

Studies on Civil Emotionalism and the Modern Transformation of Chinese Tradition

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Abstract: This article focuses on the study of the emotional discourses contained in the Chu bamboo slips dating back to the Chu kingdom of the Warring States period, and announces a newly discovered tradition of Emotionalism in ancient China. In addition to the two main traditions of Confucianism and Taoism, there is a third tradition of Emotionalism that has hitherto not attracted adequate attention and has not been sufficiently studied. I propose that rather than perceiving traditional Chinese culture through the binary looking glass of the dichotomous concept of “Complementation of Confucianism and Taoism,” Chinese culture may be represented more accurately if viewed in the light of a “Threefold Coexistence of Confucianism–Legalism, Taoism–Buddhism and Civil Emotionalism,” along with other lesser-known schools of thought. The uncovering of the hidden tradition of Emotionalism will reveal new perspectives on the modern transformation of traditional Chinese culture. This third tradition represents a conviction of civil liberalism that is of great importance to the transformation of ancient Chinese tradition into a modern constitutional culture.

Keywords: Chinese Tradition, Emotionalism, Modern Transformation of Chinese Tradition and Culture

INTRODUCTION

Large sums of emotional discourses are revealed in the recent unearthing of the Warring States Period Bamboo Slips of Chu. These discourses bring to light the existence of a previously hidden tradition of Emotionalism in ancient China. While the complementary traditions of Confucianism and Taoism form the primary image of Chinese culture, the rediscovery of an emotional Chinese tradition reveals that in addition to the two main traditions of Confucianism and Taoism, there may be a third tradition, Emotionalism, in ancient China. This third tradition represents a conviction of civil liberalism. Emotionalism stands for a certain liberal tradition that advocates individual passions within society.

The rediscovery of a tradition of Emotionalism not only helps researchers gain a new understanding of traditions in ancient China, but also has a significant impact on the discussion on the modern transformation of Chinese tradition. The core of the modern transformation of Chinese tradition has been to transform ancient Chinese traditions into a constitutional system based on individual free will. As a tradition advocating personal value, *qing* (情, emotion), is of great importance in the transformation of ancient Chinese tradition into a modern constitutional culture. Hence, the modern discourse of transformation echoes the Emotionalism of ancient times, further amplifying the significance of this new insight into ancient Chinese traditions of thought.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Apart from Dao (道), Ren (仁), Qi (气), and Li (理), there are other philosophies that are important to traditional Chinese culture and have not been thoroughly researched, one of which is Qing (情, emotion).

In the newly discovered Chu Bamboo slips there are many references to Qing. For example in “Disposition Comes out of Fate”, “On Disposition”, and “Confucian Commentary on *Shijing*”, there is much discussion about Qing. In “Between Confucius and Mencius: Confucian Theory of Mind in the Guodian Chu Slips” philosopher Pang Pu points out that in “Disposition Comes out of Fate” the importance placed on Qing contains Emotionalism within it. Li Zehou believes that the “Qing” mentioned in “Disposition Comes out of Fate” becomes the standard from which one should measure one’s value system. The content within the newly discovered Chu Bamboo slips finally has people recognizing that Qing has a very important role in the philosophy of ancient China.

The newly discovered bamboo slips enable scholars to see the philosophy of Qing embedded in the writings of ancient China. Scholars note that there are large sums of discourses on Qing in *The book of Rites*, *Xunzi*, *Guanzi*, and many other classics. Some scholars have already begun to studies on the ancient philosophy of Qing in China. In his book *Discourses on Qing in Wei and Jin Dynasties* (2007) He Shanmeng investigated the emotional discourses of Ji Kang, Wang Bi, Xiang Xiu, and other intellectuals in the Wei and Jin Dynasties. In the book *History of Xing & Qing Philosophy in China* (2010), Ma Yuliang explored the

philosophy of Xing and Qing which are two main concepts of ancient Chinese Emotionalism. Guo Zhenxiang analyzed the Pre-Qin Confucian discourses on Qing in his book *Studies on Confucian Discourses on Qing During the Pre-Qin Period* (2011). In his doctoral thesis *Study on the Doctrine of the Mean: the creation and evolution of Confucian Emotional Metaphysics*, Yang Shaohan maintained that Confucian philosophers have mean attitudes toward Qing.

Most scholars classify the ancient philosophy of Qing as being part of the Confucian tradition. However, in recent years many scholars have begun to claim that Qing is its own philosophy. In my book *Comparative Studies on Aesthetic Culture between China and Western Countries* (2008) I wrote that ancient Chinese culture has an independent tradition of Fengsao which advocates individual passions. In a later paper “Emotionalism and Aesthetic Self-awareness” (2011), I stated that the tradition of Fengsao, which pursued the free expression of personal emotions, was a part of Chinese traditional culture, independent from other traditions. In my more recent paper, “The Philosophy of Emotionalism in Ancient China” (2014), I assert that Emotionalism cannot simply be classified as an aspect of Confucianism. It stands for a kind of civil liberalism and should be taken as an independent third symbol of Chinese tradition in addition to the two mainstream traditions of Confucianism and Taoism.

This research proposal, the *Studies on Civil Emotionalism and the Modern Transformation of Chinese Tradition*, will continue to explore Emotionalism, and will discuss the significance of Emotionalism in the context of the modern transformation of Chinese tradition. I assert that the core of the modern transformation of Chinese tradition has been to transform ancient Chinese traditions into a constitutional system: Emotionalism has been a key component in promoting the value of individual emotional freedom in the Modern Transformation of Chinese Tradition.

I. THE REDISCOVERY OF EMOTIONALISM

One of the greatest events in recent years for understanding ancient Chinese tradition is the unearthing of bamboo and silk documents, and the subsequent publication of *The Guodian Chu Slips* and *Bamboo Slips of Chu during the Warring States Period in Shanghai Museum*. They are changing the impression of Chinese traditions in people’s minds, and the history

of ancient Chinese philosophy must be revised because of these new discoveries.

Among the newly discovered Guodian Chu Slips and the Shanghai Museum's Chu Bamboo Slips there are a large number of discourses on emotion. From "Disposition Comes out of Fate" to "On Disposition", all of these texts reveal a once hidden tradition of Emotionalism. "Disposition Comes out of Fate" contains an independent theme of Emotionalism. Readers are interested in independent articles like this on emotions. Other articles containing theories on emotions also appear within the bamboo slips. The character *qing* (情, emotion), is frequently mentioned in the Guodian Chu slips. In "Disposition Comes out of Fate", it is mentioned 20 times, and 7 times in the articles "Zi Yi", "Yu Tang Zhi Dao" and "Yu Cong". Sometimes *qing* (情, emotion), is written as *qing* (青, the color blue), while other time it is written as another variation of *qing* (情, emotion), where the signifier component *xin* (心) is placed underneath the phonetic component *qing* (青) (this character is no longer in common usage). This occurs in the 29th chapter of "Disposition Comes out of Fate", the 31st chapter of "Yu Cong" vol.1, and the first chapter of "Yu Cong" vol.2; four examples in total. "Disposition Comes out of Fate" contains the most relevant mentions of *qing* in these two series of Chu bamboo slips:

"Nature comes from fate and fate comes from heaven. Tao originates from emotion, and emotions spring from one's nature. Emotion is at the beginning, righteousness at the end. People who are experts at emotions know how to express themselves while people who are experts at righteousness know how to control their emotions."

"All sincere emotions should be appreciated. If someone treats people with sincere emotion, even if he makes mistakes, he can be forgiven. Blame without sincere emotion should not be appreciated. One who follows emotion, even without taking action, this one is trustworthy." (*The Guodian Chu Slips*. 1998: 61-66)

The following is written in "Disposition Comes out of Fate": Tao starts with emotion and emotion starts with nature. Li [rite] works on emotions. Loyalty is the method of trust and trust is the method of emotion; emotions come from nature." The discourses in "Disposition Comes out of Fate" advocating for emotions go beyond our understanding of pre-Qin philosophy. Surprisingly, "Disposition Comes out of Fate" considers that all sincere emotions should be accepted. For most scholars it is a surprising discovery that emotions are praised so highly.

In other articles of the *Guodian Chu Slips*, emotions are said to be born from nature and rite starts from emotions (*The Guodian Chu Slips*, 1998: 89-93); the theme of these articles is similar to that of “Disposition Comes out of Fate”.

Pang Pu, a modern Chinese philosopher, once remarked on the theory of “all sincere emotions should be appreciated.” He pointed out that it is rare that such great value be placed on emotions. Pang considers “Disposition Comes out of Fate” as a work that maintains Emotionalism (Pang, 1999: 31). In fact, the passage does not devalue *Tao* (道), *Li* (礼) or *Zhong* (忠, loyalty), when it advocates emotions. However, this article does speak highly of emotions, delivering the message of Emotionalism. Li Zehou, a modern Chinese philosopher, asserts that emotions play a major and positive role in “Disposition Comes out of Fate”, so much so that it even becomes the criteria used to distinguish between kindness and evil, loyalty and trust. These scholar’s remarks support my assertion that Emotionalism is present in “Disposition Comes out of Fate”.

The Shanghai Museum’s Chu Bamboo Slips contain many documents on emotions. “Confucian Commentary on *Shijing*” and “On Disposition” are the most eye-catching works among those documents. Though “On Disposition” has a similar theme to “Disposition Comes out of Fate”, it is much shorter. There is discussion that they may be the same be the same text. It is possible that they are two different versions of the same document, or that some of the slips were lost over the time, thus resulting in their differences. Among the slips in the Shanghai Museum, “Confucian Commentary on *Shijing*” has attracted the most attention. There are many characters which demonstrate the influence of emotions. The word *qing* (情, emotion), is written six times within “Confucian Commentary on *Shijing*”:

There is no concealed ambition in poetry, there is no concealed emotion in music, there is no concealed idea in essay (Slip No. 1);

Qing [emotions] in Yanyan (Slip No. 10);

Qing is love (slip No. 11);

Qing in Yanyan is loneliness (slip No. 16);

Qing in Didu is extreme grief (slip No. 18);

Confucius appreciates the kind of *Qing* written in Wanqiu, “I have deep love but I know there is no hope” (slip No. 22) (Ma, 2001).

Words on emotions in “*Confucian Commentary on Shijing*” reveal that emotions played an important role in Confucianism in the past.

The discovery of Chu bamboo slips, especially the Guodian Chu Slips and the Shanghai Museum's collection, has led to an unexpected result – scholars have found a long-undervalued Chinese tradition on emotions dating back almost to the times of philosophers Zisi and Mencius. Now, with the reappearance of Emotionalism, the philosophy of Qing is attracting the attention of scholars, who are producing new reflections on Chinese traditional philosophy.

II. EMOTIONALISM: A HIDDEN TRADITION ?

The reappearance of the traditional philosophy of emotions puts forth an important question: where does Emotionalism belong?

It is inappropriate to include Qing in Taoism. Although three groups of Taoist documents were also found at the time of the Chu bamboo slip's discovery, scholars have not categorized the slips as Taoist documents. Taoism puts little emphasis on emotions. The Taoist philosopher Laozi said that “the world is merciless; therefore, it treats people like they are just straw dogs. Similarly, sages are also merciless; therefore, they treat the common people like straw dogs.”¹ Laozi also wrote “colors make people dizzy; music makes people deaf; delicate food makes people lose their appetite; hunting makes people wild; and treasure makes people lose self-discipline.”² Taoism advocates people clear their inner world and cut out all kinds of desire so that they may enter a state of inner peace (Laozi, 2005)³. Zhuangzi, however, claims something different. In “Dechongfu” (Signs of Complete Integrity), the philosopher Zhuang Zhou has a conversation with fellow philosopher Hui Shi about whether or not emotions exist. Dialogues such as this demonstrate that the philosophy of Qing is not a part of Taoism.

Scholars have attempted to put the philosophy of Qing into the tradition of Confucianism. In pre-Qin Confucianism, it is not uncommon to spot descriptions on Qing. Philosophers Zilu and Zizhang remarked on Qing in *The Analects of Confucius. Liji* (the Book of Rites), written during the same period as the *Guodian Chu Slips*, has many references to Qing. In “Liyun”, one of the chapters in *Liji*, it is written that the sage king cultivates people's emotions with righteousness and rites (Zheng, 2001: 943). These discourses show that pre-Qin Confucianism had abundant recognition of Qing. They remind us that pre-Qin Confucianism is open-minded in regards to the Confucian identity. It also connotes that there

was a lot of discussion about emotions in Confucianism. Pre-Qin Confucianism had two sides it both provided political advice and solutions for kings as well as criticized their faults. Confucianism protected the system of Li (rites), but it also respected personal emotions. Roughly speaking, pre-Qin Confucianism has large sums of discourses on Emotion.

However, if we look more deeply into the past, we will realize that it is not proper to place Qing into the Confucian tradition. Considering the vague boundaries in early Confucianism, it is understandable to include Qing as a part of it. The philosophy of Qing, due to its early meaning of “sincerity”, is doubtlessly one of the important values within Confucianism, similar to the five virtues. Nevertheless, the range of Qing is greater than its colloquial meanings. The saying “all sincere emotions should be appreciated” goes beyond the range of Li (rites). The vague boundaries of early Confucianism provide a kind of space for Qing; especially in the time of Zisi and Mencius, it is quite obvious that Qing was considered important to people. The bamboo documents such as “Disposition Comes out of Fate” and “On Disposition” reveal this tendency as well. Later on when Confucianism incorporates the philosopher Xunzi and Legalism, it gradually becomes the theory of political authority while Qing takes an awkward turn. Xunzi acknowledged the inevitableness of natural and sensual emotions. In “Xing’e Lun” (Theory of Original Evil of Human Nature) (Wang 1988: 437-438) and “Wangba” (Rule by Righteousness and Rule by Force) (Wang 1988: 211), he wrote “it is the inevitable nature of emotion that people prefer what makes them comfortable.” We can see that Xunzi considered Qing as the essence of human nature (see “Zhengming” – Wang 1988: 428). Therefore, in Xunzi’s view, Qing become in some sense a doctrine on the evilness of human nature. In “Xing’e Lun”, Xunzi arranged a conversation between Yao and Shun. Yao asked Shun about the emotions of humans, and Shun answered that they were not beautiful at all. Xunzi expresses his ideas of the evilness of man’s nature and the ugliness of emotions through this conversation between two ancient governors (Wang 1988: 211). In Xunzi’s theory, Qing does not comply with social justice. Conversely, he supported changing people’s nature with rules and morality. In “Lilun” (Theories of Rites) (Wang 1988: 366), it was written “nature, is in an unrefined state [which can be] likened to crude fabric; refinement, carries the grandeur of ceremonial robes.

Without nature, nothing can be refined; without refinement, nature cannot be self-fulfilled. When nature becomes refined, the sage's glory spreads, great achievements under heaven will be achieved.” From Xunzi's point, human nature and cultivation should be combined in order to build a well-regulated world. If we consider the Simeng School as advocating sincere emotions, then Xunzi is the supporter of changing people's natural emotions through education and cultivation.

Pre-Qin Confucianism does provide a space for emotions, however Qing is not as free as people imagine in traditional Confucianism. Qing's position within the Confucian value system becomes complicated and it is difficult to describe the Confucian attitude towards Emotionalism. In Xunzi's time, due to the emphasis on rites and laws, Qing lost its fair role in Confucianism and was instead considered a tool for ritual education and musical cultivation. In “Xing'e Lun”, Xunzi's theory of the evilness of human nature brings a guilty shadow on Qing. Though Qing is part of human nature, if it isn't controlled, it might break rules and go against rites. Meanwhile, Qing still has a place in Confucianism in that it can be used as a tool. However, Qing, as representing individual emotions, is in conflict with Confucian values. It is obvious that over the centuries, the conflicts have become severe. Though most approved of sincerity, Confucian philosophers were highly averse to “passion” or other strong feelings. If we take a deeper look at Qing, we will realize that the philosophy of Qing, or Emotionalism, cannot be wholly accepted by Confucianism's rules.

Noticeably, Qing is not a monologue of Confucianism in the pre-Qin time. After the discovery of the Chu bamboo slips, people found that the pre-Qin schools have many works on Qing. Among those works, there is *Guanzi*. Qing appears ten times in different chapters of *Guanzi*, for example in “Xinshu”, “Qifa”, “Bagua”, “Xingshi Jie” and “Mingfa Jie”. In “Xingshi Jie”, it says, “Justice, kindness, trustworthiness and sincerity, these will lead to fame and glory; observant cultivation of one's conduct, this will bring honor and respect. Without kind and merciful conduct, one's reputation will be bad.” (Liang, 1997: 173) The book *Guanzi* combines all kinds of thoughts, including righteousness, utility, rites and laws. It expresses the governor's theory of emphasizing utility and laws and reveals the prevailing thoughts of the time. The discourses on Qing in *Guanzi* show that it was popular to discuss the issue of Qing in the pre-Qin age.

Actually, Confucianism did not create the philosophy of Qing. The tradition of Qing can be dated back to *Shijing* (*The Book of Songs*). *Shijing* contains a variety of passages relating to Emotionalism. In the newly discovered Chu bamboo slips, we found several pieces of work named “Confucian Commentary on *Shijing*”. Some passages of Confucian commentary explain *Shijing* from the perspective of Qing, pointing out that Confucius is not the one who created the tradition of Qing, he was merely an advocator of it.

In the book *Comparative Studies on Aesthetic Culture Between China and Western Countries*, the author suggested that there is a tradition named Fengsao (Shu, 2008: 3). In ancient China, separate from other schools, there may have been an independent symbol of culture, Qing, Emotionalism. The tradition of Qing reveals that Qing is quite popular among the public. In the pre-Qin age, these theories on Qing may not be consistent with the Confucian doctrine. It is not the same as in Confucianism, but another independent tradition.

Therefore, the concept of “Complementation of Confucianism and Taoism,” the main stream of traditional Chinese culture may be represented more accurately if viewed in the light of a “Threefold Coexistence of Confucianism–Legalism, Taoism–Buddhism and Fengsao or Emotionalism,” along with other minor currents of thought.

As a result, Emotionalism, a hidden tradition of Qing is discovered. The tradition represents an independent civil liberalism. It continues on, separate from authoritative Confucianism.

III. FROM FEUDAL ETHIC TO EMOTIONALIST ETHIC ?

The philosophy of Qing represents a different type of value orientation. Qing inherently promotes respect for human nature and it is a doctrine that stays away from normative ethic. The concept of Qing, when regarded as “sincerity”, is similar to that of Zhong (loyalty) or Yi (righteousness) and has a kind of normative value proposition. However, Qing often refers to people’s inner feelings. The philosophy of Qing can be conveyed as people’s pursuit of individual passion.

Qing expresses respect for humanity and human nature. Although Xunzi asserts that “human nature is evil” and that we must “change human nature through education and cultivation”, he acknowledges that emotions are inevitable elements of human nature. In “Zhengming”, he

defines Qing as something people are born with (Wang, 1988: 412). From this we can conclude that Qing is considered a part of human nature.

In addition, the philosophy of Qing shows the acceptance of human emotions. In “Liyun”, human emotions are sorted into seven categories: happiness, anger, sadness, fear, love, hatred, and lust. These seven emotions can be mastered without teaching (Zheng, 2001: 915). Of course, these are all inner feelings. In “Zhengming”, Qing is defined as appreciation, hatred, joy, anger, sadness, and happiness. Obviously, feelings like appreciation and joy are inner feelings as well. The acknowledgement of Qing demonstrates the acceptance of innate emotions.

Sometimes, Qing is categorized as a desire and connected to human instinct. In “Liyun”, human emotion consists of seven types of feelings. One of which is desire. Xunzi explained desire as the response of Qing (Wang, 1988: 428). In *Shuowen* Xu Shen defined Qing as “the private temperament of human which has desire”. Duan Yucai added that Qing is a human’s desire. Both Xu and Duan emphasized that Qing is similar to desire. Ruan Ji, a famous naturalist poet in the Wei and Jin dynasties, thought that Qing was more related to human desire. Zhu Xi, a famous Confucian scholar of the Song dynasty viewed Qing as a wriggling impulse that should be controlled by the mind (Zhu, 1986: 94). From his opinion Qing is considered as a result of desire. In all, discourses of Qu Yuan, Ruan Ji and Zhu Xi on Qing expressed the characteristic of impulsiveness of Qing.

Unlike ethical regulations like Li, Qing pays more attention to human nature and individual passion, representing a philosophy which advocates individual freedom. In the past, a lot of Chinese characters include the pictograph component of heart (心) or a variation of it. The function of the heart (心) is thought to be thinking in Chinese context and Chinese characters with signifier component of heart(心) have much to do with mind. From this we could consider that there was a period during which people think highly of mind. In ancient documents, *qing* (情, emotion) is written as the combination of the character components *qing* (青, phonetic component) and *xin* (心, signifier component). For example, in the newly discovered Bamboo Slips of Chu during the Warring States Period, four of the characters of *qing* (情, emotion) were written in this way (青*qing* on top and 心*xin* beneath). As a result, one can conclude that

the philosophy of Qing is one that advocates free expression of personal passion.

Unlike the other discourses in the pre-Qin dynasty, the philosophy of Qing is more representative of human nature, instincts, and desire. Though Qing still has the normative significance, it is independent from Confucianism, allowing it to incorporate many types of emotions. In fact, the philosophy of Qing is a philosophy respecting human nature. It is an ethic far from rules, or more precisely, it is an ethic staying away from normative ethic. If we see Confucian ethic as one that can adjust itself according to rules and orders, then the tradition of Qing is one that emphasizes human nature, individual passion, and inner self.

The philosophy of Qing is a kind of tradition free from norms and regulations. Early Confucianism adhered to a primary humanism, but when Confucianism became authoritative, the aspects of respecting human nature, heart, and emotions were compressed. Later, the philosophy of Qing stood independently as a trend of respecting personal emotions and liberating individuality. In the Wei and Jin dynasties, scholars advocated personal feelings and rejected regulations. Wang Bi advocated people use human nature to express emotions. Ji Kang supported people in acting according to their emotions (Ji, 1987: 120). Xiang Xiu believed that all living human have emotions, and living without emotions and desire was similar to death. These discourses show the pursuit of inner feelings and emotions. Emotionalism and liberation of individuality come together in the late Ming dynasty. After Lu Jiuyuan, a philosopher of the Song dynasty held on that “my heart is the universe and the universe is my heart”, Feng Menglong proposed a theory of education through Qing:

”If Heaven and Earth are without emotion, nothing would come into existence. Nothing in the world can relate to one another, where there is no emotion. The flow of events is uninterrupted and without ending, because emotion is uninterrupted and without ending. The four elements are illusive, emotion is true. Emotion makes strangers dear, absence of emotion drives families apart. Without emotion and with emotion, they couldn’t be further removed from one another. I want to establish a doctrine of Qing, telling the world how to live with emotions.” (Feng, 1986: 1)

Feng Menglong’s theory of emotions was similar to Confucian theory of ritual education and musical cultivation, directly influenced by Confucian feudal ethics. His saying of “six scriptures teach by emotions” was just

the extension and distortion of the common saying of “unsatisfied works came out of human emotions but were controlled by propriety and righteousness.” However, there are many stories on individual feelings and desires within Feng Menglong’s “Guazhier”, “Shange”, and “Sanyan”⁴, which go far beyond the feudal ethic of Confucian authority, almost become the rebellious examples towards traditional ethic. Feng once said, “There were once three things eternal in the past. In today’s view, Qing is an additional one.” (Feng, 1993: 1) Therefore, Feng must have recognized the meaning of Qing as an independent theme in philosophy. The proposition of the doctrine of Qing, though it was under the influence of authorized Confucianism to some extent, shows the significance of Emotionalism as an independent tradition.

IV. THE MODERN TRANSFORMATION OF CHINESE TRADITION

The rediscovery of the discourses on emotion gives researchers new insight on the traditions in ancient China. The complementary traditions of Confucianism and Taoism are considered to be at the core of ancient Chinese culture. However, due to new documents and research, Emotionalism may be a third and equally important tradition which represents the civil Liberalism among the people. Through studies on the newly discovered Chu bamboo slips and the pre-Qin discourses on emotion, this essay finds a hidden tradition of Emotionalism in ancient China. The philosophy of Emotionalism is frequently mentioned in pre-Qin dynast writings, and it cannot be simply attributed to Confucianism. Confucianism is an explainer for Emotionalism, rather than the starter. The tradition of Emotionalism stands for a liberal tradition that advocates for the individual passions of humanity.

Not long ago Ancient Chinese traditions encountered a comprehensive crisis. During the period of the May 4th Movement, they were vehemently criticized. For a long period of time ancient Chinese traditions were criticized as feudal, even as “swallowing people” ethic (Wu, 1919). At the time Confucianism was considered as the representation of feudal ethics; therefore, it was vehemently criticized during the May 4th Movement through slogans such as “down with Confucius and sons”. Confucianism, besides Tao, De (morality), Yi (righteousness), Xiao (filial piety) and Zhongshu (loyalty and forgiveness), mainly represents a doctrine

advocating both Ren (仁, benevolence) and Li (礼, rites). Undeniably, Confucianism does advocate subduing oneself and returning to propriety. Confucius once said, people are unable to live in society without learning rites. [What is the point of this sentence? I'm unclear]. In *The Analects of Confucius*, Yanyuan asked his teacher, "What is benevolence?" Confucius replied, "Benevolence is subduing ourselves and returning to propriety." Yanyuan asked, "How can we achieve that?" Confucius replied, "Look at nothing that does not conform to the rites, hear nothing that does not conform to the rites, speak nothing that does not conform to the rites, and do nothing that does not conform to the rites." As a result, rites have great significance in Confucius' ideology. In *Confucius Homely*, [Is this a book? Not sure what Homely means here] it is written "attach importance to rites and keep away from crimes". There are many examples that demonstrate rites are an important part of Confucianism. There are also many other elements in Confucianism, such as benevolence, Tao, morality, righteousness, filial piety, loyalty and forgiveness, and it is inappropriate to simplify Confucianism into feudal ethic that should be disposed of. We must keep in mind that several branches of Confucianism emerged after Confucius' initial teachings. Mencius advocated benevolence while Xunzi advocated rites and with the transformation of Confucianism from normal education to emperor's governing methods, the status of rites was greatly altered. Xunzi's "advocating rites and emphasizing law" reveals that rites are not only applied in courteous interpersonal relationships, but are also tools for an emperor to keep reign of his kingdom. In the Han dynasty, Tung Chung-shu suggested that Emperor Wu do away with all non-Confucian schools of thought and declared Confucianism the state ideology⁵. Tung also claimed the divine right of the emperor and stated that the emperor was heaven's son and people must follow the emperor's orders. He put forward the theory of divine right of kings, together with his theory of "the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues" as specified in the feudal ethical code. As a result, Confucianism was no longer the theory of people-oriented thoughts; it gradually became the political strategy that emperor adopted. The more authoritative Confucianism became, the more it appeared to be a compilation of feudal ethics.

The rediscovery of a hidden tradition of Emotionalism deepens our current day understanding of ancient Chinese traditions. With the discovery of Chu bamboo slips, especially the publication of *The Guodian*

Chu Slips and *Bamboo Slips of Chu during the Warring States Period in Shanghai Museum*, scholars found a long ignored ancient tradition of Qing. The tradition represents a liberal Emotionalism among people in ancient times, which cannot be simply attributed to Confucianism. Confucianism is not the progenitor of Emotionalism; it is merely a facilitator and promoter of it. As Confucianism was adopted by the court and became more authoritative and official, the tradition of Qing came under pressure. Finally, the philosophy of Qing stood as an independent symbol of Emotionalism in late Ming dynasty. It is reasonable to predict that besides Confucianism and Taoism, there is a third symbol, Emotionalism, in ancient China.

With the rediscovery of Qing tradition, it is proved that the Chinese traditions, besides Confucianism and Taoism or Confucianism-Legalism and Taoism-Buddhism, may exist a threefold coexistence of Confucianism-Legalism, Taoism-Buddhism and civil Emotionalism. In loose sense, they represent the pursuit of political public value, individual value and religious value respectively.

China's shift from a feudal system to a constitutional system is at the core of the Modern-day transformation of Chinese tradition. Politicians and philosophers have been seeking to change Chinese culture, reshaping Chinese traditions to encompass modern constitutionalism. Modern constitutionalism structures society through a set of public contracts based on personal free will, the core of this is the coupling of individual values (free will) and shared societal values. In contrast, the core in Confucian traditions is paying attention to both Ren (仁, benevolence) and Li (礼, rites). The expression of "benevolence is to love people"⁶ reveals respect for personal value as well as pursuit of righteous value.

Authoritative thoughts in ancient China, represented by Confucianism-Legalism after the political instrumentalization, are often packaged as sort of "righteous value" and the characteristic of which is ignorance of personal value. Take feudal ethic as an example. The typical characteristic of feudal ethic is regulatory. Considered as "the orders from heaven", feudal ethic regulates people's daily life. Confucian advocated subduing oneself and returning to propriety, from which the regulatory of propriety can be seen. In *The Book of Rites*, it writes that the king founds a set of rites in order to help people tell right from wrong and return to the humanity. The aim of rites and propriety is opposite to that of desire. Also, in *The Book of Rites*, there is an expression of "rites and laws are

both used to regulate people's behaviors", indicating that both rites and laws are regulatory. The sages use rites to rule and distinguish people. Xunzi further pointed out how rites regulate people's desire. He wrote in his book, "Where do rites come? It is human nature to have desire. When people are unable to satisfy their desire, dispute appears and dispute leads to dilemma. The king hates dispute and therefore he founds rites to rule people. Rites provide people with hope and satisfy their need. Therefore, people would not limit their desire due to the shortage in goods; instead, they limit the desire due to their grade." Tung Chung-shu's saying of "Rite is used to understand each other and prevent dispute" is the result of rites' normative ethics.

In fact, feudal ethics can be divided into conceptual ethic and educational ethic; but they gradually change from early folk ethic into political ethic that king uses to reign. Therefore, there are many sorts of rites in different levels, such as customs, ethics, politics and religions. Theorists that support natural rites consider the multi-level rites as the result of folk nature, as *The Book of Rites* records, "Rites are the orders from heaven". Confucius' saying of "subduing oneself and returning to propriety" includes various meanings in customs, ethics, politics and religions, emphasizing obedience to normative etiquettes. In addition to the theory of Five Conduct (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sage) and Six Virtues (sage, wisdom, benevolence, righteousness, loyalty and sincerity) in pre-Qin dynasty, Tung Chung-shu created the theory of Three Cardinal Guides and Five Constant Virtues to lay stress on normative ethics. In Song dynasty, the discussion of "righteousness or reason" emphasizes on "keeping the natural law and abolish the selfishness" and the pursuit of normative ethics goes to extremes. Theorists that support conspiracy theory consider rites as the result of both folk nature and conspiracy built by the ruling class.

The conspiracy theory of rites also reflected in Legalism. Since Xunzi proposed his theory of "advocating rites and emphasizing law", legalists, such as Han Feizi and Li Si, also put pursuit of social justice into their plans for social legal system. However, their thoughts lost the people-oriented status and eventually became ruling tools of the emperor. The so-called Legalism respected neither personal right nor personal value, not to mention to realize the legalized administration through public contracts that based on personal equality. Legalism became the ruling strategy of ancient emperors, or more precisely, ruling tools.

The transformation of ancient Chinese tradition to a modern constitutional system is based on free will. The authoritative ruling systems implemented in ancient China, represented by Confucianism-Legalism, are construed as promoting “societal values,” consciously excluding individual values. The previously hidden tradition of Qing in ancient China respects individual values and emotions. Qing is an important supplement to the so-called “shared societal values” that were popularized by rulers and governors in the past. Therefore, the continuing transformation of Chinese tradition needs to incorporate aspects of individual values and free will, which are represented by the tradition of Qing. Of course, tradition of Qing possesses only symbolic meaning; it is still a long way to go before personal free will reaches public contract. Modern transformation of Chinese traditions must carry forward the cause pioneered by predecessors and forge ahead into the future, witnessing an overall innovation.

The constitutional system is founded on public contracts based on free will. It is mainly concerned with legal systems, not personal emotions; however, individual free will – which passion and emotion are a part of – is an essential aspect of constitutional culture. Through the rediscovery of the ancient tradition of Qing, researchers can now reframe their understanding of Chinese tradition: in addition to the traditions of Confucianism-Taoism and Taoism-Buddhism, there exists a third tradition of Emotionalism. Emotionalism embodies an independent civil liberalism that advocates for the individual passions of humanity; it is of great importance to the transformation of ancient Chinese tradition into a modern constitutional culture.

Emotionalism is an important tradition of ancient China. This can be seen through many references to Qing. The acknowledgement of the significance of Emotionalism, and reincorporation of the Qing philosophy can help modern China become a society which operates through modern constitutionalism.

This must be recognized and integrated for the modernization of Chinese tradition into modern constitutionalism.

Modern transformation of Chinese tradition has long been involved into issues, such as “Chinese Learning as the Fundamental Structure, Western Learning for Practical Use”, “Western Learning as the Fundamental Structure, Chinese Learning for Practical Use” and “Chinese and Western Learning for both Fundamental Structure and Practice Use”.

However, researchers ought to surpass the dispute between Chinese and Western and find out the core in modern transformation of Chinese tradition – transformation from ruling class culture to constitutional system based on personal free will.

The modern transformation of Chinese tradition is a topic broader than the discussion above. This transformation is a comprehensive combination of Confucianism-Legalism, Taoism-Buddhism, Emotionalism, and other traditions: Its transformation must be open and inclusive. It seeks for the combination and balance of individual value and societal values within the framework of the constitution. Through the combining of multicultural and pluralistic values, the modern transformation of Chinese tradition can be achieved.

CONCLUSION

This article announces a newly discovered tradition of Emotionalism and discusses the modern transformation of Chinese tradition. By rediscovering the hidden tradition of Emotionalism this article shows the significance of Civil Emotionalism in the modern transformation of Chinese tradition from an ancient feudal system to a modern constitutional system.

Notes

¹ “Heaven and earth do not act from [the impulse of] any wish to be benevolent; they deal with all things as the dogs of grass are dealt with. The sages do not act from [any wish to be] benevolent; they deal with the people as the dogs of grass are dealt with.” (Laozi, 2005: 3)

² “Color's five hues from the eyes their sight will take; Music's five notes the ears as deaf can make; The flavors five deprive the mouth of taste; The chariot course, and the wild hunting waste, Make mad the mind.” (Laozi, 2005: 5)

³ “He [who knows it] will keep his mouth shut and close the portals [of his nostrils]. He will blunt his sharp points and unravel the complications of things; he will temper his brightness, and bring himself into agreement with the obscurity [of others]. This is called « the Mysterious Agreement ».” (Laozi, 2005: 21)

⁴ “Guazhier”, “Shange”, and “Sanyan” are stories written by Feng Menglong.

⁵ Biography of Tung Chung-shu. *The Book of Han*.

⁶ The Confucius states “loving men” to explain the Confucius Humanity in *The Analects of Confucius*. See Confucius, 1989: 131.

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