民 in classical Confucianism, such as *shi min* 使民 (to dispatch the people),² *yang min* 養民 (to feed the people),³ *wu min* 務民 (to put the people to work),⁴ and *jiao min* 教民 (to educate the people).⁵ By introduction the notion of “the living people,” Zhang emphasized both the need for a multiplicity of roles in human society, and the creativity and dynamism when different social and political players work together. Beginning from the eleventh century and continuing on until the end of the nineteenth century, it was this more egalitarian notion of *min* as “the living people” that was predominant in the Neo-Confucian discourse. During these eight hundred years, a number of subsidiary terms had been developed to underscore the liveliness of ordinary people, such as *zhong min* 眾民 (the multitude of people)⁶ and *fan min* 凡民 (the ordinary people).⁷

In what follows, I will examine this Neo-Confucian notion of *min* by focusing on two sets of texts. One set is the combined commentaries of Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107) and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) on the Four Books. As is well known, the writings of Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi formed the core of the Cheng-Zhu school of Neo-Confucianism that became the state orthodoxy from the Yuan to the Qing dynasties. To lend support to the Cheng-Zhu school, the imperial court ordered the two thinkers’ commentaries be tested in the civil service examinations. Commonly known as the *Sishu zhangju jizhu* 四書章句集注 (Combined commentaries on passages from the Four Book), Cheng’s and Zhu’s commentaries on the Four Books were the required readings for the examinations. Our concern here is not the role of the commentaries in the examination system, but how they spelled out a new notion of *min* through an interpretation of Confucius’s and Mencius’s sayings. As we shall see, by interpreting what Confucius and Mencius had said about governing and learning, Cheng and Zhu spelled out a vision of society that was complex and dynamic.

The second set of texts that I will examine is the combined Cheng Yi’s and Zhu Xi’s commentaries on the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經). Unlike their commentaries on the Four Books, Cheng’s and Zhu’s commentaries on the *Book of Changes* were markedly different and, in some cases, conflicting.⁸ Throughout late imperial China, many attempts had been made to iron out the differences in order to present a cohesive picture of Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism. To achieve this purpose, two massive compilations were undertaken by the imperial court in the Ming and the Qing periods: the *Zhouyi daquan* 周

易大全 (The compendium of Cheng Yi's and Zhu Xi's commentaries on the *Changes of the Zhou Dynasty*, 1415) and the *Zhouyi zhezong* 周易折中 (Balanced annotations of the *Changes of the Zhou Dynasty*, 1715). One of the key differences between these two massive compilations was the sequence in which Cheng's and Zhu's commentaries were presented. In the Ming compilation, Cheng's commentary appeared ahead of Zhu's; in the Qing compilation, Zhu's commentary appeared before Cheng's. As we shall see, this change in the sequence from "Cheng-Zhu" to "Zhu-Cheng" reflected a major social transformation in the late Ming and early Qing periods when commercialization—particularly the booming of the book market and the fusion of culture and commerce—altered the self-image of the educated elite. Rather than a bookish scholar memorizing ancient texts to pass the civil service examinations, the new image of the educated elite was a versatile scholar-merchant (*shi shang* 士商) who was at home in classical scholarship and commercial entrepreneurship.

Throughout late imperial China, these changes in the self-identity of the educated elite led to an increasing emphasis on the social dimension of *min*, particularly the complex relationships among "the four groups of people" (*si min* 四民)—scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchants. As archetypes, "the four groups of people" described a society with a variety of professions and social standings. At the same time, the "four groups of people" ensured that scholars, or the literati (*shi* 士), must be the head of the four groups, either through joining the government by passing the civil service examinations, or through developing a network of sponsorship and partnership in local areas. To be sure, members of the other three groups could become the literati if they passed the examinations. Yet, as Peter Bol has pointed out, the social mobility that the examination system might engender was heavily circumscribed within the limit of "this culture of ours" (*si wen* 斯文).⁹ Even though members of other three groups could move up to become members of the literati, they had to forsake their original group identity and join the literati community. Limited and limiting notwithstanding, the notion of "the four groups of people" focuses our attention on the mutual influence and the transmutability of different social and professional groups in late imperial China. It highlights *min* as a social category that reflects a fluid and complex society. As such, its importance should not be overlooked in our study of late imperial China.

II. The Living People

As is well known, the Four Books are a collage of texts that Zhu Xi compiled to provide moral training to the educated elite. Of the Four Books, two are short chapters extracted from the *Book of Rites* (Li ji 禮記) — the *Great Learning* (大學) and the *Doctrine of the Mean* (中庸). The other two were the seminal texts of classical Confucianism: the *Analects* (論語) and the *Mencius* (孟子). In late imperial China, the Four Books were read in a specific order: the *Great Learning*, the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, and the *Doctrine of the*

Mean. The logic behind this order was that readers must first be informed of the purpose of moral learning in the *Great Learning*, and then they would deepen their understanding of the various aspects of moral learning by reading Confucius's and Mencius's comments on political leadership, family relationship, and the method of self-cultivation. Finally, when readers reached the *Doctrine of the Mean*, they would be able to see learning as a moral metaphysics linking the humankind to the universe.¹⁰

To explain this logic of reading the Four Books, the opening line of the *Great Learning* is a powerful statement about the goal of moral cultivation. The line begins:

The Way of the Great Learning lies in keeping one's inborn luminous
Virtue unobscured, in renewing the people, and in coming to rest in
perfect good.¹¹

The Chinese characters for "renewing the people" (*xin min* 新民) were originally written as "loving the people" (*qin min* 親民). But Zhu Xi followed Cheng Yi's advice to read *qin* as *xin*.¹² In late imperial China, due to the requirements in the civil service examinations, this reading of *qin* as *xin* was widely accepted and strictly followed. Here, we do not need to concern about whether Cheng Yi's reading is accurate. What is important is that Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi made concerted efforts to avoid the paternalistic and condescending tone that *min* conveyed in classical Confucianism. Rather than "loving the people" as if the people are one's sons and daughters (*min zhi fumu* 民之父母),¹³ Cheng and Zhu find it more appropriate to consider *min* as individuals who have distinct personality and unique character.

From the perspective of Cheng and Zhu, moral learning is open to everyone because all human beings are "living people descended from Heaven" (*tianjiang shengmin* 天降生民).¹⁴ Based on Mencius's notion of the innate goodness of humankind, Cheng and Zhu see every human being as potentially a sage. What separates a sage from a deluded person lies not in their original nature, but in their efforts to preserve and cultivate their original nature. Hence, according to Cheng and Zhu, moral cultivation does not add anything new to the learner; it is simply an attempt to "return to one's original nature" (*fu qi xing* 復其性).¹⁵

In his commentary on the opening line of the *Great Learning*, Cheng Yi stresses this effort of "returning to one's original nature." The *Great Learning*, he says, begins with one's realization of one's original nature. It is only after one has succeeded in "returning to the beginning" (*fu qi chu* 復其初) where his original nature has not distorted and deformed by the environment, then he can pass on his experience to others by "renewing the people."¹⁶ In this reading, the act of "renewing the people" describes a fellowship between those who have achieved self-realization and those who have not. The "people" (*min*), in this context, are no better or worse than the educator who is going to enlighten them. Similarly, the purpose of "renewing" (*xin*) is not to distinguish an educator from a learner.

Rather, it is a partnership of the equals to activate what is innately given in each human being.

Sometimes this more equalitarian view of *min* as a fellowship of learners caused trouble to Cheng and Zhu when Confucius seemed to look down on people of lower social standings. For instance, in Chapter 8 of the *Analects*, Confucius is said to have made this ambiguous comment: “The common people can be made to follow it, but they cannot made to understand it.”¹⁷ At first sight, the statement can be taken to mean that Confucius is discriminatory and judgmental in relating to “the common people” (*min*). He seems to be disturbed by their ignorance and unwilling to give them full information. To preempt this reading of the statement, Cheng Yi warns his readers that they should not take this Confucius’s statement to mean that he is not interested in informing the common people.¹⁸ To make sense of this seemingly discriminatory utterance from Confucius, both Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi stress that the implied object of Confucius’s statement—namely, the unspecified “it”—refers to the innate goodness of human nature. Due to a long period of delusion and distortion, they argue, many common people have already lost touch with their original human nature. Consequently, they can only follow passively a code of behavior to guide their actions, without knowing the cosmic roots and the ontological foundation of their innate goodness. Thus, according to Cheng and Zhu, the elliptical statement should be read as Confucius’s affirmation for the need to educate the common people. He is stating that all measures should be taken to educate them in accordance with their ability and level of learning.¹⁹

Similar problem appears in Chapter 13 of the *Analects* where Confucius discusses the goal of “educating the common people” (*jiao min* 教民). He says: “Having been instructed by an excellent person for seven years, the common people will be ready for anything, even taking up of arms.”²⁰ At first glance, the statement seems to imply that Confucius treats the education of the common people as part of training soldiers. He appears to suggest giving the common people seven years of training to prepare them for war. For Zhu Xi, however, one should be aware of what is not said in the statement, namely, the contents of the education of the common people. In his commentary, he gives a long list of items that are supposed to be taught to the common people, such as filial piety, brotherly love, loyalty, trustworthiness, and the technique of farming. He adds that after the common people have learned all the moral values, they will be eager to take up arms to defend a moral society. Thus, the readiness for war should not be taken as a sign of bellicose; rather, it is an affirmation of a deep commitment to morality.²¹

Whereas in interpreting the *Analects* Cheng and Zhu had to guard against what appeared to be Confucius’s condescending attitude toward the common people, in interpreting the *Mencius* they found ample support to develop their notion of “the living people.” First and foremost, in the *Mencius*, there are many passages that emphasize one’s determination to be morally cultivated. Furthermore, Mencius discusses at length the innate goodness of human nature and the condition for developing one’s innate potentials

into concrete moral actions. More important, Mencius explicitly spelled out the importance of protecting the interest of *min* in polity and society. Take, for instance, in *Mencius* 5A5, Mencius is engaged in a discussion about the source of a king's power. To illustrate his point, Mencius quotes a famous line from the *Great Declaration* (Tai shi 泰誓): "Heaven sees as my people see; Heaven hears as my people hear."²² Of course, in the context of *Mencius* 5A5, the quoted line gives support to Mencius's argument that the source of power of a king lies in his relationship with the people, who express the Will of Heaven (*tianming* 天命). But in a broader context, this line also lends support to what Zhu Xi calls "the living people descended from Heaven" (*tien jiang sheng min* 天降生民) whose concrete daily experience are the foundation for spiritual awakening.

In *Mencius* 5A:7, Zhu Xi found an opportunity to further discuss the notion of "the living people" when Mencius explained why the venerated minister Yi Yin 伊尹 decided to join Tang 湯 (the founder of the Shang dynasty) to revolt against the Xia.

Heaven in giving birth to this people cause those who are first to know to awaken those who are later to be awakened. I am one of those of Heaven's people who has awakened first; I must take this Way in order to awaken the people. If I do not awaken them, who will do so?²³

From this passage, Zhu could claim that all human beings—young or old, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, powerful or powerless—are all "Heaven's people" (*tian min* 天民). In terms of their moral potentials, they are all the same in possessing what Mencius calls "the commiserating mind" (*buren ren zhixin* 不忍人之心).²⁴ Nevertheless, this equality in potentiality does not mean that everyone would be equally good in behavior. The difference in behavior lies in whether one's innate potentials have been fully activated.²⁵ On this ground, Yi Yin's statement justifies the power of the government, the need for a social hierarchy, and above all, the paramount importance of a ritualistic system to regulate family relationship and individual behavior. The political, social, and bloodline structures are intended to "awaken the people" (*jue si min* 覺斯民) by activating their innate human goodness.

In his commentary, Zhu Xi was fully aware of the paradox of justifying the political, social, and familial structures in terms of awakening the people. On the one hand, the argument can be used to support imperial autocracy, aristocracy, and elitism by giving license to political and social leaders to dictate the lives of the common people. After all, as shown in the example of Yi Yin, the political and social leaders can claim that since they have been "awakened first" (*xian jue* 先覺), they should have the power to educate those who are "later to be awakened" (*hou jue* 後覺). On the other hand, the argument also substantiates the equality between the ruler and the ruled when both are in the process of awakening to their innate human nature. In awakening the people, as Yi Yin's speech implies, the ruler-teacher adds nothing new to the learner. What is taught by the ruler-

teacher is already available in the learner. Hence, the ruler-teacher is at best a facilitator in what essentially a process of self-awakening.²⁶

This double bind in “awaking the people” also appears in *Mencius* 6A:4 where Mencius quotes from the *Book of Poetry* (*Shijing* 詩經) to explain why the innate human nature must be good.

Heaven in giving birth to humankind,
Created for each thing its own rule.
The people’s common disposition
Is to love this admirable virtue.²⁷



The original characters for “humankind” in this quotation are *zheng min* 蒸民 (the multitude of the people). At first glance, the quotation seems to be contradictory. Whereas the first line stresses the multiplicity of discrete and unique human beings who make their own rules, the second line states that these different people are basically the same in sharing the love of one admirable virtue. Thus, in one breath, the quotation argues for both the unity and the multiplicity of humankind. For Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi, this seemingly contradictory utterance in the *Book of Poetry* affirms what they have been discussing in their commentaries. That is, all members of the Heaven’s people are endowed with the same innate goodness (*liyi* 理一), and yet due to environment and training, they differ in temperament and behavior (*fenshu* 分殊).²⁸ Henceforth, the goal of moral learning—be it carried out through the government policies or social conditioning—is to activate the innate goodness of every member of “the living people” so that everyone will be as worthy as the ancient sages like Yao and Shun.


III. Forming an Affectionate Fellowship with the Common People

For Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi, it is precisely this paradoxical nature of “awakening the people” that the educated elite should be the key players in governing. To a great extent, their belief in the rule by the educated elite was based on the classical Confucian notion of “the rule by morality” (*dao tong* 道統). But in Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism, “the rule by morality” was different because it did not rest exclusively on a partnership between the imperial court and the educated elite as Confucius and Mencius had suggested. Rather, it was based on a dual relationship: a relationship between emperor (*jun* 君) and scholar-officials (*chen* 臣) in the government, and a relationship between the literati (*shi* 士) and the different social and professional groups (*zhong* 衆) in society. To be sure, in late imperial China, only a small portion of the educated elite could become government officials by passing the civil service examinations. At the same time, not all members of the educated elite had to be in the government to carry out the “rule by morality.” Since “the living people” scattered in all corners of society working in different professions and

engaging in different trades, the “rule by morality” had to be inclusive in order to be fully effective. As such, the educated elite—who played the double role as government officials and social leaders—provided the crucial link between the political realm and the social realm, bringing order to an empire that was increasingly complex, diverse, and mobile.

Skillfully using the graphic symbolism of the sixty-four hexagrams of the *Book of Changes*,²⁹ Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi discussed at great length the double role of the educated elite in ruling the empire. Because of the double role of the educated elite, Cheng and Zhu gave different emphasis to the “rule by morality.” For Cheng Yi, the *Book of Changes* addressed the concerns of government officials who, in their daily life, made difficult decisions as civil bureaucrats. Constantly under pressure to make the right decisions for the public good, they looked for guidance and support when engaging in fierce policy debates or political battles. For this reason, in his commentary Cheng Yi provided detail instructions for resolving specific problems that were common to civil bureaucrats, such as how to handle oneself in factional politics, how to befriend with like-minded colleagues, and how to run a government under an arrogant ruler. In particular, Cheng offered both encouragement and warning to officials who were locked in partisan politics. He cautioned them of impending dangers when they were in power, and urged them to fight on when they were out of favor.³⁰

Reading the *Book of Changes* in this light, Cheng Yi turns the sixty-four hexagrams into a series of battles between the “great men” (*junzi* 君子) and the “petty people” (*xiaoren* 小人). He equates the ebb and flow of the *yang* straight line of a hexagram as the rise and fall of honest officials in the government. He regards the wane and wax of the *yin* broken line of a hexagram as the gain and loss of corrupt officials using their power to pursue private interest. This battle between the “great man” and the “petty people” begins with hexagram #1  *Qian* 乾 (The Assertive) and hexagram #2  *Kun* 坤 (The Receptive), respectively symbolizing the great men and the petty people. The battle continues on by taking different forms and shapes as the balance of power shifts. In the end,

this saga of battles begins anew upon reaching hexagram #64  *Wei Ji* 未濟 (Ferrying Incomplete) when the hexagram points to a breakdown of the political order after a brief stalemate between the two camps of officials. The breakdown of order ushers in another round of battles beginning with *Qian* and *Kun*. For readers who are still puzzled by factional politics, Cheng suggests them to re-read the *Book of Changes* from the beginning.

Although Cheng Yi focused primarily on the civil bureaucrats in interpreting the *Book of Changes*, occasionally he casted his eyes on what happened outside the government. In these few excursions into the educated elite’s social role, Cheng Yi offered stimulating thoughts on forming “an affectionate fellowship with the common people” (*bi min* 比民).


In the *Book of Changes*, the word *bi* 比 (holding together) is the name of hexagram #8 .

With five *yin* lines competing to form a relationship with the singular *yang* line, the hexagram symbolizes a political union where the king (the *yang* line in the fifth position) has a favorable condition to get support from all of his followers (the five *yin* lines from the bottom to the top). Nevertheless, despite his power, the king decides not to dictate the terms of his relationship with his followers. Instead, he adopts a conciliatory approach whereby he lets his followers choose the condition for making a political alliance. This conciliatory approach is referred to in the hexagram as “a union manifested with kindness” (*xian bi* 顯比).³¹ For Cheng Yi, this “union manifested with kindness” is not limited to rulers, but also applicable to “all people” (*zhong ren* 衆人). For the educated elite particularly, Cheng suggests that the union should be performed in three ways: forming a trustful partnership with the emperor (*bi jun* 比君), being honest to oneself (*bi ji* 比己), and developing an affectionate fellowship with the common people (*bi min* 比民).³²

While Cheng Yi coined the term *bi min* to urge the educated elite to form an affectionate fellowship with the common people, in the rest of his commentary he focused primarily on the interests and concerns of government officials. Occasionally he might include a brief discussion of what civil bureaucrats should do to cater to the needs of their friends, lineage, and family. In general, he followed strictly the four parameters as set down in the *Great Learning*: self-cultivation, ordering the family, governing the country, and bringing peace and order to the universe.³³ In short, Cheng had very little interest in the social space between family and government where partnership and collaboration are forged not based on bloodline or loyalty but on common interest and mutual trust.

In contrast, Zhu Xi showed a great interest in discussing *bi min*. Addressing readers as “diviners” (*zhanzhe* 占者), he presented the *Book of Changes* as a manual of divination. For him, divination was not a superstitious act of asking guidance from a deity. Rather, it was a self-reflection to gain a better understanding of the multiple forces shaping one’s life.³⁴ Instead of limiting to kings, nobles and government officials, Zhu contended, the *Book of Changes* addressed to a broad audience who, literate or illiterate, powerful and powerless, were concerned with the uncertainty in life.³⁵

Given the visual imagery of the sixty-four hexagrams, Zhu was right to claim that the *Book of Changes* was open to everyone. As abstract signs, the hexagrams have no specific reference. They are merely symbols of the interaction and intermixing of *yin* and *yang*, thereby calling attention to the complex alignment of forces in the natural and human worlds. As such, the hexagrams are not the property of any group of people; they belong to everyone who is interested in finding meanings in life. For this reason, Zhu Xi sharply criticized Cheng Yi for being preoccupied with the concerns of government officials. He

was particularly disappointed with Cheng Yi’s commentary on hexagram #1  *Qian* 乾 (The Assertive) which Cheng interpreted as the biography of King Shun.³⁶ In response to Cheng Yi’s interpretation, Zhu Xi wrote: “[In interpreting *Qian*,] we must apply it to different walks of life. When the emperor reads the hexagram, he will find it useful to him

as an emperor. When an official reads the hexagram, he will find it useful to him as an official. When a father reads the hexagram, he will find it useful to him as a father. When a son reads the hexagram, he will find it useful to him as a son. And so on and so forth. If we follow Master Cheng's interpretation, then for thousands of years, only Kings Shun and Yu found the hexagram meaningful."³⁷

To open to people of all variety, Zhu Xi adopted an exotic version of the *Book of Changes*, known as the "Old Version" (*guben* 古本), that privileged simple diagrams and the practice of divination over the scholarly treatises on ethics and moral-metaphysics. Literally Zhu changed the text of the *Book of Changes* to foreground its graphic symbolism and its practical value. To make his point, he named his commentary *Zhouyi benyi* 周易本義 (The original meanings of the *Changes* from the Zhou Dynasty), overturning all existing commentaries including Cheng Yi's.³⁸ This daring move to risk all—including his professed admiration for Cheng Yi—is hard to comprehend unless it is understood in the context of "forming an affectionate fellowship with the common people."

IV. The Head of *Si Min*

According to Yu Yingshi 余英時, the term *si min* 四民 (four groups of people) first appeared during the mid or late Warring States period (roughly third to second BCE). He identifies the locus classicus of the term in the *Guliang* 穀梁 commentary to the *Spring and Autumn Annals* where four professional groups (scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants) are listed as members of *min* in an unspecified "early ancient times" (*shanggu* 上古).³⁹ Its ancient origin notwithstanding, *si min* had a different meaning in late imperial China. The term did not only specify the four major professional groups who led Chinese society and economy, it also defined the relationship among the four groups after the civil service examinations became the "ladder of success" for the educated elite. During the Northern Song (960-1276), large numbers of civil bureaucrats entered into the government after passing the civil service examinations. This massive recruitment of civil bureaucrats helped to end the monopoly of power of the aristocrat families who dominated the political field for centuries. The massive recruitment of civil bureaucrats also gave incentive to studying the Confucian classics when a mastery of classical scholarship became a ticket to wealth and power.⁴⁰ However, as John Chaffee has shown, beginning with the Southern Song (1127-1276), the "thorny gates of learning" were increasingly tightened as the percentage of successful candidates in the civil service examinations continued to fall.⁴¹ This "paradox of declining success and increasing participation," as Peter Bol aptly calls it, indicates a drastic change in the function of the examinations. After decades of being "a ladder of success" for scholars of non-aristocratic heritage, the civil service examinations became a mechanism for granting elite status to the educated.⁴²

The key to this change was the limited number of positions available in the government and the huge financial burden on the government to put extra people on its pay

roll. Further complicating the matter was the incessant power struggle inside the government that made life of an official miserable and unrewarding. Finally, the brief termination of examinations in the early Yuan period forced scholars to look for other career options outside the government. All these changes led to a situation where even if the educated elite still saw the civil service examinations as a venue to join the government, the majority of them were not able to receive appointments in the bureaucracy. Most of them had to content with being the leaders of local communities or finding jobs in their native areas. In this context, *si min* became popular to denote a new identity of the educated elite who had to look beyond the imperial bureaucracy to develop their careers. Underlying the notion of *si min* was the belief that despite their differences in professional specialization, the four groups of people were in essence the same in their pursuit of the Way (*Dao*). As Wang Yangming emphatically argued, the four groups were “different professionally but identical in their pursuit of the Way” (*yiye er tongdao* 異業而同道). And they were the same, Wang contended, because they were able to activate the innate goodness of human nature (*jin xin* 盡心).⁴³

This emphasis on the “sameness” of *si min* highlighted the double role that the educated elite played in governing the empire. As the link between the political realm and the social realm, the educated elite (as a group) performed two functions: they were the civil bureaucrats in managing the daily affairs of the empire, and they were the leaders in society who set the moral standards for various groups of people. Being the “free agents” between polity and society, they navigated among different power groups, reached consensus from opposing views, and above all, established “a culture of ours” that gave cohesion to an empire that was vast and diverse.

It was for this purpose of creating “a culture of ours” that tremendous efforts had been made throughout late imperial China to combine Cheng Yi’s and Zhu Xi’s commentaries on the *Book of Changes*. Despite the differences in the two commentaries, the goal of this combination was to establish a two-fold reading of the *Book of Changes* that paralleled the dual role of the educated elite. To achieve this goal, Cheng Yi’s commentary had to be kept to highlight the continuing relationship between the imperial court and the educated elite even though the latter became less dependent on the former due to the tightening of the civil service examinations. Similarly, Zhu Xi’s commentary had to be preserved to underscore the new reality that the majority of the educated elite had to develop their careers outside the government. Thus, during the Yuan and the Ming periods, massive efforts had been made to combine, hexagram by hexagram, Cheng’s and Zhu’s commentaries. These efforts led to the publication of the *Zhouyi daquan* 周易大全 (The compendium of Cheng Yi’s and Zhu Xi’s commentaries on the *Changes of the Zhou Dynasty*, in 1415). In the *Zhouyi daquan*, the compilers put Cheng’s comments ahead of Zhu’s in each entry. In adopting Cheng’s commentary as the basis of the *Zhouyi daquan*, the compilers did not claim that Cheng’s commentary was better than Zhu’s. Rather, they saw it as the point of departure for understanding the teachings of the *Book of Changes*. As

Cheng Yi took readers (as civil bureaucrats) to understand the moral philosophy of the classic, Zhu Xi took readers (as social leaders) to understand the graphic symbolism of the hexagrams and the practice of divination as self-reflection.⁴⁴

Behind this “Cheng-Zhu” paradigm was a change in the self-identity of the educated elite. While the educated elite continued to find jobs in the government, they had more opportunities in local areas. At the same time, despite their successes in local areas, they still needed the imperial certification in order to have the proper credentials to be local leaders. Thus, regardless of the remote chances of securing an appointment in the government, passing the civil service examinations was still an essential step to become a member of the educated elite. Put it differently, without being certified by passing the examinations, no one could have the cultural capital to be an influential local leader, a successful businessman, or a respected teacher. In this way, the Cheng-Zhu paradigm indicated that although distant and remote, the power of the imperial state could still penetrate into local areas through the mediation of the educated elite as the head of *si min*.

V. The “Zhu-Cheng” Paradigm

Dominated the *Yijing* studies for close to three hundred years, the *Zhouyi daquan* was replaced by the *Zhouyi zhezhong* 周易折中 (Balanced annotations of the *Changes of the Zhou Dynasty*) in 1715. Ordered by the Kangxi emperor (r. 1661-1722), the *Zhouyi zhezhong* was the third and the most successful attempt of the early Qing rulers to standardize the commentary of the *Book of Changes*.⁴⁵ The reason for the Qing emperors to produce a standard commentary was that during the Ming-Qing transition, many Ming loyalists took the occasion of interpreting the classic to express their “sorrow and worry” (*youhuan* 憂患) about the end of the Ming dynasty.⁴⁶ While most of these commentaries did not explicitly challenge the Qing authority, the melancholy and frustration expressed in them were alarming and potentially subversive. As political statements, these commentaries gave voice to the painful memories of the Ming loyalists and provided them with a forum to express anti-Manchu sentiments. Out of political concern, the early Qing emperors were determined to reshape the cultural landscape by producing a new standard commentary. Signifying the beginning of a new era, the new standard commentary would replace the Ming official text, *Zhouyi daquan*, in the civil service examinations.

Fitting its mission as a symbol of a new era, the *Zhouyi zhezhong* was clearly designed to be a new state-sponsored commentary of the *Book of Changes*. In terms of scope, the *Zhouyi zhezhong* included thousands of excerpts from commentators from the Han to the Ming periods. At the same time, similar to the *Zhouyi daquan*, the focus of *Zhouyi zhezhong* was still on the Song commentators. Yet, compared to its Ming predecessor, the Qing commentary was distinctly inclusive, particularly with respect to non-Song commentators.⁴⁷ Furthermore, under each hexagram the compilers provided four types of information: (1) Zhu Xi’s comments; (2) Cheng Yi’s comments; (3) the comments

from the commentators of different dynasties; (4) the compilers' comments.⁴⁸ With this wide range of information, the readers were assured that the *Zhouyi zhezhong* was not designed to promote any particular commentarial tradition. Rather, it was to convey, in the words of its chief compiler, Li Guangdi 李光地 (1642-1718), "the shared views [of the classic] from the past to the present."⁴⁹

What Li did not say, however, was that the "shared views" in the *Zhouyi zhezhong* were mediated through the lens of the two exegetes, Zhu Xi and Cheng Yi. This emphasis on the Song view, and in particular Zhu Xi's view, was expressed through the overall structure of the commentary. In presenting the *Yijing* text, for instance, the compilers of *Zhouyi zhezhong* adopted the format of Zhu Xi's *Zhouyi benyi* 周易本義, namely, privileging the graphic symbolism of the sixty-four hexagrams and the concrete practice of divination. In so doing, unlike its Ming predecessor, the *Zhouyi zhezhong* reverted the order in presenting Cheng's and Zhu's commentaries. In presenting each of the sixty-four hexagrams, Zhu's commentary appeared first, and Cheng's commentary came second.

In many respects, this new "Zhu-Cheng" paradigm was directly linked to the rapid economic growth and social mobility in the lower Yangzi River valley during the late Ming and the early Qing periods.⁵⁰ Due to the expansion of commercial publishing, hundreds of thousands of scholars in the lower Yangzi River valley became professional publishers, craftsmen, editors, art connoisseurs and book traders. Consequently, in addition to being government officials and local leaders, the literati could become what Kai-wing Chow calls *shishang* 士商 (literati-merchants-businessmen) who gained respect in society as the liaison between the political, commercial, and cultural fields.⁵¹ Still certified by the state through the civil service examinations, the *shishang* operated in an arena which was categorically commercial and profit making. They made money by supplying preparation materials to the examination candidates, won readers by writing best-selling novels, and made friends by forming literary groups and book clubs. All these activities were possible because of the developments in printing technology and the expansion of print market. As Kai-wing Chow points out, the rise of *shishang* was "both supportive and subversive to the imperial system."⁵² On the one hand, the elite status of the *shishang* was still dependent on their performance in the civil service examinations.⁵³ To be successful, the *shishang* had to be certified as scholars (*shi*) before they could venture into business and commerce (*shang*), not the other way around. On the other hand, after they established themselves in the commercial market, they flourished in an autonomous zone that was not directly controlled by the state. Controlling the media of mass communication, the *shishang* could compete with the imperial court in speaking for the public (*gong* 公).⁵⁴

In view of this rise of *shisheng*, the shift from "Cheng-Zhu" to "Zhu-Cheng" in the interpretation of the *Book of Changes* was by no means accidental. To a great extent, the new "Zhu-Cheng" paradigm was an indication of the literati's further distancing from the center of political power, and consequently developing a closer relationship with other social and professional groups in local areas. In the new state-literati relationship, the

imperial court still controlled the licensing and certification of the educated elite. In this regard, Cheng Yi's commentary must be retained to affirm the relationship between political power and cultural capital. And yet, as a reflection of the change in the matrix of power and wealth, Cheng Yi's commentary could not continue to occupy the central position because the state licensing and certification, although still important, were no longer as critical. When the educated elite had a lot more opportunities outside the government, Zhu Xi's commentary made more sense to them as the head of *si min*. In Zhu's commentary, the readers were reminded that change is the only constant and it applies to all people, powerful and powerless. The readers were reassured that the world is so variegated and diverse that no one can control everything, including the emperor in the imperial capital.

VI. From *Si Min* to *Guo Min*

This brief review of the history of *min* shows that in late imperial China, the concept denoted a social realm which was relatively autonomous. It referred to a domain where the educated elite tried to take control as the head of *si min*. More important, it pointed to a space where the educated elite connected polity with society, the ruler with the ruled. As ruler-teachers, they argued, they could form "an affectionate fellowship with the common people" by activating their innate nature and realizing their full potentials. As such, they used *si min* to highlight their social leadership and thereby made themselves indispensable in the imperial order.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, *si min* rapidly lost its appeal to the educated elite when the late Qing government took major steps to change its political and social system. As Luo Zhitian 羅志田 has shown, the Qing rulers' decision to end the civil service examinations in 1905 not only dealt a devastating blow to the traditional social hierarchy in urban and rural areas, it also rendered *si min* meaningless.⁵⁵ One of the last times that *si min* was used in public discourse was in 1904, when Yan Fu 嚴復 (1854-1921) discussed the characteristics of a national state in his preface to *Shenhui tongquan* 社會通詮 (An explanation of the pattern of society). In the form of summarizing the view of Edward Jenks (1861-1939)—the author of *A History of Politics* on which *Shenhui tongquan* was based—Yan Fu described the social structure of a national state as a form of *si min*: soldiers, farmers, artisans, and merchants.⁵⁶ In this new *si min*, he replaced the literati with the soldiers partly because of the Qing court's decision to end the examination system, and partly because of the desperate need to find well trained soldiers to defend the country. While it is unclear whether the new *si min* was Jenks's idea or Yan's, it is certain that in Yan's mind, *si min* should still be a part of the modern Chinese nation.

But in the 1900s when political radicalism was rising, Yan Fu's new *si min* was no match to Liang Qichao's *guo min* 國民. Powerfully evoked and solidly substantiated in his seminal essay "On New Citizens" (*xin min shuo* 新民說, 1902), Liang argued that the

creation of the political *min* (as citizens in a national state) was the only option that the Chinese had in strengthening their country.⁵⁷ By returning to the political *min* in classical Confucianism and suppressing the social *min* in Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism, Liang turned *min* into a homogenizing category referring primarily to political rights, political power, and political activism.⁵⁸ This politicization of *min* has had two consequences since the 1911 Revolution. First, as John Fitzgerald observes, the preoccupation with political solution has led to a narrowing of the horizon in the Chinese political discourse. It reduces the world to a nation, a nation to a political party, and a political party to a political leader.⁵⁹ Second, the preoccupation with political solution has led to a prejudice against the social *min* in the academy. This prejudice is particularly clear in the studies of Chinese political thought in which the Song-Ming period is often described as the “depressing times” (*xiao chen shi qi* 消沉時期) with no significant contribution to the Chinese political and social thought.⁶⁰

In reviewing the history of modern China since 1911, one wonders what would have happened if *si min* was included in the matrix of forming a unified and diverse Chinese nation. Would there be a May Fourth New Culture Movement if the political *min* and the social *min* were equally stressed in building a nation-state? Would the power of the party-state be somewhat tempered if the social *min* was given a bigger role in checking the excess in political mobilization? These are the questions that the contemporary Chinese thinkers cannot ignore. After three decades of rapid economic growth since 1980, they are facing the same predicament (as did their forebears in the late imperial period) of finding a way to connect the political realm with the social realm.

Notes

¹ Chu Xi and Lū Tsu-ch'ien, compiled, *Reflections on Things at Hand: The Neo-Confucian Anthology*, translated by Wing-tsit Chan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), p. 83. The original statement is: 為天地立心，為生民立道，為去聖繼絕學，為萬世開太平。

² *The Analects*, Chapter 1 (*Xue er*) paragraph 5: 道千乘之國，敬事而信，節用而愛人，使民以時。

³ *The Analects*, Chapter 5 (Gongsun Cheng) paragraph 15: 有君子之道四焉，有行己也恭，其事上也敬，其養民也惠，其養民也義。

⁴ *The Analects*, Chapter 6 (Yong ye) paragraph 20: 務民之義，敬鬼神而遠之，可謂智也。

⁵ *The Analects*, Chapter 13 (Zi Lu), paragraph 28: 善人教民七年，亦可以即戎矣。

⁶ See Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu* 四書章句集注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), p. 329. For details see the discussion on 蒸民 in this paper.

⁷ See Zhu Xi's commentary on the *Mencius* 7A:10. Zhu stressed that *fan min* should be understood as “ordinary people” (庸常之人). See Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 352.

⁸ Shortly after Zhu Xi's death, scholars were already aware of the differences between Zhu's commentary on the *Book of Changes* and Cheng Yi's. For one of the earliest accounts of the

differences of the two commentaries, see Dong Kai 董楷 (Jinshi, 1256), “Zhouyi zhuanyi fulu yuanxu” 周易傳義附錄原序, *Zhouyi zhuanyi fulu* 周易傳義附錄 (Added Comments to the Combined Cheng Yi’s and Zhu Xi’s Commentaries to *Changes*) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), *yuanxu*: 2a-2b.

⁹ Peter K. Bol, “*The Culture of Ours*”: *Intellectual Transitions in T’ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 32-75.

¹⁰ For a discussion of the Neo-Confucian approach to learning, see Tu Wei-ming, “The Confucian Sage: Exemplar of Personal Learning,” in *Way, Learning, and Politics: Essays on the Confucian Intellectual* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp. 29-44.

¹¹ The original is: 大學之道，在明明德，在親民，在止於至善。 The translation is from Daniel K. Gardner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh: Neo-Confucian Reflection on the Confucian Canon* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1986), pp. 88-90.

¹² See Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 2.

¹³ *The Great Learning*, paragraph 9: “民之所好好之，民之所惡惡之，此之謂民之父母。”

¹⁴ The phrase “the living people descended from Heaven” appears in the first paragraph of Zhu Xi’s preface to his commentary on the *Great Learning* (大學章句序). See Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 1. For a full translation of Zhu Xi’s preface, see Gardner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh*, pp. 77-87.

¹⁵ The term “returning to one’s original nature” appears in the first paragraph of Zhu Xi’s preface to his commentary on the *Great Learning*. See Gardner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh*, p. 78.

¹⁶ Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 1.

¹⁷ The original is: 民可使由之，不可使知之。 The line appears in the *Analects*, Chapter 8 (Taibo) paragraph 9. The translation is from Edward Slingerland, *Confucius Analects with Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003), p.81.

¹⁸ Cheng Yi argues that Confucius’s statement is categorically different from those teachers who change their teaching from day to day to manipulate students. See Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 105.

¹⁹ Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 105.

²⁰ The original is: 善人教民七年，亦可以即戎矣。 The translation is from Edward Slingerland, *Confucius Analects*, p. 152.

²¹ Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 105.

²² The original is: 天視自我民視，天聽自我民聽。

²³ The original is: 天治生此民也，使先知覺後知，是先覺覺後覺也。予，天民之先覺者也，予將以斯道覺斯民也。非予覺之，而誰也。 The translation is from Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition: From Earlier Times to 1600*, volume one (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), p.145.

²⁴ See Mencius’s famous parable of a child fallen in the well (*Mencius* 2A:6). For a translation of the parable, see de Bary and Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, p. 129.

²⁵ In *Mencius* 2A:6 Mencius discusses four innate moral potentials in a human being: the feeling of pity and compassion, the feeling of shame and aversion, the feeling of modesty and compliance, and a sense of right and wrong. For a translation of the passage, see de Bary and Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, p.120.

²⁶ In his commentary, Zhu Xi puts emphasis on the latter point by quoting a long speech by Cheng Yi. In his speech, Cheng Yi argues that the ruler-teacher give nothing to the learner. See Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 310.

²⁷ The original is: 天生蒸民，有物有則。民之秉夷，好是懿德。 The translation is from de Bary and Bloom, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, p. 150.

²⁸ For the juxtaposition of the oneness of innate human goodness and the multiplicity of human behavior, see Cheng Yi's commentary on the quoted statement from the *Book of Poetry*. Cheng Yi's commentary can be found in Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, p. 329.

²⁹ Commonly known as a manual of divination, the *Book of Changes* is a composite text. It consists of three distinct layers: the sixty-four hexagrams, the hexagram statements, and the *Ten Wings* allegedly written by Confucius. For hundreds of years, these three layers of the *Book of Changes* had caused continuous debates among scholars in China. For those who focused on the first two layers, they believed that the sixty-four hexagrams were the tools of divination that reflected the constant changes in the natural and human worlds. For those who focused on the *Ten Wings*, they believed that the *Book of Changes* began as a set of primitive graphical symbols, but it developed into a sophisticated system of moral philosophy when Confucius wrote his commentary. In late imperial China, these two schools of thought divided Chinese scholars into two camps, one emphasizing “diagrams and numbers” (*xiangshu* 象數) and the other “meanings and principles” (*yili* 義理).

³⁰ For a detailed discussion of the characteristics of Cheng Yi's commentary on the *Book of Changes*, see my book *The Yijing and Chinese Politics: Classical Commentary and Literati Activism in the Northern Song Period, 960-1127* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), pp. 110-34.

³¹ The term *xian bi* appears in the hexagram statement that discusses the characteristics of the fifth line. The statement is: 顯比，王用三驅，失前禽。邑人不誡，吉。 Richard Wilhelm renders the hexagram statement as follows: “Manifestation of holding together. In the hunt the king uses beaters on three sides only and foregoes game that runs off in front. The citizens need no warning. Good fortune.” See Richard Wilhelm, *The I Ching or Book of Changes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), p.38.

³² See Cheng Yi, *Yichuan yichuan* (A Commentary on the *Changes* [by a reader] from Yi River) (Taipei: Yinyin wenyuange siku quanshu, 1983-1986), p.190.

³³ For the locus classicus of the four parameters, see the first paragraph of the *Great Learning* which says: 古之慾明明德於天下者，先治其國，慾治其國者，先齊其家，慾齊其家者，先修其身。

³⁴ Joseph Adler, “Chu Hsi and Divination,” in Kidder Smith, et al., *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I Ching* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 191.

³⁵ See Zhu Bokun 朱伯崑, *Yixue zhexue shi* 易学哲学史 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1984-88), pp. 428-37; Joseph Adler's "Introduction" in *Introduction to the Study of the Classic of Chang (I-hsüeh ch'i-meng)*, trans. Joseph A. Adler (Provo, Utah: Global Scholarly Publications, 2002), pp. i-xxv; Joseph Adler, "Chu Hsi and Divination," in Kidder Smith, et al., *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I Ching*, pp.177-88.

³⁶ For Cheng Yi's commentary on *Qian*, see *Yichuan yichuan*, pp. 158-59.

³⁷ Hu Guang 胡廣 (1369-1418), *Zhouyi zhuanyi daquan* 周易傳義大全 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), *juan* 卷 1, pp. 13b-14b. The quoted statement is: 要知此事通上下而言, 在君有君之用, 臣有臣之用, 父有父之用, 子有子之用, 以至事物, 莫不皆然。若如程子之說, 則千百年間, 只有個舜禹用得了。

³⁸ For the importance of Zhu Xi's adoption of the "old version" of the *Book of Changes*, see my article "Classical Exegesis and Social Change: The Song School of *Yijing* Commentary in Late Imperial China," *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies*, volume 11, no. 1 (2011): 2-5.

³⁹ Yü Yingshi 余英時, *Zhishiren yu Zhongguo wenhua di jiazhi* 知識人與中國文化的價值 (Intellectuals and the Chinese cultural value) (Taipei: Shibao wenhua, 2007), p.166.

⁴⁰ A discussion of the four professional groups (although not the term *si min*) appears in the *Mencius* 2A5. Revealingly, both Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi did not comment on the four professional groups. Instead, they focused on political leadership. See Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangju jizhu*, pp. 236-37. This lack of interest in the four professional groups during the Song period may reflect the continuing strong appeal of the civil service examinations as the honorable "ladder of success" for the educated elite in eleventh and twelfth centuries.

⁴¹ John W. Chafee, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China*, new edition (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. xxi-xxx, 182-88.

⁴² Peter Bol, "Review Article: The Sung Examination System and the Shih," *Asia Major*, third series, 3 (1990): 149-71.

⁴³ Quoted in Yü Yingshi 余英時, *Shi yu Zhongguo wenhua* 士與中國文化 (Literati and Chinese Culture) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2002), p. 455.

⁴⁴ For a discussion of the structure and contents of the *Zhouyi daquan*, see my article "A Precarious Balance: Divination and Moral Philosophy in *Zhouyi zhuanyi daquan*," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 35.2 (2008): 254-271.

⁴⁵ Before the *Zhouyi zhezong*, there were the *Yijing tongzhu* 易經通注 (Combined Commentaries of the *Yijing*, 1658) under the auspice of Shunzhu emperor (r. 1644-1661), and the *Rijiang Yijing jieji* 日講易經解義 (Notes of Daily Explanations of the Meanings of the *Yijing*, 1680) at the order of the young Kangxi emperor.

⁴⁶ See, for instance, Sun Qifeng 孫奇逢 (1585-1675), *Du yi da zhi* 讀易大指 (Main Points in *Changes*) (Taipei: Yinyin wenyuanke siku quanshu, 1983-1986), *juan* 3: 45a-46b.

⁴⁷ See the list of commentators, Li Guangdi, *Zhouyi zhezong*, punctuated by Li Yixin 李一忻 (Beijing: Jiuzhou chubanshe, 2002), pp. 1-9.

⁴⁸ See the purpose of this four-fold arrangement in "Yu zhi zhouyi zhezong fanli" 御制周易折中凡例, *Zhouyi zhezong*, *fanli*:2-3.

- ⁴⁹ “Yu zhi zhouyi zhezhong fanli,” *Zhouyi zhezhong, fanli*:1.
- ⁵⁰ The scholarship is huge on the social and economic changes during the Ming-Qing period. For a sample of this huge scholarship, see the writings of David Faure, Timothy Brook, and Bin Wong.
- ⁵¹ Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 1-5, 241-53.
- ⁵² Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power*, pp. 242-43.
- ⁵³ Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 66-124, 239-94.
- ⁵⁴ Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power*, pp. 189-240.
- ⁵⁵ Luo Zhitian 羅志田, *Luanshi qianliu: Minzu zhuyi yu Minguo zhengzhi* 乱世潜流：民族主义与民国政治 (Hidden streams in a chaotic age: Nationalism and politics during the Republican period) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshi, 2001), pp. 1-17.
- ⁵⁶ Yan Fu, *Shihui tongquan* (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1981), p.ix.
- ⁵⁷ Liang Qichao, “Xin min shuo,” in *Yinbingshi quanji: zhuan ji* 飲冰室全集：專集 (Complete work from the ice-drinker’s studio: Special studies) volume 4 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989), pp. 1-162.
- ⁵⁸ Liang Qichao, “Xin min shuo,” pp. 5-7.
- ⁵⁹ John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 1-22.
- ⁶⁰ See Jin Yaoji 金耀基, *Zhongguo minben sixiang shi* 中國民本思想史 (A history of the Chinese concept of the People) (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1993), pp. 125-42. Similar argument is found in Xie Fuya 謝扶雅, *Zhongguo zhengzhi sixiang shi gang* 中國政治思想史綱 (A guide to the study of Chinese political thought) (Taipei: Zhengzhong chubanshe, 1951), pp. 137-151; Xiao Gongquan 蕭公權, *Zhongguo zhengzhi sixiang shi* 中國政治思想史 (A history of Chinese political thought) (Taipei: Liangjing, 1982), pp. 1-16.

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