



# On the Relationship Between Confucianism and China’s Soft Power: An Analysis Based on Empirical Study of the Influence of Confucian on Religious Belief and Experience of Contemporary Chinese People

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## Abstract

Confucian had been the mainstream of traditional Chinese ideology and provided a foundation for Chinese culture and society. To a great extent, it shaped the spiritual course of development of Chinese culture, exerted a significant influence on the character of the nation, and inserted certain distinctive features into various religious traditions in China. This paper aims to discuss the relationship between Confucian and religious belief and experience in contemporary China so as to reveal the vitality and future development of Confucian, argues that the core values of Confucian is the foundation of soft power

**Key words:** Confucian; Soft power; Religious belief and experience

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The concept of soft power has been widely used by the academics and statesmen even since it was put forward by Joseph Nye, and becomes a hot topic in China in recent years. Current studies mainly concentrate on three aspects: the concept of the soft power, the relationship between hard power and soft power and the approaches to build china’s soft power<sup>[1]</sup>. Although the scholars agreed that culture is the major sources of soft power, there are disputes and disagreements on the relationship

between traditional Chinese culture with china’s cultural soft power. Some extreme opinion even thought that traditional Chinese culture must be completely abandoned, and replaced by new culture suitable to modern society. On contrary to the opinion mentioned above, the author argues that traditional Chinese culture, especially the Confucian is the important headspring and foundation of china’s soft power. The key lies in the true understanding of the genuine teachings and the intrinsic value of traditional culture. These must be clarified first, or china’s soft power will be false issues without headspring and foundation.

During the past century, the tradition of Confucian, regarded as the justification of the feudalist Chinese society, has to face up to the embarrassment of being disintegrated with the collapsing of the feudalist moral and social order. Joseph Levenson considers that Confucian becomes a shadow treasured in the mind after the society which needed it disintegrated<sup>[2]</sup>. Actually, Confucian does not disappear and does exist in a form that “utilize it in daily life without realization of the fact, as any other doctrines of vitality. The paper, based on a survey on the religious experience of Han ethic group, tries to interpret the vitality and future development of Confucian, through analysis of its influence on the contemporary Hanese religious experience. The paper argues that Confucian is able to get down to the fundamentals and roots and acts as a remedy to the confusing and empty spiritual world of contemporary Chinese people. Chinese traditional culture, with Confucian as its core part and basic value, is the most important root and long live spring of Chinese soft power.

## 1. CONFUCIAN CULTURE’S INFLUENCE ON THE CONTEMPORARY HANES RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Confucian is a moral doctrine based on humanitarian

with strong religious rationalism, depending on such kind of character, Confucian is tolerant on foreign religion and humanitarian rationalism has been dominant in the Chinese culture. Through an analysis on the survey, the paper reveals that Confucian culture still exerts a most important influence on the religious belief and experience of contemporary Hanese without realization of the fact. Three features could be found in the survey as follows:

Survey data indicate that the most significant feature of Chinese religion experience is the reverence to the Heaven and the belief in destiny/fate. It seems apparent that a significant percentage of the Han Chinese believe in the existence of Heaven as an independent entity, and believe that the will of Heaven controls human being's destiny in the form of mandate. Most of Chinese believe that humans propose but only Heaven can dispose, that whether or not they can succeed in the world is not entirely a matter for human beings but is more or less predetermined by destiny/fate, and that human beings should comply with the will of Heaven.

**Table 2**  
**A New Understanding of Life or the World**

Some people have an experience in which they suddenly realized a new understanding of life or the world which then changed their life. Have you ever have such an experience?

A New Understanding of Life or the World	Valid Percent
Everything in life is changeable, do not stick to one principle	37.1%
Life and death are matters of fate and wealth and ranks are predetermined by Heaven	53%
God/Spirit/Buddha have arranged everything	22.2%
Good will be rewarded with good; we must do more good things	64.8%
To glorify God/Spirit/Buddha/Ancestors	27.2%
Standing aloof from the worldly affairs, everything go along naturally	52.1%
The earthly life is so tiring, it is best to go back to nature	17.5%

The statistics reveal that that 52 percent of the interviewees have an experience that life or death is a matter of fate (ming) and wealth and ranks are predetermined by Heaven. However, at the same time a majority of the interviewees (52.3%) believe that everything goes naturally, and that humans should detach themselves from worldly affairs. All of these data indicate that the Han Chinese enjoy what is natural and obey what is destined, and this has become a remarkable national character of the people in China.

In the Confucian culture, Confucius and Mencius combined some religious elements of the Zhou Dynasty (1766?-1045? BCE) into humanistic culture when they shaped their doctrine, which endowed these religious elements with humanism, avoiding the belief tending towards blindness and mystery. So humanism culture became more sacred as well, thus avoiding developing to utilitarianism and pragmatism. The most important point of which is the belief of the ordinances of Heaven, preserving the value of the mandate of Heaven

**Table 1**  
**Mysterious power**

Some people have such an experience as being controlled by a mysterious power. Have you ever had such an experience?

Power	Yes (percentage)
The Mandate or will of Heaven	33.6%
Buddha / Bodhisattva or Causational power	28.5%
God/ Lord of Heaven (or the will of the divine)	9.5%
Ancestor/ forefathers	20.9%
Ghost or spirit	9.1%
Your own fortune/ fate	48.4%
Dao or Qi	9.1%

Survey data indicate that 48.6 percent of all the samples report that the deepest and most frequent experience they have had is concerned with fortune/fate, while the next comes the mandate or will of heaven (33.8%). These statistics demonstrate that the Han Chinese pay most attention to the fate and the will of Heaven.

and regards it as the ultimate spiritual authority of the human society order, Confucianism believes that Heaven functions as the Ultimate Existence or Ultimate Reality, to which human beings are answerable with respect to fulfilling their destiny. within the framework of human destiny, individuals are endowed with responsibilities to practise the will of Heaven in their own life. Therefore, whether or not they are succeed in the secular world is unimportance, what they encounter or how they stay in the real life are predetermined by the destiny/fate. Confucianism requires everyone must know Heaven and try their best to fulfill the will of Heaven. so fulfilling the will of Heaven is the ultimate end.

Confucius wrote: "There are three things of which the superior man stands in awe. He stands in awe of the ordinances of Heaven. He stands in awe of great men. He stands in awe of the words of sages." (*The Analects, 16:8*) and "he who offends against Heaven has none to whom he can pray" (*The Analects, 3:13*). We can catch the meaning of the will of Heaven in three aspects as follows: first,

Heaven is spirit of naturalness, but not personification of human. everything on the earth are created by Heaven. The power of Heaven is a sum of all kinds of dissident power which is unknown and uncontrollable by human. So: “dose Heaven speak? The four seasons pursue their courses, and all things are continually being produced, but dose Heaven say anything?” (*The Analect*, 17: 19); Second, Heaven is the dominator of world. The mandate of Heaven determines human to live or die, rich or poor. So Zixia said: “There is the following saying which I have heard: death and life have their determined appointment; riches and honours depend upon Heaven” (*The Analects*, 12:15); Third, god’s mandate can determine the success or disuse of the way “it is the Destiny (ming) if the Way prevails. It is equally Destiny if the Way falls into disuse.” (*The Analects*, 14:36). In sum, the mandate of Heaven has been abstracted into the fate in reality. Confucius emphasized authoritative and determinative of the mandate of Heaven, other than its emotional and mysterious, and insisted that the mandate of Heaven can determine human’s destiny in three fields hereinbefore; however, how to be a good man is determined by human himself. so: “Is virtue a thing remote?I wish to be virtuous, and Virtue is at hand.” (*The Analects*, 7:30) Mencius further believed the mandate of Heaven could determine the rise and decline of the society, and there is nobody can success if he disobey it. “Those who are obedient to Heaven are preserved; those who are against Heaven are annihilated” (*Mencius*, 12:7) and take the Heaven’s mandate as the destiny which human’s power cannot reach. He also regarded the mandate of Heaven as the fountainhead of moral values. So: “Sincerity is the way of Heaven.To think how to be sincere is the way of man.” (*Mencius*, 7:12). Therefore, the human nature is according to the way of Heaven, human should exert the good of his nature,to embody the grandness of the Heaven way so: “He who has exhausted all his mental constitution knows his nature.Knowing his nature,he knows Heaven.” (*Mencius*, 13:1). Since then, the mainstream schools of Confucianism have taken the mandate of Heaven served as the highest criterion for human being’s behaviour.

## 2. FAMILIAL CHARACTER

Xinzhong Yao has pointed that familial charater is the most important and the most fundamental characteristic of Chinese religion in his *The familial characteristic of Chinese Religion*. Ancestry worship is the core of Chinese religion and the family-form structure is its most fundamental structure. Survey data indicates that the religious experience of the contemporary Han nationality has much to do with this characteristic. Both ancestry worship and sacrifice site can reflect the familial characteristic of Chinese religion. On the one hand, ancestry worship and sacrifice activities are the chief means of expression for Chinese religions. Since “human beings are the most intelligent of all beings” and “have their roots in their ancestors”, they should not forget their ancestors where they descended from. Burial ceremony and sacrifice ceremony are very important ceremonies of the Han nationality. Whether they believe the existence of spirit or not, many people have the experience of dialogue or encounter with their ancestors in their dreams. Most people believe that their ancestors were conveying some message by giving them such an experience. The phenomenon of “asking god” in folk religions is another explanation for the Han people’s worship for ancestors. “Asking god” refers to the “dialogue” between the living and their dead ancestors through god medium regarding some events or changes in their lives, in the hope of getting some explanations or implications from it. God medium become the mouthpiece for their dead ancestors, telling the living how to do. Some people made some enquiries about their dead relatives’ life conditions in the other world through the god medium. In this way, they could express their feelings of condolences. They also wish to improve the life conditions of the dead in the other world in certain ways. On the other hand, family is an important place for holding religious memorial ceremonies. Most prayers and sacrifice ceremonies in China are hold within families. Many families have worship Kwan-yin Bodhisattva, the money god, Chairman Mao Zedong, ancestors and Guan Yu, etc. Therefore, the family is an important place for Chinese religious activities.

**Table 3**  
**Which Have You Experienced Most Frequently?**  
 Among these dreamlands above, which have you experienced most frequently?

Spirits (God/Jesus, Buddha/Bodhisattva/Guanyin, Taoist God/ Immortal, Fairy etc.	10.3%
Ancestor/ forefathers	58%
Dragon, phoenix, snake, fish etc. animals predicting lucky or boding	23%
Some supernatural plants	0.5%
Paradise, Hell, Taoist wonderland, etc	4.6%
Other (please specify, if none, fill in 'no')	4.9%

Survey data manifest 57 percent of informants has experienced the dream of their ancestors and forefathers. Merely approximately 15.8 percent experienced revelation, warning, and entrusting some mission from dreams. Nevertheless, a majority of informants (63.9%) reported that they could feel nothing and 42.9 percent of them felt that the dream they experienced just as the same

as usual. All these data displays the dreamland has no relevant with whether they are religious follows or not.

Someone may suddenly have a mysterious feeling, such as the appearance of God or Buddha or gods to him, hearing a mysterious sound calling, etc. There are some mysterious feelings below, please answer one by one if you have had such a feeling:

**Table 4**  
**Mysterious Feelings**

Mysterious feelings	Valid percent
Hearing a mysterious sound or music	7.3%
Seeing an unexplainable vision	4.2%
Smelling a mysterious scent	1.5%
Feeling warm or cold the whole body suddenly	6.9%
Feeling the body being daunted or contacted by something mysterious	2.7%
Other (please specify, if none, fill in 'no') _____	0

In the mysterious feelings of religious experiences, most of informants described their mysterious experience is seeing/hearing/feeling the dead relatives still appeared in their daily life. And they feel that the dead relatives still living in their home. Most of mysterious experiences demonstrated in the table above are related to such feeling. Different with other religious experiences in this survey is that others almost didn't arise informants' reactions in physiology or psychology. In this kind of religious

experience, survey data indicate 44.2 percent of all the samples have no physiological reaction, and 37.2 percent come into being negative reaction. Meanwhile, there are 37.2 percent of informants take no psychology reaction, but about 47.7 percent get negative reaction. This survey also displays that whether that a person can experience such a religious experience has no direct connection with whether they are religious followers.

**Table 5**  
**Do You Agree with the Following Statements?**

	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree
Existence of spirits in the world	13.1%	26%	60.9%
One will be blessed by them if praying to them sincerely	23.5%	34%	42.6%
The good or bad fengshui can have an effect on the future of oneself or his family	30.5%	34.2%	35.4%
Reincarnation	5.3%	25.4%	69.3%
Husband-wife, relatives and friends result from what one did in the previous life	51.4%	28.4%	20.2%
One will be able to change one's fortune through doing good and accumulating virtues, and one will be punished if doing bad things	73.4%	16.6%	10%
One will be blessed and protected if offering sacrifices to ancestors in time and according to rituals	24.8%	39.6%	35.6%
Without sacrifices the dead one will become a lonely and homeless ghost	6%	22%	72%
It is very important to choose an auspicious date for doing anything	38.2%	27.7%	34.2%
One will possess an extraordinary power by religious practices	2.5%	21.7%	75.8%
Spiritual medium can exorcise evil spirits and cure the illness	4.4%	11.4%	84.2%



As to the statement “husband-wife, relatives and friends result from what one did in the previous life”, survey data indicate 51.4 percent of all the samples agree with it. The indifference and disagree part just occupy about 20 percent respectively. This is an unexpected result to Han nationality which seldom pay much attention to ghosts and gods. From this data, we can know the emphasize of family relationship in han nationality. This is a good example that family is the foundation of Chinese culture.

**Table 6**  
**Which of the Following Pictures or Images Are Presented at Your Home**

None	56.5 %
Father figures like Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai,	19.6%
Buddha, Guanyin, Bodhisattva	21.8%
Jesus or the Cross	1.5%
Laozi	0
God of Fortune, God of Kitchen, Guan Yu	10.6%
The Tablets of Ancestors	9.7%
Sayings of Confucian Sages and Worthies	0
Others	0.6%

Survey data manifest 43.5 percent of informants have dedicated pictures or images of god. Hence we can come the conclusion that family is an important place for religious sacrifice. Besides, we have observed that over ten family temples which is formed up by family offer burning incense on both sides of street so that the residents in the neighborhood can pray there at the beginning and middle of every month. The original purpose of setting up these family temples maybe is to let the neighboring residents pray more conveniently, but it reflects that family occupies a key position in Chinese religious activities as well.

Family is significant to Chinese religion, it also can be seen from the numeric data as follows:

1. In religious experience of power, the rate of those who feel that they have been influenced by their ancestors occupies 20.8 percent, which ranks the fourth in all the eight options.

2. In the eleven options which religious attitudes influence person most, the option of family is placed second, which merely trails the option of one's own factor.

Chinese familiar character is indivisible to the influence of Confucian culture. Mencius mentioned, “He is affectionate to his parents, and lovingly disposed to people generally, He is lovingly disposed to people generally, and kind to creatures”. In *The doctrine of the mean*, it said: “Benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great exercise of it is in loving relatives”. In Confucianism, Family is the foundation of Chinese culture as well as the Chinese political structure. The moral system of Confucianism is constituted by

relationships between monarch and minister, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and young brother, friends. That is: “Between father and son, they should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness. between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity.” Relationships of father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and young brother belong to direct familiar relationships. Although the other two are not the direct familiar relationships, they also are the extensions of familiar relationship. In Confucianism, the state is also a form of family, the relationship of monarch and minister is an expander of familiar relationship and the relationship of friends is an extension of brothers' relationship. Confucianism emphasizes family relationship, and it always embraces all the social and political relationships who wished to govern their states rightly and to make the whole empire tranquil and happy, they should firstly cultivate their persons and regulate their families. Confucianism emphasized that family order is the root of well-ordered states. That is: we should firstly make “the father is father, the husband is husband, the wife is wife”, then, the states will be rightly governed and the whole empire will be well-ordered. Zhang Dongsun, in his *Reason and Democracy* wrote “Chinese social structure is composed by a big family including innumerable hierarchical small families. It also can be called a hierarchical system of families. The monarch in China refers to the father of the state, and the minister are sons of the monarch. In the hierarchical system, there is no conception of person. Anyway, one is father or son, monarch or Minister, husband or wife, elder brother or young brother. The five relationships are reflection of the Chinese social structure. The Chinese social structures will not be existed without the five relations. Anyone who occupies a certain position will assume a certain responsibility. For example, one has his/her duty as a father or as a son, as monarch or as a minister and so on. In a family, the distinction of sex belongs to nature scope, as well as distinction of age. As social structure is reflected by this natural distinction the social hence is a unity of all kinds of people”<sup>[3]</sup> Consequently, “In Buddhism, self is melted in the universe, however, self is melted into the family in Confucianism”<sup>[4]</sup>.

### 3. EMPHASIZING MORALITY AND CONTRIBUTION

Another obvious feature of Chinese religious experience is emphasizing morality and contribution. Chinese religion has great moral function: on the one hand it pushes people to do good thing, on the other hand it keeps people from doing bad thing. Chinese religious follows believe that morality and belief is unbreakable. This feature can be presented in two aspects: one is the recognition to morality

and the other is that the consecrated gods in religion always are those who have made great contribution or brought actual benefit to the nation. Meanwhile it shows that god and people can transform each other. If one person can comply with the moral standard in a certain degree (It's always difficult to achieve), he will turn to a sage, an immortal or even god. In accordance, Chinese religious images like Kwan-yin, Guan Yu, and Mao Zedong are worshiped by so many people, just because of their good moral behaviors or great contribution to Chinese nation.

Survey data in table 2 displays 64.4 percent of samples have had the understanding that good will be rewarded with good and we must do more good things. It is important that most of them have pointed that the purpose of doing good is not anticipating got reward from god, but only realizing the ethical standards, which everyone

should obey.

Survey data in table 5 shows 73.4 percent of informants believe that good is rewarded and evil is punished. The rate of those who believe that the dead will be reincarnated only occupies a very small part. This result fully explains that the core of Chinese religion is morality other than ghosts or gods. Chinese religion can propel people to take moral practice on the one hand and restrain people from doing some immoral conducts on the other hand.

Survey data in table 6 manifest that 19.6 percent of surveyed families dedicate pictures and images of revolutionary leaders like Mao Tse - tung and Zhou Enlai, which only 2.2 percent less than those of Buddha, Kwan-yin, and Bodhisattva. Here Kwan-yin and Bodhisattva are embroidered as the incarnate of morality.

**Table7**  
**Do You Pray or Worship God, Bodhisattva, Taoist Gods or Other Spirits in the Past Year?**

God/ All Souls' Day	Buddha/ Bodhisattva	Guan Yu	God of Fortune	Allah	Laozi	Confucius	Monarch of Huang, monarch of Yan	Others
3.6%	39.9%	6.6%	18.4 %	0	2.7%	0.9%	1.8%	6.9%

Survey data shows that some of samples have prayed or worshipped Guan Yu, Confucius, and monarch of Huang & Yan, which are worldly respected because of their good moral behavior and grate contribution to Han nation. Meanwhile 6.9 percent have worshiped local Daigong (Daigong temple is a private temple to remember a folk doctor in ancient Changsha. It is said that this temple can provide special lots, which records prescriptions. If the prayers draw lots, and then take medicine according to the corresponding prescription, the patient will be well soon. In our survey, some informants exemplified their own experience and proved that their recovery all is a dedication of praying Daigong. "Chuanzhu Temple" of Sichuan is another private temple. It is a scarifying place to Li Bing and his son, who inaugurated water project of Guanxian)

The phenomenon of Huan Yuan (redeem a vow to a god) is another good example. This is a way that prayers promise that if god can fulfill their expectations, they will reward god with money or other things. All the prayers believe that once they breach the promise, they will get punishment by gods. In general, the harder the expectations can be fulfilled the more reward the prayers will offer. This phenomenon reflects the practicality and utilitarianism of Chinese religions.

From survey statistics, we can see that the concept of god and ghost in Chinese religions is very weak. This may be could explain the lack of holiness to some extent in Chinese religions. It could also explain the

pragmaticism and utilitarianism of Chinese religion. From this we can further understand why Chinese religions have so strong degrees of tolerance. Just because the very core of Chinese religions is not god but morality, it is not so important which god you choose to worship. The Han nationality is one which worships many gods. they believe in Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist gods and saints without any discrimination. They may practice Buddhism at home. But when they are out, they may pay homage and kowtow to any god that they encounter. The different varieties of temples can meet the different needs of the people. They have become an indispensable part of civil cultural and spiritual life. The fact that Chinese religion has morality at its core has much to do with the influence of Confucian culture. Confucian humanism abandoned the religious crust of Zhou culture. The major idea that Confucianism upholds is human beings' moral rationality with benevolence at the core. According to *The Analects*, 7:12, "the subjects on which the Master did not take were—extraordinary things, feats of strength, disorder, and spiritual beings." When Zilu asked him about serving the spirits of the dead. The Master answered, "while you are not able to serve men, how can you serve their spirits?" Zilu added, "I venture to ask about death?" He was answered, "while you do not know life, how can you know about death." (*The Analects*, 11:12). The proposition that "to give oneself earnestly to the duties due to men, and, while respecting spiritual beings, to keep aloof from them." offered by Confucius set a keynote for Confucian

concept of religion, namely, respect and no remissness, distance and no indulgence. This is an attitude of religious rationality and moral rationality. Confucianism holds that human beings' value lies not in an existence of perceptual life but in the ethical value contained in moral life and the achievement of that value. It holds that human beings can achieve consummation through their own nature and mind and elevate themselves to a level of eternity and divinity. This kind of methodology has provided people with a life philosophy through which they can transcend in real life, giving Confucianism both philosophical rationality and religious consciousness, with emphasis on both morality and wisdom. It has also made the Chinese people's spiritual life fluctuate between belief and rationality, between Heaven's way and human's way, between seclusion and participation. That may be one explanation why there are so many people worshipping god (see table 8 and 9), but so few acknowledge that they are religious converts or believers (the average level nationwide is 10%, 9.1% in Hunan).

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## CONCLUSION

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The above analysis not only revealed the inseparable links between culture and religion, but more importantly, from it we can see that Confucianism has always held a core position in Chinese culture. Although with the collapse of the public system of Confucian ceremony and education the Confucian temples and ritual are diminishing which has also been indicated from the survey data, the core of Confucianism is unassailable and it isn't a dead culture but deeply embedded in common people's life, influencing the thinking way and acting way of common people. the core of Confucianism is still alive and has a new stage in its long life and there is no Confucianism relying on or determined by the existence of religions, but all kinds of religions in Chinese history are determined by and rely on it, taking it as the groundwork upon which to base themselves. Even until today, we can still say that any religion that wants to find a foothold and spread abroad in China must accept and acknowledge Confucian culture as its precondition. So the Chinese religion is deeply branded by the Confucian culture. In reality, the Confucian culture still influences the religious beliefs and experiences of the Han nationality in Contemporary China profoundly. It exists in the Chinese thought precipitations and the inherited living spaces as the format of "daily practice without understanding."

Currently, the construction of the soft power of Chinese culture faces two kinds of serious situations. Firstly, the economical development in China has got great achievements. But the problems such as the rent-seeking in economics, the corruption and the fake and inferior commodities, emerge in endlessly. These important problems further influence the moral environments of the

people, which lead to the slackness of the core values, the lack of beliefs, the deficiency of the sense of security for the future, the lack of enough belief for the social rules and the deficiency of happiness for the life. Secondly, what should we do to keep the cultural consciousness and independence when facing the extensive permeability and derivation of the western cultures and institutions? A general phenomenon is that the traditional culture is arbitrarily dismembered and sniffed, no matter what attitude of the modern people about it and how flippancy of the psychology of the modern people. An essential problem is whether we can abandon the traditional culture to construct the so-called new culture. Should we transmit our own viewpoints in the Globalization Wave? Should we keep our own Chinese gene of the culture? One important core of the Chinese culture is "harmoniousness but difference." And we always treat and learn the foreign culture with the open and tolerate psychology. But it is ironical that we can even not accommodate our cultural tradition. We have abandoned our own culture in the historical river and tried to learn the foreign cultures. But what we have learned and obtained are secondary things and not the main cores. What a nation obtains belongs to the whole world and the traditional culture contributes to the modern culture. So how can we construct the common spirit homeland for Chinese nation if we can not inherit and explore our own cultural tradition self-consciously? How can we find out the settlement of life? How can we construct the generally accepted and followed core values? How can we advocate the life style with charisma and happiness? How can we discuss the attraction of our culture to the foreigners if the culture has no cohesion for domestic people? So we should have the cultural consciousness and responsibilities, illustrate and understand our own cultural tradition, and practise earnestly in order to solve these problems, while the Confucian ethic tradition itself is the foundation and headspring for these promotion and construction for the Chinese culture, just as the station from Tu weiming, "Although the Confucianism has intimate connections with the agricultural economy, the bureaucracy and the family society from the prospect of the ontogeny, and is deeply rooted in economy, politics and society of traditional China, it can not be simply reverted to the familism, the bureaucratism and the incommmercialism. It can not be thought that the Confucianism will lose the meanings of the humanistic care and the ethic religion if the foundation of the society is destroyed. The care and the meaning are still connected to the modern world."

Now the problem is whether we can put aside kinds of misunderstandings and insignificant arguments to attain the consensus for the modern value of the Confucianism. Can we find out the inherent vitality of the Confucianism from the government's promotion and the grass-roots strength and seek out the realistic path for the future

development of it? Can the philosophical connotations of the Confucianism boom again and supply vivid sources for the settlement of life and the ultimate concern of people after a century of fading? In my opinion, there are three most important factors as follows.

(i) Can the philosophical connotations and the essence of the Confucianism be elaborated and clarified again? It is the key for the booming of the Confucianism again, while how we understand the core values of the Confucianism correctly is the chiefly premise for the spicing of the philosophical connotations and reconstruction of the Confucianism. It is also the essence and headspring of the Confucianism.

(ii) Will the Confucianism absorb and digest the philosophical connotations of other different cultural traditions to realize its development and reconstruction, as that the Confucianism in the Song and Ming dynasty absorbed and digested the philosophical connotations of the Buddhism and the Taoism when facing their challenges? It is the necessary conditions for the erection and development of the Confucianism.

(iii) Are there confucianists to undertake the above responsibilities, who can really understand, illustrate and carry out the essence of the Confucianism? The great confucianists such as Ercheng, Chu Hsi and Wang Yangming are needed. All the confucianists, who believe, pursue, practise and propaganda the Confucianism, should try their best together.

We believe that the independence of academy and thinking will make the Confucianism considered again and supply the temporal opportunity and theoretical platform for the development and creation of the Confucianism in modern vivid era. The Confucianism, which was once abandoned in the history, will be understood again for its glaring flame one day and supply the wisdom and excess to influence the society. The core values of the Confucianism ethic tradition will give abundant sources for the ultimate concern and the common faith of the social morality in modern society. The core values of the Confucianism ethic tradition illustrated above should be the important foundation and headspring for the construction of the soft power of Chinese culture. Then the soft power of Chinese culture, which has international

influences, can be constructed to show cohesion for domestic people and abstraction for foreigners.

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