TO BECOME A SAGE-KING IN *HUAINANZI*

by

DANIEL SUNGBIN SOU

(Under the Direction of Russell Kirkland)

ABSTRACT

This paper explains the method for becoming a "sage-king" in *Huainanzi*, which is the main purpose of the text according to its editor, King Liu An. The authors of *Huainanzi* present two methods of self-cultivation: (a) nourishing the physical body by breath-cultivation and stretching techniques and (b) "cultivating the heart-mind," which leads one to *shenming*, "spiritual brightness," a state in which one's psychological state is identical to the Dao. Along with self-cultivation, non-action or non-government is also required. As the process of inner cultivation aligns oneself with the Dao, non-action or non-government emulates the Dao. *Yin*, "adaptability," is the main method for the latter and is practiced based on self-cultivation. According to *Huainanzi*, one must achieve both to become the ideal leader.

INDEX WORDS: *Huainanzi*, Self-cultivation, Non-action, Non-government, Sage-king, Adaptability, Spiritual brightness.

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DEDICATION

Over the 2 years I have been writing this thesis, I have received support from so many people that I can hardly mention all of them individually. However, I would like to thank a number of them.

From among my numerous supportive professors, I want to thank Dr. Carolyn Medine, Dr. Glenn Wallis, and Dr. William Power, who inspired me with different points of view and encouraged me as I worked on this thesis. In addition, I would like to thank my department coordinator, Ms. Zinetta McDonald; without her help with “official” procedures, I would have been lost and confused.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Terms and Definitions

After Qin 秦 united the seven countries and name himself S*hihuangdi* 始皇帝 (259 B.C.E. – 210 B.C.E.), the first emperor, Liu Fang 劉邦 and his supporters reunited China and built the Han 漢 dynasty in 202 B.C.E., which ended in 220 A.D.E. Ever since this remarkable historical event, China has remained a unified country under one government or at least desired to remain so. In keeping with this political and territorial unification, since the Warring States period, scholars from different schools of thought, *Zajia* 雜家, also tried to unify China's diverse philosophies into one belief system to serve the emperor's reign.[1] Of the "syncretistic" works of the *Zajia*, one of the most outstanding is *Huainanzi*.[2]

Huainanzi is a text consisting of twenty-one chapters that was dedicated to emperor Wu (*wudi*, 武帝) for his enthronement ceremony in 139 B.C.E. Each of the twenty-one chapters were written by a group of scholars who gathered under feudal king Liu An's 劉安 court, the

[1] Feng Youlan 馮友蘭, Park Seongkyu trans. *Zhongguo zhexue xinpian* 中國哲學史新編 (上) (Seoul: Kachi, 1999), 736-738.
[2] Originally, the text was titled *Honglie* 鴻烈. However, in this paper, I will use the commonly accepted title *Huainanzi*. Further explanation about the text is given in the next chapter.

second king of Huainan 淮南 and the grandson of Han founder Liu fang 劉邦.[3] The issues addressed by the text vary from self-cultivation to cosmogony to war strategy to government due to the diverse interests of the various scholars and schools of thought that contributed.

This paper will provide an overview on how one became a sage-king based on *Huainanzi*. Under this purpose, two interwoven subjects from *Huainanzi*, self-cultivation and non-government, will be analyzed: self-cultivation as the basis of non-government and non-government as the purpose for self-cultivation. First, the central concern with self-cultivation in *Huainanzi* is to explain how to cultivate the physical body along with the heart-mind, the aim being to realize the Dao. Furthermore, like many *Zajia* texts, clarifying the technique of non-government was the ultimate aim of *Huainanzi*. This section of the paper will cover thoughts about non-government, such as how *yin* 因, *adaptability* was applied to non-action or non-government, the role that law and morality played in government, and the views held by the authors of *Huainanzi*.

Throughout the history of "Daoism", self-cultivation has been a crucial issue among Chinese scholars, regardless of school and era. By "Daoist" scholars during the Warring States period and the early Han dynasty, realizing the Dao through a process of emptying one's heart-mind of emotions and pre-conditioned knowledge to attain tranquility or clarity was widely

[3] Liu Wendian 劉文典, *Huainan honglie jijie* 淮南鴻烈集解 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1997), 21/711. (*abb*. *Huainanzi)*

pursued and explained.[4] *Huainanzi* reflects this Daoist concentration on emptying the heart-mind, but it was also influenced by the Mawangdui manuscripts regarding methods for cultivating the physical body by stretching and proper digestion.

Along with self-cultivation, government was a crucial issue not only for *Huainanzi* but also for many scholars.[5] Sima Qian 司馬遷 pointed out that although each school espoused different thoughts, they all had the same destination (*Tonggui er shutu*, 同歸而殊途).[6] Following this perfect concept as a guide to government, king Liu An elucidated that the purpose of compiling the text was to "establish the Way for the emperor."[7] And this "Way" was mainly based on Daoist thought, primarily non-government (*wuzhi*, 無治), blending diverse thoughts from different schools without adherence to any particular one.[8]

Before moving further into the textual history of *Huainanzi*, one thing must be clarified about terms such as *school*, *Daoism*, *Confucianism*, etc. In fact, before Ban Gu categorized the texts into several groups and organized them into different "schools (jia, 家)," the writers who wrote or composed the texts had most likely never classified themselves in this way. "Grouping"

[4] According to Harold Roth, there are three distinctive ideas that are present in all Daoist texts throughout the Warring States period and early Han dynasty: cosmogony, inner cultivation (self-cultivation), and political thought. (See, Harold Roth, *Original Tao* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 7.)
[5] During Han dynasty, the primary concerns of scholars did not merely lie on to explain the surrounding natural phenomena but also events of human history. As a result, scholars struggled to understand the reason of Qin's collapse and find a solution to avoid. For further explanation about Han scholars' concern, see Russell Kirkland, *TOAISM*: *The Enduring Tradition* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 78-79.
[6] Sima Qian 司馬遷, *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1999), 130/70/3288-3289.
[7] *Huainanzi*, 21/707.
[8] Ibid, 21/711-712.

texts or scholars indeed helps readers understand their thoughts on the subject; however, it can also put false emphasis on one thought while neglecting others in a text. For this reason, even the terms *Daoism* and *Confucianism*, for example, are invalid, for there are no such groups or "schools" before the late Han dynasty. As Russell Kirkland mentioned, "Such groups have no social, political, economic, or historical reality."[9]

However, in this thesis, I will use the terms *school*, *Daoism*, *Confucianism*, etc. for several reasons. First, though these terms can mislead readers, they still offer a brief and characteristic view of the belief-system behind a certain text that will help the reader understand. Second, I agree with scholars such as Russell Kirkland or Michael Nylan that using these terms might either distort or even misrepresent the actual thoughts of a scholar or text. However, I believe there are no other terms that can be substituted. Therefore, when I use the term *school* or any "-ism" in this paper, I will place them in quotation marks to indicate the term is not exact or correct but open to further research.[10]

[9] Russell Kirkland, *TAOISM*: *The Enduring Tradition* (2004), 21-22.
[10] For researches about the incorrectness of terminology used in categorization, such as the usage of "school," "Daoism," and "Confucianism," see Russell Kirkland, *TAOISM*: *The Enduring Tradition* (2004), 20-33, and Michael Nylan, THE FIVE "CONFUCIAN" CLASSICS (Michigan: Yale University, 2001), 2-8, which explains about the term "Confucianism."

Textual Background

Composition

Explaining the scholastic background and textual history of *Huainanzi* gives us some insight into its thoughts. Because it is a "syncretistic" text composed of various thoughts and even conflicting statements, a brief review of who and what schools participated in its composition will help clarify its overall qualities. Unfortunately, the composition of *Huainanzi* has not been fully explained by scholars yet due to the fact that many of its writings were lost.

According to the foreword (*shu*, 序) written by Gao You 高誘, an Eastern Han (*tonghan*, 東漢) commentator of *Huainanzi*, the text was initially named *Honglie* 鴻烈. "*Hong* 鴻" means "big (大)" and "*lie* 烈" means bright (*ming*, 明), which together indicates that the text "widely reveals the meaning of the Dao."[11] Liu Xiang 劉向 revised and adjusted the original text *Honglie* into the so-called reserved text that we have today and named it *Huainan* 淮南. According to Gao You, in addition to the 21 reserved chapters, there was also a text called *Huainan waipian* 淮南外篇 that was composed of 19 chapters.[12]

Though Gao You's comments are assumed to be the earliest on the composition of *Huainanzi*, there is still not enough information to confirm whether it included "Inner-chapters (*neipian*, 內篇)" and "Central-chapters (*zhongpian*, 中篇)," or "Miscellaneous-chapters (*zapian*,

[11] Ibid, foreword, 2.
[12] Ibid, foreword, 2.

雜篇)" like *Zhuangzi*. However, *Hanshu* claims that the original text was composed of three parts; the 21 chapters of "Inner-text (*neishu*, 內書)," "Outer-text (*waishu*, 外書)," and "Central-chapters," which explained the Shenshan 神仙 school's techniques of alchemy. The "Inner-text" is what was dedicated to emperor Wu (*wudi*, 武帝).[13] As Harold Roth pointed out, "the first two were philosophical treatises while the "Central-chapters" was a manual of alchemical practice," and "the "Inner-text" presumably refers to the Daoist work while the "Outer-text" must refer to the doctrine of other schools."[14] But because only the "Inner-text" survived Chinese history, no one knows exactly what the contents of the other two are, except for several fragmented passages from other texts. The reserved version of *Huainanzi*, the *Huainan honglie*, appears in documents from the Eastern Han dynasty,[15] and the well known name *Huainanzi* first appears in *Suishu* 隋書, "Jingji zhi 經籍志."[16] Regardless of the name, the text referred to in each source consists of the 21 chapters of "Inner-text."

Nowadays, it seems that scholars commonly agree that the reserved version of *Huainanzi* stems from the "Inner-text," but whether the other two texts existed is still controversial. Indeed, it might be true that feudal king Liu An, the editor of *Huainanzi*, has fond of alchemical practice and gathered many scholars who studied alchemy or *yinyang wuxing* (陰陽五行家) to his

[13] Ban Gu 班固 ed. *Hanshu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1996), 44/14/2145.
[14] Harold Roth, *The Textual History of the Huai-nan Tzu* (Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, 1992), 16.
[15] Mou Zhongjian 牟鍾鑒, *Lüshichunqiu yu Huainanzi sishang yanjiu* 呂氏春秋與淮南子思想研究 (Shandong: Jilushushe 齊魯書社,1987), 162.
[16] Wei Zheng 魏徵 et el., *Suishu* 隋書, vol.4 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1973), 34/29/3/1006.

court.[17] However, whether those scholars participated in writing the "Outer-text" and "Miscellaneous-chapters" is unknown, and because both texts have never been found, it is difficult to make any sound comments about their context or even their existence.

Besides the explanation of *Huainanzi*'s composition above, there is another opinion raised by Kanaya Osamu 金谷治, who mentioned it might be unnecessary to make any distinction between the "Inner-text" and "Outer-text," based on the fact that "Jingji zhi" only mentions that there are two versions of *Huainanzi*, both composed of 21 chapters. It is possible, therefore, that the reserved version is in fact a mixture of contents from both texts.[18]

The possibility that the reserved version of *Huainanzi* that we see today is a mixture of "Inner-text" and "Outer-text" seems reasonable, judging from its contents. As Mou Zhongjian 牟鍾鑒 explained, *Huainanzi*'s thoughts embrace classical "Daoism", "Confucianism", "legalism," "Mohism," and more.[19] According to ancient texts, the 21 chapters of "Inner-text" were dedicated and passed down to us, while the forgotten "Outer-text" can only be assumed to be syncretistic.[20] But as Mou explained, the reserved *Huainanzi* is 21 chapters and composed of thoughts from various schools. Therefore, as Kanaya Osamu argued, judging from its

[17] Wang Chong 王充, *Lunheng* 論衡, in *Zhuzi jicheng* 諸子集成, vol. 7 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1954), 68-69.
[18] Kanaya Osamu 金谷治, *Enanji no shisō*: *Rō-Sōteki sekai* 淮南子の思想 (Tokyo: Kōdansha 講談社, 1992), 94.
[19] For an explanation of schools of thought found in *Huainanzi*, see Mou, Zhongjian 牟鍾鑒, (1987), 164-167.
[20] Scholars who supports this idea besides Harold Roth are Lee Sukmyung (see, Lee, Sukmyung, "A Study on Theory of Wu-wei in Huainanzi" [Ph.D. diss., Korea University, 1997], 3-4.), and the Tang dynasty scholar An Shigu 顏師古. (see An's commentary in *Hanshu*, 30/10/1742)

philosophical contents and number of chapters, the reserved version is likely a mixture of "Inner-text" and "Outer-text," with parts of the "Outer-text" blended into the larger work.

Syncretistic Thoughts and the Hundred Schools

Because *Huainanzi* is a text comprised of various thoughts, we can more easily figure out the fundamental thought of *Huainanzi* if we know who or what schools were primarily in charge of its composition. Basing on Gao You's "preface (*zishu*, 自序)," Ren Jiyu 任繼愈 claimed there were eight Daoist scholars who played the most important role, and two Confucian schools, Dashan 大山 and Xiaoshan 小山, who are alleged to have written "Xiuwu hun 脩務訓," chapter 19, and "Taizu hun 泰族訓," chapter 20.[21] And the one who managed the collection of all the writings into an integral text was king Liu An 劉安. Besides the eight Daoists, two Confucian schools, and Liu An, Gao You gives no further information about the authors.

However, there may have been other scholars who participated in the writing. As Mou Zhongjian and other scholars have explained, there are various thoughts in the text that belong to schools of thought other than "Daoism" and "Confucianism", which means there were definitely others who wrote a chapter or at least collaborated with authors mentioned above. But lack of

[21] Ren Jiyu 任繼愈, *Zhongguo zhexue fazhanshi* 中國哲學發展史 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社, 1998), 249. The eight Daoist scholars are Sufei 蘇飛, Lixiang 李尙, Zuowu 左吳, Tianyou 田由, Leibei 雷被, Maobei 毛被, Wubei 伍被, and Jinchang 晉昌.

information about the participating authors and schools prevents current scholars from drawing a commonly accepted picture of the structure of *Huainanzi*.

Rather than searching for the exact authors, several Japanese and Chinese scholars are trying to classify the kind of thoughts that make up the text. The main concern of this approach is to classify each chapter's main principle and determine which school(s) may have contributed to the work. These scholars hope to find the fundamental thought of *Huainanzi* and further explain the overall philosophy of the text.

	Mukai Tetsuo 向井哲夫[22]	Kanaya Osamu 金谷治[23]	Uno Shigehiko 宇野茂彦[24]	Mou Zhongjian 牟鍾鑒[25]
Daoism	Chapter 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 14, 21		Chapter 1, 2, 12, 14	Chapter 1, 2, 12
Confucianism	Chapter 10, 20	Chapter 10, 19, 20	Chapter 10, 11, 20, 21	Chapter 19,20
Legalism	Chapter 9	Chapter 9	Chapter 9	Chapter 9, 20 (overlaps with Confucianism)
Mohism	Chapter 19			Chapter 16, 17
Yin-Yang Wuxing school	Chapter 3, 4, 5, 6, 13			
School of Names	Chapter 16, 17			
School of	Chapter 15	Chapter 15		

[22] Mukai Tetsuo 向井哲夫, *Enanji to shoshi hyakka shisō* 淮南子と諸子百家思想 (Tokyo: Hoyu shotem 朋友書店, 2002), i -iii.
[23] Kanaya Osamu 金谷治, 1992, 132-133.
[24] Uno Shigehiko 宇野茂彦, "Enanji no sōgō to sono kanken 淮南子の總合とその整合管見" *Nagoya daiga ku bungakubu kenkyū ronshū* 名古屋大學文學部研究論集 35, (1989): 151-156.
[25] Mou Zhongjian 牟鍾鑒, 1987, 164-167.

Strategist				

As the diagram above shows, there is no common acceptance among scholars about which chapter belongs to which school, except perhaps chapters 1, 9, and 20. Though scholars have failed to reach a common answer, they have at least isolated the fundamental thoughts of each chapter and the kind of thoughts from the pre-Qin that blended into *Huainanzi*. Because there are various thoughts applied to each chapter, the text does not seem integrated but composed of diverse thoughts. Furthermore, even though scholars have classified and labeled the essential thoughts of each chapter, there are often theoretical conflicts between different thoughts in the same chapter.

For this reason, *Huainanzi* has occasionally been labeled by scholars throughout history as a work done by the eclectics or syncretics: the *Zajia* 雜家.

> The thoughts of Zajia 雜家 come from the public officials (*yiguan*, 議官). They blended "Confucian" with "Mohism," connected thoughts from the school of Name (名家) to that of the Legalist. They know their country needs the support of each school; the kingship will be established once every school is united. This is their advantage.[26]

Along with the *Nei* and *Waishu* of *Huainanzi*, eighteen other texts, including *the Annals of Lü Buwei* (*Lüshi chunqiu*, 呂氏春秋), are labeled as work done by *Zajia* and differentiated from

[26] Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 1996, 30/10/1742.

"Daoism". If Ban Gu's classification is reliable, then *Huainanzi* has nothing to do with the promotion of "Daoism"; instead, it would simply be a textual mixture of several different meant to support the emperor and his reign.

For some scholars, categorizing the work of *Huainanzi* as *Zajia* degrades its status in Chinese intellectual history. As the term '*Za* 雜' literally means "miscellaneous" or "hybrid," many scholars have criticized its contextual crudeness and illogicality.[27] Feng Youlan 馮友蘭 criticized the works of *Zajia* because, having been written by different scholars who have different thoughts, they have no fundamental or basic principles and cannot establish one integral system.

However, others argue that *Huainanzi* and other works of the *Zajia* still have a fundamental thought: "Daoism" blended with "Confucian", "Legalism," "Mohism," etc. Based on *Suishu*'s 隋書 comment that "the term *Za* means mastering thoughts of various schools,"[28] Li Zheng 李增 and Yu Dacheng 于大成 both agree that "Daoism" must be considered the core that assimilated diverse thoughts from other schools.[29]

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[27] See, Jin Chunfeng 金春峰, *Handai sishangshi* 漢代思想史 (Beijing: Zhongguo shihui kexue chubanshe 中國社會科學出版社, 1987), 265 and Hou Wailu 侯外廬, Yang Jaehyuk trans., *Zhongguo zhexueshi shang* 中國哲學史 上 (Seoul: Il Wolgak, 1988), 183.

[28] *Suishu*, 34/29/3/1010.

[29] See Li Zheng 李增, *Huainanzi* 淮南子 (Taibei: Dongda dushu gongsi 東大圖書公社, 1992), 2 and Yu Dacheng 于大成, *Zhongguo lidai sishangjia* 中國歷代思想家 (卷10) (Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1978), 7.

The two conflicting opinions are difficult to reconcile or choose between. Whichever one a scholar supports, the debate will continue because studies on *Huainanzi* or *Zajia* are still in progress, and there is a lack of textual information. Nevertheless, there are some answers in the text of *Huainanzi* itself:

> The purpose of writing this text is to establish *Daode* 道德 and examine worldly affairs (*renshi*,人事). I am worried readers will not understand if the text only mentioned the core Dao without giving further explanation using examples from everyday life. Therefore, the text uses various examples for explanation. Furthermore, I also fear that people will leave the fundamental (*ben*, 本) and go after the trivial (*mo*, 末).[30]

The above passage is quoted from the last chapter "Yaolue 要略," a chapter that sums up the contents of each chapter before it is alleged to have been written by king Liu An himself. Though "*daode* 道德" is usually translated as "morality" and often used by Confucians, here it means the Dao of "Daoism". According to Sima Qian's definition of *Daojia* 道家,[31] *Daode* in the passage refers to the Daoist Dao because each term used in the name of a school expresses the character of thought in that school. As for "Daoism", *Daojia* is also called as *Daodejia* 道德家 by Sima Qian and classified as a school that explains that everything starts from the Dao.[32]

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[30] *Huainanzi*, 21/700.
[31] Sima Qian 司馬遷 ed. *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1999), 130/70/3288-3289.
[32] Zheng Yuanming 丁原明, *Huanglaoxue lungang* 黃老學論綱 (Shandong: Shangdong daxue chubanshe 山東大學出版社, 2000), 26.

Accordingly, Hu Shi 胡適 understood that even though *Huainanzi* blends diverse thoughts, its basic principle comes from Daoist thought.[33] *Daode* is what Liu An and his authors considered to be the basis and fundamental idea (*ben*, 本) of all the contents. Furthermore, among the classical Daoists, Laozi and Zhuangzi were the most influential in the composition *Huainanzi*.[34] More precisely, the authors used Zhuangzi's perspective to explain Laozi's thought (*yizhuang jielao*, 以莊解老).[35]

Considering the passage above and the explanations of others, we can reasonably classify *Huainanzi* as a Daoist text or at least as text based on Daoist theories. Though Ban Gu concentrated on particular thoughts described in the text, including ones in disagreement with "Daoism", without explaining the most basic principle, his opinion is vulnerable enough to be rivaled. Based on statements in the chapter 21, "Yaolue," we can say that various thoughts were blended into the text but leaned on Daoist thinking for clearer examples. "Daoism" acts as the most fundamental principle in *Huainanzi*, connecting with other schools such as "Confucianism", "Legalism," etc. As will be shown below, even though it demonstrates the usage of thoughts other than "Daoism", these alternative thoughts are reinterpreted in their new context. They are

[33] Hu Shi 胡適, *Huainanwangshu* 淮南王書 (Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 商務印書館, 1962), 10.
[34] Bo Shengxian 朴勝顯, "A Study and *Huai Nan Zi* and Zhuang Xue in early Han Dynasty (淮南子與漢初的莊學)" (Ph.D. diss., Beijing University,), 7-8.
[35] Wang Shumin 王叔岷, *Xianqin daofa sishang jianggu* 先秦道法思想講稿 (Taibei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan zhongguo wenxue yanjiusuo 中央研究院中國文哲研究所, 1992), 132.

mostly considered to be secondary and "placed in a Daoist cosmological and political framework."[36]

Huainanzi, as Charles Le Blanc said, "may generally be characterized as a Daoist-oriented summa of Chinese philosophy describing Daoist-oriented utopianism."[37] The text might also be considered a collection of diverse ideas that lacks synthesis. However, as Liu An and other modern scholars have clarified, the work was organized as a synthesis. Therefore, when Ban Gu's label, *Zajia*, should be understood not as *eclecticism* but as *syncretism*.[38]

[36] Harold Roth, *Textual History of the Huai-nan Tzu* (Ann Arbor: The Association for Asian Studies, 1992), 19.
[37] Charles Le Blanc, *HUAI-NAN TZU* (Hongkong: Hong Kong University Press, 1985), 2.
[38] In this paper, I will use the term *syncretism* to mean synthesis and *eclecticism* to mean the lack of it, following Harold Roth's definition (see, Harold Roth, *The Textual History of the Huai-nan Tzu* (Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, 1992), 19-20).

CHAPTER 2

TWO METHODS OF SELF-CULTIVATION

Keeping one's body healthy and preserving the harmony of its functions was an important issue for the intelligentsia in early China. More recently, this issue has been studied under a category called "self-cultivation" or "inner cultivation," a concept heavily considered by Confucians and Daoists in early China.[39] The specific methods of self-cultivation vary from one school of thought to another and from one time in history to another, but the classical Daoist mostly concentrated on cultivating one's heart-mind (*xin*, 心), aiming for a state of identification with the Dao (i.e., realizing the Dao).

In the case of *Huainanzi*, the methods for realizing the Dao fall under two categories: (a) using physical techniques such as breathing cultivation and proper digestion and (b) emptying the heart-mind. While the former enables one to reach the state of the Dao by controlling the physical body, the latter mostly enables one to eliminate or diminish natural dispositions or attachments, such as desire, prejudice, etc.

[39] Harold Roth, *Original Tao*, 1999, 7.

Nourishing the Body

Interest on the Physical Body

In *Huainanzi*, though the physical body is criticized for its vulnerability to sensual enticement,[40] its existence itself is never denied. As mentioned in the first chapter, "Yuandao hun 原道訓," if a human being wants to live as a 'human,' the existence of the body is indispensable, for the inner nature (*xing*, 性) resides there.[41] For example, in the same chapter, the importance of the body is emphasized when *Huainanzi* explains the three fundamental components of the human being:

> Each body (*xing*, 形), spirit (*shen*, 神), and vital energy (*qi* 氣) has to occupy its proper position and follow the way of Heaven and Earth. The body is the abode of life (*sheng* 生), vital energy is the foundation of life, and spirit is the guide of life. If any one loses its proper position, the others will be impaired. . . . These three components must be sustained carefully without a doubt.[42]

According to this passage at the end of chapter 1, an individual can be defined as a full human being or a sage if the three constitutive parts coexist in an organized way, while a non-sage or an insane person is one who does not lack any of these parts but fails to use and manage them

[40] *Huainanzi*, 7/222.
[41] Ibid, 1/39.
[42] Ibid, 1/39-40.

properly.[43] We can assume that along with the spirit (*shen*, 神), which is the most crucial part of *Huainanzi*'s self-cultivation, the physical body is also considered a crucial component that needs to be preserved.

Appreciation of the body in *Huainanzi* was not a new idea at the time. In fact, the "Neiye 內業" chapter in *Guanzi* 管子 first introduced the importance of the body for self-cultivation, explaining that "no one can obtain inner power (*de*, 德) without stabilizing the body righteously."[44] The concern of these two Huanglao Daoist texts with the physical body is a slight turn from *Zhuangzi*, which mostly speaks about the cultivation of spirit, not giving much attention to the human body or bodily well-being.[45] *Huainanzi*'s interest in the body raised a question about how one can cultivate and nourish the body as a container of life. Without a healthy body, there is no life, and without life, there is no cause for self-cultivation.

Breath-Cultivation and Proper Digestion

After the excavation of several texts from Mawangdui 馬王堆 in the Changsha 長沙 area in 1973, scholars turned their eyes to a typical technique used for self-cultivation: breathing exercise, yoga, dietetics, and sexual techniques.[46] Even though the explanations are scarce

[43] Ibid, 1/41.
[44] Dai Wang 戴望, *Guanzi jiaozheng* 管子校正, in *Zhuzi jicheng* 諸子集成 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1954), 49/270. (*abb*. *Guanzi*), 49/270.
[45] Donald Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1998), 113.
[46] See, Ute Engelhardt, "Lonevity Techniques and Chinese Medicine," in Livia Kohn ed., *"Daoism" Handbook* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2000), 85.

compared to its contemporaneous Mawangdui manuscripts, *Huainanzi* also mentions the techniques of breath-cultivation and yoga in a famous passage:

> Blowing and breathing, exhaling and inhaling (*shuixuhuxi*, 吹呴呼吸), expelling the old air and ingesting the new (*tugunaxin*, 吐故內新). Practice stretching techniques such as bear-hanging (*xiongjing*, 熊經), bird-stretching (*niaoshen*, 鳥伸), duck-floating (*fuyu*, 鳧浴), monkey-dancing (*yuanjue*, 蝯躩), owl-looking (*chishi*, 鴟視), and tiger-staring (*hugu*, 虎顧). These techniques are all for those who nourish the body (*yangxingzhiren*, 養形之人), but not enough to confuse the true heart-mind.[47]

This passage has two parts, one describing breathing exercises and one describing stretching techniques using the arms, legs, and neck to imitate animal behavior. The techniques shown above are very similar to those in chapter 15, "Fixed Ideas (*keyi*, 刻意)," in *Zhuangzi*, where the first four techniques are described, but not with stretching techniques.[48] The six stretching exercises in *Huainanzi* are definitely meant to relax muscles and make the body more flexible. However, the purpose of these techniques extends further to promote bodily well-being and ease the internal circulation of *qi* 氣.[49] Breath-cultivation is a necessary part of the stretching

[47] *Huainanzi*, 7/230.
[48] Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩, *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1997), 15/535. (*abb*. *Zhuangzi*)
[49] Donald Harper, "The Sexual Arts of Ancient China as Described in a Manuscript of the Second Century B.C" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Dec., 1987), 556.

exercises, which complement each other, and each stretching exercise may require a different breathing posture.[50]

Even though breathing exercises were regarded as one of the important techniques, unfortunately, *Huainanzi*, and even the earlier *Zhuangzi*, do not clearly explain how to practice it. All we know now is based on an earlier *Document on Pulling* (*yinshu*, 引書), an article excavated from Western Han tomb no.247 and buried around 186 B.C.E. It explains the practice of exhaling and inhaling using special sounds like *xu* 呴, *hu* 呼, or *chui* 吹 while one breathes, each one indicating a typical breathing method.[51] Furthermore, according to *Documents of Rites* (*yizhi*, 禮記), *breathing* does not simply mean breathing air but breathing the vital energy, *qi* 氣, the fundamental element for physioogical sustenance.[52]

According to the chapter "Abstaining from grain and eating vital energy (*quegu shiqi*, 却穀食氣)" in the Mawangdui manuscripts, which gives a somewhat clearer explanation of breathing techniques, breath-cultivation is understood as "eating vital energy (*shiqi*, 食氣)": "Those who eat grain eat the base, and those who eat vital energy practice *xu* 呴 exhalation and *chui* 吹 inhalation when they first go to bed and first arise."[53] Like the Mawangdui manuscripts, *Huainanzi* also express the same idea in chapter 4: "the one who eats vital energy has spiritual

[50] Donald Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1998), 132.
[51] Ute Engelhardt, 2000, 101.
[52] *Liji* 禮記, *Sibuconggan* 四部叢刊 version, 14/24/140a.
[53] Donald Harper, 1998, 306. The translation of the classical text was done by Donald Harper.

brightness (*shenming*, 神明) and long-life; the one who eats grain has wisdom and short-life."[54] In both texts, grain eaters are degraded by those who fast and eat vital energy instead. The individuals who complete this practice are praised as spiritual beings; as illustrated in chapter 20, Wang qiao 王喬 and Chi songzi 赤松子, who both practice breathing and eating the vital energy of Heaven and Earth are defined as spiritual beings.[55]

Huainanzi's concentration on breathing vital energy does not lead us directly to the conclusion that regular consumption of food or digestion must be denied. On the contrary, a proper amount of digestion is also required for self-cultivation. For instance, eating a suitable amount of food is one condition for becomimg a Daoist sage, *zhiren* 至人,[56] and those who both "digest grain and eat vital energy" will realize the Dao.[57] These examples may seem unusual when we recall that grain eating is considered less valuable than eating vital energy.

It is unclear why there are contradictory assertions about this issue. Perhaps because *Huainanzi* was written by different scholars from different schools, thoughts about the consumption of food are diverse. Whatever the reason, *Huainanzi* supports the idea that physiological sustenance is one basic condition for ordinary people and a Daoist sage alike. Other texts of the same time and from earlier periods, such as *Huangdi neijing Suwen*

[54] *Huainanzi*, 4/143.
[55] Ibid, 20/676.
[56] Ibid, 7/241-242.
[57] Ibid, 20/690.

(黃帝內經·素問), *Guanzi*, and *the Annals of Lü Buwei* (*Lüshichunqiu*, 呂氏春秋), all clearly acknowledge moderate digestion as a way to nourish the body,[58] and doing so is beneficial for accumulating essential vital energy.[59] Even though we do not know what caused the disagreement over ordinary digestion, we can assume that without a healthy physical condition, there is no need for eating vital energy. Indeed, the call to eat vital energy exclusively might be a figurative way of encouraging light eating.

However, throughout the whole process of self-cultivation, according to *Huainanzi*, one cannot become fully awakened by cultivating the body. Indeed, body-cultivation is a prerequisite condition but merely one method to awakening. The importance of body is undeniable but also cannot be over-estimated. As it says, "for self-cultivation, cultivating spirit is essential and cultivating body is secondary."[60]

Cultivating the Heart-Mind and Spirit

Among the theories of self-cultivation, the importance of cultivating the heart-mind is undeniable. Along with the heart-mind, s*hen* 神 is one of the dominant ideas in self-cultivation thought and also one of the most difficult terms to translate into modern English. *Shen* as a noun or adjective has been rendered by modern scholars who specialize in Chinese early Syncretism or

[58] Zhen, Qiyou 陳奇猷 ed. *Lüshi Chunqiu jioashi* 吕氏春秋校釋 (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe 學林出版社, 1984), 14/1/732. (*abb*. *Lüshi Chunqiu*)
[59] Chui, Wei 崔爲, *Huangdi neijing Suwen* 黃帝內經·素問 (Haerbin: Heirongjiang Renmin chubanshe 黑龍江人民出版社, 2003), 7/22/139.
[60] Harold Roth, *Original Tao*, 1999, 170.

"Daoism" as spirit/spiritual,[61] daemonic, numen/numinous,[62] or anima.[63] Whatever the translation is, it is doubtful there is one exact translation that fully captures the meaning of *shen* in *Huainanzi* or any other Classical Chinese texts. The failure of translation does not indicate that any of these translations are wrong, but that all of them can be accepted. As will be shown below, *shen* implies a spiritual or numinous thing existing outside the body that comes inside the body to function as human cognizance. For the convenience of discussion, the commonly accepted translation, "spirit," is used in this paper.

Role and Function of Spirit (神) and Heart-Mind (心)

The importance of cultivating spirit is based on its coexistent role with the other two components of the human being: vital energy (*qi*, 氣) and body (*xing*, 形). The following passage shows why spirit has to be nurtured:

> Why can people see clearly and hear acutely? How can the physical body sustain its own weight, and its hundred joints be bent and stretched? For what reason can someone discriminate white from black, and beauty from ugliness? And how can one discern

[61] "Spirit" is probably the most common translation for *shen*. According to Michael Puett, the term is used to describe both "human spirituality" and "divinity," which are also explained by David Hall and Roger T. Ames. (Michael Puett, *To become a God* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 21-22.) The difference between Michael Puett and Hall is that Hall argues that both meanings of *shen* have to be considered together, while Puett argues the two definitions have to be rendered separately, judging by the context.
[62] To see the motive for translating *shen* as "numen," see Harold Roth, *Original Tao*, 1999, 43-44. Here, Roth argues that "numen" is a better translation than "spirit" because it retains the aura of something mystical, yet lacks connotations such as "Holy Spirit" etc., which are too closely association with Western religions.
[63] Griet Vankeerberghen, *The Huainanzi and Liu An's Claim to Moral Authority* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001, 106.

sameness and difference, right and wrong? These are possible because vital energy infuses the body and the spirit governs it.[64]

When someone is guided by the properly functioning spirit, he or she is able to use everyday perception, function physically, and make moral judgments about what is right and wrong. All of these mental capacities and physical movements work properly only when the spirit controls vital energy and that physical body. If the spirit fails to govern the physical body, harm awaits.[65]

The interesting point here is that spirit is also strongly related to everyday sense perception (vision and hearing), which is a different perspective on spirit from that of "Neiye (内業)," a chapter of *Guanzi* that significantly influenced thoughts about about self-cultivation in *Huainanzi*. In "Neiye," spirit is mostly related to intuitive knowledge or precognition, and this kind of perception occurs as a reaction of the spirit when "the external things (*wu*, 物) make contact with (*zhi*, 至)" someone.[66] In this case, spirit is not active but passive due to the fact that it will only react to outer stimuli. And because our surroundings are a given, fixed condition that cannot be avoided, the state of spirit is crucial. It has to be purified so one's attention will not lose composure and so one can nourish the inner nature.

[64] *Huainanzi*, 1/40.
[65] Ibid, 1/41.
[66] *Huainanzi*, 1/11. For a fuller discussion of the thoughts on the spirit in early "Daoism", see Harold Roth, "The Early Taoist concept of *Shen*: A Ghost in the Machine?" in Kidder Smith. Jr. ed., Sageh*ood and Systematizing Thought in Warring States and Han China* (Bowdoin College, 1990).

Beside spirit, another agent that functions in a similar but broader sense is *xin* 心, usually translated as "heart-mind" or "heart as mind," a pictograph of the physical heart which indicates that it is the very source of all kinds of perception, cognition, and emotions. Compared to spirit, heart-mind has a broader meaning because it relates not only to perception and precognition but also to emotions, desire, and inner nature (*xing*, 性). For instance, in the first chapter of *Huainanzi*, heart-mind is

> the master of five intestines; it controls the physical body, makes blood and vital energy circulate inside the body, is dashed around the border of right and wrong, and comes in and goes out the door where everything occurs.[67]

The heart-mind is considered the master of all organs that controls movements of the limbs, physiological processes, and human cognizance and judgment. In chapter 7, "Jingshen hun 精神訓," of *Huainanzi*, each of the five intestines, lungs (*fei*, 肺), kidneys (*shen*, 腎), gall (*dan*, 膽), liver (*gan*, 肝), and spleen (*pi*, 脾), are respectively inner-connected with the five sense organs, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, and tongue.[68] And the heart-mind controls them all.[69] If the heart-mind fails to take control of the five sense organs, the five intestines will be agitated and

[67] Ibid, 1/35.
[68] Ibid, 7/219. Of the five intestines, only four are mentioned; the "spleen" is left out. However, according to Liu Wendian, the editor and annotator of *Huainan Honglie Jijie* 淮南鴻烈集解, spleen was mistakenly omitted, for the spleen is included as one of the five intestines in the following passage (see 7/219 for Liu's commentary and 7/221 for spleen as a part of the five intestines.)
[69] Ibid, 7/221, and also see 14/476. Heart-mind in chapters 7 and 14 is clarified as the controller of the intestines though, in chapter 14, the heart-mind is described as one of the intestines instead of the spleen. This might be caused by the fact that both the spleen and the gall deal with the same sense: taste.

become unstable with sensual enticement. Blood (*xue*, 血) and vital energy (*qi*, 氣) will tremble, and essential energy (*jing*, 精) and spirit (*shen*, 神) will run outside from one's body. This situation makes someone unable to sustain life and or realize (*shizhi*, 識之) what fortune or misfortune he or she is confronting no matter its dimensions.[70]

When the heart-mind is connected to the physical body, its role is to help or control not only bodily movements but also cognizance or perception.[71] By controlling the physical body, preventing its sense organs from being subdued by sensual desires, the heart-mind can cognize and make proper judgments about what is beneficial.[72] The notion in *Huainanzi* that the heart-mind is an agent for sensory perception is assumed to be a historical result of "Mohism" and "Confucianism" and the Daoist text *Guanzi*. In *Mozi* 墨子, "perception/knowledge is reception (*jie*, 接),"[73] which means perception starts and forms as a reaction when the five sensory organs receive stimuli from the surroundings.[74] As Sun Yirang 孫詒讓 mentioned in *Mozi xiangu* 墨子閒詁, "when the outer things make contact with the body the spirit reacts," and "perception/knowledge and outer things interact."[75] In chapter 23, "Gengsangchu 庚桑楚," the first chapter of the outer chapters of *Zhuangzi*, the Huanglao Daoist revised this passage from

[70] Ibid, 7/222.
[71] Li Zheng 李增, *Huainanzi* 淮南子, 1992, 28.
[72] According to chapter 14, to become beneficial, digestion has to nourish the body, hearing has to accord with the Dao, and sight has to fit with the inner nature. (see *Huainanzi*, 14/476)
[73] Sun Yirang 孫詒讓, *Mozi xiangu* 墨子閒詁, in *Zhuzi jicheng* 諸子集成, vol. 4 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1954), 10/40/190.
[74] Ibid, 7/28/136-137.
[75] Ibid, (1954), 10/40/190. For the passages in *Huainanzi*, see *Huainanzi* 1/11.

Mozi: "perception/knowledge is reception; perception/knowledge is scheming."[76] Though both *Mozi* and *Zhuangzi* show a similar view, the latter expresses a negative view of perception as "scheming" and degrades its value compared to non-knowing (*wuzhi*, 無知).

Along with *Mozi*, early Confucian writings such as *Xunzi* 荀子 also agreed with the idea that the heart-mind is an agent of everyday perception. For instance, in chapter "Zhengming 正名," the heart-mind is able to cognize the outer things through the senses of hearing and seeing. And the sense organs that make this perception possible are called *tianguan* 天官, an organ created by the Heavens. Though *Xunzi* and *Zhuangzi* share similar terminology for heart-mind and its psychological agency, the difference is that while *Xunzi* is confident in the heart-mind's judgments using sense organs,[77] *Zhuangzi* refuses to have full confidence in the usage of "cognizance of one's senses (*guanzhi*, 官知)" and instead relies on "spiritual encounter (*shenyu*, 神遇).[78]

Despite its strong theoretical connection to *Mozi* and *Xunzi* regarding the psychological role of the heart-mind in everyday perception, *Huainanzi* preserved its Daoist sense of the heart-mind. Truly the heart-mind is the main agent of cognizance and bodily movement. But to take full control of the body and to perceive everything in a right manner, the heart-mind has to be

[76] *Zhuangzi*, 23/810.
[77] A.C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao* (Chicago: Open Court, 1989), 252-253.
[78] *Zhuangzi*, 3/119. In fact, sense organs or perception using these are not truly denied. As the story of cook Pao Ding 庖丁 describes, everyday perception and skill is one way to reach true awakening. However, the point of the story is that this cannot be the ultimate and essential method to reach true awakening: realization of the Dao.

purified. In other words, one must remove prejudice, pre-judgment based on systems of knowledge, desire, and excessive emotions from the heart-mind so it can perform as the true master of bodily components.

Cultivating the Heart-mind

If the heart-mind is the agent of cognizance, its condition is a factor in one's realization of the Dao. The ideal state, which is widely accepted and discussed among early Daoists, is the "emptied heart-mind":

> Therefore, when the heart-mind does not have worry and joy, the inner power will be perfected. When it communicates with others yet does not change, quiescence will be perfected. When it does not saddle with preference and desire, emptiness will be perfected. When it does not have likes and dislikes, evenness will be perfected. When it does not scatter outside the body with external things, purity will be perfected. If one can perform these five conditions, then he or she will coincide with the spiritual brightness. And the one who coincides with spiritual brightness are those who attain the true inner self.[79]

In the practice of cultivating heart-mind, one attempts to remove all harmful conditions in order rest in spiritual brightness, which eventually leads one to discover the true inner nature. Though

[79] *Huainanzi*, 1/31-32.

the above passage uses the negative adverbs *bu* 不 and *wu* 無 to criticize the emotions in ways that can also be found in other chapters, emotion is considered a natural tendency in human nature. For example, chapter 11, "Jingshen hun 精神訓," says that joy (*xi*, 喜), anger (*nu*, 怒), grief (*ai*, 哀) and happiness (*le*, 樂) are emotions that will occur naturally when elicited by outer conditions and will be expressed outwardly in moaning and crying.[80] However, if someone feels obligated to express emotion as one might in a Confucian or Mohist funeral ritual, where long-term mourning is expected, this kind of expression must be denied and removed from the heart-mind because it is unnatural, threatens life, and eventually corrupts custom.[81] Emotion itself is a natural tendency of human beings and will only be expressed when stimulated by outer things, yet excessive or unnatural expressions must be removed.[82]

Similar to its treatment of emotion, *Huainanzi*, on the one hand, largely discourages answering to one's desires, urging one instead to remove them from the heart-mind. On the other hand, it promotes ideas that occasionally contradict its rejection of desire. The term "desire," which is a translation of *yu* 欲 or *jiyu* 嗜慾, designates two kinds of objects: sensual desires that come from our sense organs and the desire for fame/honor and possessions, which are irrelevant to human subsistence. The sense organ's preference to indulge in outer stimuli appears

[80] Ibid, 11/354.
[81] Ibid, 11/356.
[82] Li Zheng, 1992, 33.

to be an unavoidable fact; "the eyes like gorgeous things, the ears like beautiful sound, and the mouth likes delicious tastes. When the organs are stimulated, they are delighted without knowing the harm they are confronting. This is desire."[83] Desire, which does not know the harm it brings, stands against the pure quiescent inner nature; consequently, someone who wants to become a sage must "lessen (*sun*, 損)" his or her desire and behave according to the inner nature.[84]

Given the emphasis on how harmful desire is to the inner nature and life, it seems odd that *Huainanzi* uses the word *lessen* instead of *wu* 無, which means "no" or "non-," and does not mention the word *wuyu* 無欲, "no/non-desire." The term *lessen* implies that *Huainanzi* basically acknowledges that desire is a basic necessity for sustaining life. According to *Huainanzi*, "a sage digests food and wears clothing compatible with his or her condition; therefore, desire can coexist with the heart-mind,"[85] and one remains composed not because of wealth but because desire is moderated (*yujie*, 欲節) and the amount of work is reduced (*shigua*, 事寡).[86]

Huainanzi admits that desire is valuable only when it serves the basic necessities of subsistence, but all desire beyond this purpose should be removed from the heart-mind. This ostensibly contradictory view of desire occurs in earlier Daoist texts such as *Daodejing*. For example, though chapter 57 of *Daodejing* says, "when the sage has no-desire (*wuyu*, 無欲), an

[83] *Huainanzi*, 14/476.
[84] Ibid, 14/475-476. Elsewhere, *Huainanzi* also mentions that "craving attaches itself to outer things, making one's inner nature and destiny lose what they have attained" (2/65), and "misfortune comes from craving." (10/341)
[85] Ibid, 2/70.
[86] Ibid, 11/351.

ordinary person naturally becomes as pure as an unhewn log," it is doubtful that "no-desire" means sweeping out all kinds of desire entirely.[87] Chapter 64 says, "a sage desires not to desire and places no value on goods that are hard to obtain"[88]; the sage denies the desire that will bring him possessions, but he clearly does not deny all desire.

Nevertheless, the desire for fame and possessions is strictly forbidden in *Huainanzi*. The text criticizes Confucians and Mohists for their impracticable teachings, which are not based on inner nature:

> One who can possess the whole country does not take pains to possess it. One who can achieve honor does not strive for it. It is the sage who is awakened to this fact because there is no craving heart-mind (*shiyuzhixin*, 嗜欲之心). Disciples of Confucius and Mozi all try to lead people by techniques of benevolence (*ren*, 仁) and righteousness (*yi*, 義) but fail and leave them suffering. How can they teach what they cannot perform themselves? The reason is because their teaching looks outward. . . . One who can perform as the sage will govern (*taoye*, 陶冶) everything well and will become a

[87] Wang Bi, *Wangbi Daodejingzhu* 王弼道德經注, in Lou Yulie 樓宇烈 ed. *Wangbi jijiaoshi shang* 王弼集校釋上 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1999), 57/150. (*abb*. *Daodejing*)

[88] Ibid, 64/166. Elsewhere in chapter 19 and 20, in spite of all the negative verbs, *jue* 絕, *qi* 棄, and *wu* 無, that are used to explain what object has to be removed, desire is connected with a verb *gua* 寡, meaning "lessen" or "diminish"; "Lessen (少) self-interest, and make few (寡) your desires." (see *Daodejing*, 19/45)

companion with the creator (*zaohuazhe*, 造化者). Everything between Heaven and Earth, inside the universe, will not die or be exhausted prematurely.[89]

A Daoist sage is defined as one who does not have a craving heart-mind, and this kind of heart-mind is without desire for possessions or scholastic honor. Most likely, the phrase "possess the whole country" was meant for the Han emperor and his administration's expansionist policy.[90] The text insists on *xiuyang shengxi* 休養生息, an anti-war guideline not to embark on government enterprises but to enhance people's economical life.

According to *Huainanzi*, the one who wants to rule over the country has to realize the Dao and govern the country by following its condition; the proper way to possess and govern lies inside the truly awakened self.[91] In the case of government, then, cultivating oneself by eliminating selfish desire should be first priority; nothing can precede this aim.[92] If one concentrates on possession, especially territorial possession as the seven states did in the Warring States period, the ruler will pile up one hundred thousand corpses and people will use the heads of the dead for pillows.[93] The disapproval of territorial possession is so large that *Huainanzi* uses

[89] *Huainanzi*, 2/70-72.
[90] Even though it is possible to say *Huainanzi* criticizes Han government expansionism, it does not necessarily deny the government's legitimacy. For example, in chapter 6, the Han government and the ruling family are described as identical to the ancient sacred five emperors (五帝) and highly praised for its moralistic government. (see 6/215)
[91] Ibid, 1/35-36.
[92] Ibid, 20/685-686, 1/34.
[93] Ibid, 6/214.

the term *zhi* 至, "extreme," saying, "craving to possess the country that does not belong to himself is the extremeness of craving (*zhitan*, 至貪)."[94]

Huainanzi also rebukes those who seek scholastic honor, mostly pointing to the successors of Confucius and Mozi of its era. *Huainanzi*'s criticizes the two schools because their "teaching looks outward." This clause has two meanings. First, it means that Confucian and Mohist teachings are based on "outer things"; they concentrate on outer moral forms that are not based on the inner nature of all beings. Although benevolence and righteousness, two highly significant moral values for Confucians, are not refused by *Huainanzi*, they are recommended only as a secondary solution to save people from a depraved society.[95] They are secondary because benevolence and righteousness can be naturally attained after one awakens to his or her true inner nature.[96]

Second, the clause can refer to seeking scholastic social honor. Because their teachings failed to acknowledge awakening through clarifying the heart-mind by means of removing desires or the "craving heart-mind (*shiyuzhixin,* 嗜欲之心)," they continued to crave fame and honor. According to the text, both schools pursued scholastic honor rather than helping relieve suffering. According to *Huainanzi*, even though Confucians and Mohists discussed the Dao, they

[94] Ibid, 12/381.
[95] Ibid, 8/250.
[96] Ibid, 2/71.

actually "built factions and fought each other, confusing sageness with erudition, deceiving people with eloquence. They buy honor from the world by using the *Book of Poetry* (*shijing*, 詩經) and the *Book of History* (*shujing*, 書經)."[97] They were not concerned with how to make a better world or serve their country and people; they cared only about their personal fame, triggered by the craving heart-mind.

The text seems to say that desire cannot be entirely denied but should largely be removed from the heart-mind because it occurs continually while one is exposed to the outer world during his or her lifetime. And, for the most part, desire frustrates the need for calmness. Yet it also serves the continuation of life to a limited extent. Wanting to realize the Dao is a desire, for instance, that performs in a positive way. However, unlike emotion, desire was greatly resisted by the authors of *Huainanzi*, perhaps because the result of excessive desire is harm not only to the individual but also to others. If the Emperor or feudal king were eager to get something that did not belong to him, the result could be extortion or invasion, which would cause suffering. For this reason, desire, along with emotion, needs at least to be controlled, restricted, and, most importantly, removed from the heart-mind.

Along with emotions and desires, *zhi* 知, which translates as knowledge or cognition, is frequently considered by the authors of *Huainanzi*. Unlike the natural tendencies of human

[97] Ibid, 2/66.

beings to express emotion or be compelled desire, knowledge has to be acquired through effort. Knowledge cannot be treated as a natural tendency, yet when it comes to the issue of cultivating the heart-mind, it receives the same critical treatment as desire.

The earlier Daoist texts *Daodejing*, *Zhuangzi* and *Guanzi* all agree that one must not depend on knowledge to become a Daoist sage, one who can accord with everything and every situation. And *Huainanzi* basically agrees with these thoughts, saying, "throw out intelligence (*congming*, 聰明) and deceptive knowledge (*zhigu*, 知故)"[98] because they will eventually harm the pure and quiescent inner nature.

> Quiescence at birth is the innate nature. Responding after contact with outer things is harmful to the innate nature. When there is stimulation from outer things, the spirit responds to it. This response activates knowledge. When knowledge and outer things interact with each other, preference (*haozeng*, 好憎) occurs. When preference occurs and knowledge is enticed by outer things, one cannot return to its inner nature and the Heavenly Order (*tianli*, 天理) is ruined.

According to this passage, the use of knowledge starts from the moment when the spirit, the agent of knowledge, responds to outer stimuli. Interestingly, *Huainanzi* claims that preference develops from the interaction of knowledge and outer things. If preference can be defined as a

[98] Ibid, 7/238.

tendency to like or dislike, desire will also emerge from knowledge because we desire what we like and repel what we dislike. As D. C. Lau noted, the problem of knowledge can be traced back to its relation with desire: "Desire is in a sense secondary to the knowledge upon which it is dependent. It is through knowledge of what is desirable that desire is excited."[99] Because of knowledge, people prefer certain things, give value to those things, and eventually desire to obtain them. Consequently, if someone wants to stop desiring, it would seem that knowledge should not be the first priority. However, we can also say that proper knowledge can lead one not to desire or to desire that which is worthwhile.

> Everyone makes different decisions basing on their own awakened heart-mind (*xiaoxin*, 曉心). Therefore, right (*shi*, 是) and wrong (*fei*, 非) have their own condition (*chu*, 處). If one stays in that condition, nothing can be wrong, but when separated, nothing can be right.[100]

Right/wrong decisions, according to this passage, are based on one's knowledge. Furthermore, *Huainanzi* admits that any kind of knowledge can be appropriate if it fits the situation. As the sentence following the above passage explains, if knowledge or a knowledge system receives common agreement inside a typical custom or region, then it is in itself right.[101]

[99] D. C. Lau, *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching* (New York: Penguin Books, 1963), 38.
[100] *Huainanzi*, 13/436.
[101] Ibid, 13/436.

Knowledge itself does not cause problems, but the manner in which it is applied is a crucial factor (i.e., one needs to manage his or her knowledge according to his or her surroundings and not impose it on others). One might explain this idea further using the American proverb "put yourself in the other's shoes."

Following this path seems difficult for scholars because they are usually obsessed by their knowledge and assume it erects an absolute standard. The reason these scholars, mostly Confucian and Mohist, became obsessed is obscure in *Huainanzi*. But considering the fact that most of the intelligentsia in early China sought political status or were actually politicians, striving for social fame by "selling" their knowledge to the public and eventually seeking a position in the government might explain why.

Spiritual Brightness

Removing and diminishing desires, emotions, preference, and the knowledge that provokes desires from the heart-mind is meant to empty the heart-mind so the spirit can reside there. And the one who is able to do so becomes a sage. For example, chapter 20, "Taizu hun 泰族訓," says, "the state of realizing the Dao comes when one has accumulated vital essence (*jing*, 精) the physical body and placed spirit (*shen*, 神) in the heart-mind (*xin*, 心). In this state, the spirit obtains its right position (*wei*, 位)."[102]

[102] Ibid, 20/668. Instead of using the heart-mind as the place the spirit resides, some passages use different terms

Spirit, the governing agent of body and life, can perform its role when it resides in the heart-mind. And to make room for it, the heart-mind needs to sweep out desires, preferences, and deceptive knowledge. This state of the heart-mind is called *shenming* 神明, spiritual brightness.[103] According to chapter 15, "Binglüe hun 兵略訓," these kinds of people are called *duzhizhe* 獨知者 and *dujianzhe* 獨見者, using the term *du* 獨, which has represented the state of having been awakened since *Zhuangzi*. These individuals have obtained spiritual brightness and therefore can see the unseen and know the unknown.[104] Spiritual brightness is a precognition that does not use sense organs as its medium and can be managed or actualized only after being fully awakened.[105]

Thoughts about spiritual brightness in Daoist history started in the *inner chapter* of *Zhuangzi*, "Jiewulun 齊物論," chapter 2. Yet here, spiritual brightness does not describe the perfect state of the heart-mind on account of its failure to understand that everything is unified.[106] The idea of spiritual brightness as the uppermost state of the heart-mind came from the Huanglao Daoist. For example, "Mingli 名理," chapter 9 of *Huangdi sijing* 黃帝四經 gives an explanation similar to that of chapter 15 "Binglüe hun": spiritual brightness is "the epitome of

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such as *yingfu* 靈府, "the divine repository," or *xiong* 胸, "chest," all of which represent the heart-mind.
[103] Ibid, 1/32.
[104] Ibid, 15/517
[105] Takuya, Arima 有馬卓也, *Enanji no seiji shisō* 淮南子の政治思想 (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 1998), 204-205.
[106] *Zhuangzi*, 2/70.

sight and knowledge,"[107] relating perception to precognition, which makes one apprehend everything.[108] Another example relating to precognition can be found in *Guanzi*, "Neiye," which says, "Spiritual brightness, no one knows its limits. It illuminates knowledge (*zhaozhi*, 照知) to everything."[109] Illuminating knowledge, *zhaozhi* 照知, is a metaphorical term explaining a higher rank of knowledge, attained by those who know everything, including the Dao. Here *Zhao* 照 means shedding light like a sun above everything from which nothing can hide. Regardless of whether the word *knowledge* can be used in this situation, *Zhaozhi* is the "knowledge" possessed by those who have realized the Dao.[110]

Like the earlier Huanglao Daoist, *Huainanzi* admits that one who can illuminate everything brightly surpasses those who have normal-sense knowledge, for his knowledge is based on the Dao (*dao*, 道) and the Order (*li*, 理) and gives him power and the right to govern the world.[111] According to chapter 12, "Daoying hun 道應訓," when the heart-mind has been

[107] Leo S. Chang and Yu Feng, *The Four Political Treatises of the Yellow Emperor* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 141. I will use this text as the source of *Huangdi sijing* 皇帝四經.
[108] Zheng Kai 鄭開, *Daojia Xingershangxue Yanjiu* 道家形而上學研究 (Beijing, Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe 宗教文化出版社, 2003), 127.
[109] *Guanzi*, 16/270.
[110] Harold Roth translated *zhao* 照 as "intuitively." Besides the difference in translation, Roth emphasizes that this kind of knowing captures the sense of a non-rational, non-intentional, and spontaneous knowing that is different from normal dualistic knowing. (See, Harold Roth, (1999), 68 for translation, and quotation 61 for his understandings of *zhao*.)
[111] *Huainanzi*, 9/278-279.

clarified, both the spirit and the Dao will reside there.[112] Therefore, one who has spiritual brightness can realize and be inhabited by the Dao.

[112] Ibid, 12/382. An exact same passage is described in *Zhuangzi*, 22/737.

CHAPTER 3

PRINCIPLE AND METHODS OF NON-GOVERNMENT

The Widely Opened Non-Action

It might be reasonable to think that after according with the Dao through self-cultivation, any behavior, without any hindrance or restriction, will be correct. Logically, this argument makes sense because the behavior, with the other aspects of the human being, will already be harmonized with the Dao. However, as demonstrated by *Huainanzi*, people who are willing to complete self-cultivation need to restrict and control their behavior even after self-cultivation. This behavior is the well known *wuwei* 無爲 and generally translated in English as "non-action." As the process of cultivating the heart-mind aims to match oneself with the Dao, non-action also aims to emulate the Dao, to conduct oneself in the world as the Dao does.

However, defining non-action as acting as the Dao acts is simply a raw definition that can be easily misunderstood if taken literally. The misunderstanding of non-action in the early Han dynasty is one issue addressed by *Huainanzi*.

> Someone said, "non-action is soundless and motionless, pulled, but will not be drawn (*yinzhibulai*, 引之不來), pushed, but will not be pushed (*tuizhibuwang*, 推之不往). Living this way is a feature of one who has realized the Dao."[113]

Looking at this passage, we can say that in the period when *Huainanzi* was written and composed, there were people who misunderstood the meaning of non-action as motionless: to do nothing at all. The reason this misunderstanding spread among the people is unclear, but according to the last chapter of *Huainanzi*, "Yaolüe 要略," it was caused by people who only "read words (*wenci*, 文辭)" and "neglected studying (*fenxue*, 分學)." They could read the literal meaning but not the full meaning beneath the words, so they had a "shallow understanding of the Dao." Furthermore, people also thought non-action meant they could do whatever they wanted based on their desires and emotions.[114] This kind of non-action is called "obstructed non-action (*seerwuwei*, 塞而無爲)," which stands against what *Huainanzi* supports, the "widely-open non-action (*tongerwuwei*, 通而無爲)."[115]

> The non-action I advocate means that no selfish interests (*sizhi*, 私志) interfere with the public way (*gongdao*, 公道) and that desires do not distort righteous behavior. Following

[113] *Huainanzi*, 19/629. A part of this quotation, "引之不來, 推之不往" first appeared in a Huanglao Daoist text, *Xinyu* 新語, written by Lu, Jia 陸賈. In his text, this sentence is used to criticized hermits who turn their back on a national crisis yet claim to "embrace the Dao (懷道)." (See, Wang, Liji 王利器 ed., *Xinyu jiaozhu* 新語校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1997), 96.
[114] Ibid, 21/705-706.
[115] Ibid, 21/706.

the Order (*shunli*, 順理), measure achievement based on the other's disposition (*yinzi*, 因資), consider nature's circumstances (*ziranzhishi*, 自然之勢), and do not admit any deceitful, distorting sills. Even when you accomplish an enterprise, do not take it as yours. Though you achieve, do not seek honor. But staying motionless regardless of stimuli and showing no reaction to attack is not the non-action I am speaking about.[116]

What really distinguishes the two kinds of non-action is whether one reacts to others without possessing any selfish intentions or desires. Therefore, inner self-cultivation is a prerequisite to appropriate non-action.[117] Meanwhile, even though one has a clarified heart-mind in accord with the Dao, one cannot expect that his or her behavior will be automatically proper or right. The practitioner still needs to consider his or her surroundings before acting. In any case, practicing self-cultivation is a prerequisite, for only when one has a heart-mind in accord with the Dao will he or she not distort the natural tendencies or dispositions of others and so be able to treat them as they are. The above passage addresses this consideration in the phrases "follow the Order (*shunli*, 順理)," "based on the other's disposition (*yinzi*, 因資)," and "consider nature's circumstances (*ziranzhishi*, 自然之勢)."

[116] Ibid, 19/634-635.
[117] Ibid, 9/295.

According to *Huainanzi*, everything is spontaneous (*ziran*, 自然); therefore, even the "one who realizes the Dao should not alter spontaneity by artificiality.[118] The sage interacts with everything outwardly yet does not lose the true inward condition."[119] Therefore, the practitioner who has clarified the heart-mind still tries to accommodate his or her behavior to the surrounding spontaneities (*ziran*, 自然), an effort of non-action encouraged by *Huainanzi*.

Adapting to Surroundings

The well-known chapter 25 of *Daodejing* mentions that the ultimate goal to pattern (*fa*, 法) oneself to the spontaneity as the Dao does.[120] *Huainanzi* confirms this thought using the concept *yin* 因, which means to follow or adapt one's behavior to the surroundings or the inner nature of others without imposing fixed thoughts or desires.

Actually, this *adaptability* is used frequently in *Huainanzi* and earlier Daoist texts, such as *Huangdi sijing*, *Guanzi*, and *the Annals of Lü Buwei*. Among these three texts, *Guanzi* provided *Huainanzi* the most basic foundation for making *adaptability* the fundamental factor of non-action. For instance, the statement in *Huainanzi* that one should base his or her own behavior on the surroundings is strongly connected with the chapter 36 "Xinshu shang 心術上" of *Guanzi*: "The way to perform non-action is *yin*. It means to throw out oneself (*sheji*, 舍己)

[118] Ibid, 1/18.
[119] Ibid, 1/11.
[120] *Daodejing*, 25/65.

and take things as the norm (*fa*, 法)."[121] "To throw out oneself (*sheji*, 舍己)" is a metaphorical term for refraining from pre-judgments (*feisuosheye*, 非所設也) based on selfish desires or preferences. Following the surroundings is non-action. Even rituals (*li*, 禮) are acceptable and legitimate if they are grounded in the true disposition (*qing*, 情) of human beings.[122] Practicing non-action by following others can expand to the establishment of moral rituals, which constituted a social system for government in early China.

Furthermore, in *Huangdi sijing*, sages are those who follow the order of Heaven (*tianzhize*, 天之則) by not imposing themselves on others no scheming.[123] Because everything individually derives from and coexists with the Dao,[124] the sage has nothing to do but follow spontaneity to accomplish goals;[125] "using the masses abilities (*yongren*, 用人)"[126] is an example mentioned in *the Annals of Lü Buwei*.[127]

Unlike the Daoist texts that explain *yin*-thought in the ways mentioned above, *the Annals of Lü Buwei* demonstrates a much broader usage, even labeling one chapter "Guiyin 貴因," meaning "Esteeming the principle of *yin*." In this chapter, the author considers *yin* the core of the

[121] *Guanzi*, 36/221-222.
[122] Ibid, 36/221.
[123] *Huangdi sijing*, 182.
[124] Ibid, 130.
[125] Ibid, 191.
[126] Ibid, 187-188. Similar to *Huangdi sijing* but belonging to adifferent school, the Confucian Shenzi 愼子 also mentions that by following others' true disposition (情), the ruler can use their abilities to do service for his own. Though *Shenzi* does not explain this behavior as non-action directly, it is categorized as following the Heavenly Dao (天道). (see, Qian Xizuo 錢熙祚 ed. *Shenzi* 愼子, in *Zhuzi jicheng* 諸子集成 vol.5 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1954), 3.
[127] *Lüshi chunqiu,* 15/5/905.

government of the ancient idealistic Three Dynasties. Furthermore, along with the heart-mind and desires of the ruled, customs and even vehicles are prescribed as objects to which the ruler must adapt himself.[128] As in *Guanzi*, *yin* is strongly related to non-action and is considered a "ruler technique (*junshu*, 君術)" based on the tranquility (*jing*, 靜) of the ruler and in contrast to "the minister's way's (*chendao*, 臣道)" of "intentional action (*wei*, 爲)."[129] The *adaptability* in *the Annals of Lü Buwei* is highly stressed as the utmost doctrine, articulated as "the *yin*-principle is unrivaled (*renzhewudi*, 因者無敵)," [130] using the same sentence structure and pronunciation, intentionally or not, of *Mengzi*: "benevolence is unrivaled (*renzhewudi*, 仁者無敵)."[131]

Overall, three derived principles underpin the idea of non-action in *Huainanzi*. First, *adaptability* is described as the main method of non-action. While early Daoists such as Laozi or Zhuangzi did not give a straight and clear definition about how to perform non-action, the syncretists explained *adaptability* as the way to practice non-action firsthand. Second, following *adaptability* must be grounded on self-cultivation. The practitioner cannot consider the other's condition if he or she holds any prejudice. Therefore, only when one empties the heart-mind and confronts his or her surroundings on their own terms can the *adaptability* be actualized. And third, non-action is almost identical to *wuzhi* 無治, non-government, the idealistic way to govern.

[128] Ibid, 15/7/925-927.
[129] Ibid, 17/3/1066.
[130] Ibid, 15/7/927.
[131] Qiao Sun 焦循, *Mengzi zhengyi* 孟子正義, vol.1 (Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1987), 1a/68. (*abb*. *Mengzi*)

In this case, non-action is not merely the perfect way to behave but much more the absolute method of administration. In *Huainanzi*, as its main purpose was to explain "the way of the emperor," non-action performed by the ruler is considered to be the essence of non-government.

Adaptability in Non-Action and Non-Government

Basically, *Huainanzi* adopted its predecessor's thoughts about non-action: explaining non-action using *adaptability* and identifying non-action with non-government.

> The sage inwardly cultivates the foundation (*ben*, 本) and outwardly does not decorate the trivial (*mo*, 末). The sage preserves essence and spirit, suppresses deceitful knowledge, and quietly performs non-action, but nothing is left undone (*wuwei er wubuwei*, 無爲而無不爲). Silently practice non-government, but nothing is left ungovern (*wuzhi er wubuzhi*, 無治而無不治). The so called "non-action" means not preceding things. The so called "nothing left undone" means to follow (*yin*, 因) the way things are. The so called "non-government" means not altering the natural, and the so called "nothing left ungoverned" means to follow (*yin*, 因) the as-it-is of everything.[132]

Explaining how a sage should apply the notion of non-government, this passage seems to imply that only a sage is qualified for government. In the real world, however, political rulers do not

[132] *Huainanzi*, 1/24.

have to be sages. In fact, after the Han dynasty unification, only the Liu 劉 family had a legitimate right to government, and opposing the "blood" was considered rebellious.

The principle is not that the sage can become a ruler but that the ruler should be a sage. When affirming that the sage cultivates the foundation (*ben*, 本) inwardly, *Huainanzi* is only asserting the importance of inner self-cultivation, emptying the heart-mind and remaining in a quiescent state so the sage can rightly confront everything as it is.[133] By extension, the ruler needs an empty heart-mind to stay in this quiescent state.[134] Connecting sage or sageness to the political leader here is assumed to be an indirect reference to an expression from the last chapter of *Zhuangzi*, "Tianxia 天下": "the way of internal sagehood and external kingship (*neishenwaiwang zhi dao*, 內聖外王之道)."[135] The sage-king (*shengwang*, 聖王) can confront every thing and situation as it is in a proper way and behave according to the principle of non-action, which in other words is non-government. The following table summarizes the distinctions made in the above passage about non-action and non-government.

無爲	而	無不爲
non-action	but/yet	nothing left undone
not preceding things	but/yet	follow the way things do

[133] Ibid, 1/20 and 24, 7/226-227.
[134] Ibid, 9/282.
[135] *Zhuangzi*, 33/1069.

non-government	but/yet	nothing left ungovern
not altering the naturalness	but/yet	follow the naturalness of everything

For *Huainanzi*, non-action means "not preceding things" (i.e., not imposing prejudice on others but "following the way things go"). Non-action does not mean to do nothing but instead to adapt oneself to the surroundings and following its tendencies without distortion. Therefore, "the sage holds the pure Dao, embraces female moderation, follows (*yinsun*, 因循) others, and responds to changes (*yingbian*, 應變). He stands back and never precedes things. Therefore, no one can defeat the sage."[136] In this explanation of non-action, *adaptability* is used to describe how to perform.

The explanation of non-government uses exactly the same grammatical pattern of *wuwei er wubuwei*, "performs non-action, but/yet nothing left undone." Like non-action, non-government means following the natural tendencies or disposition of others without any distortion introduced by the practitioner's heart-mind. Here, non-government does not mean a laissez-faire policy but a particular approach that requires the ruler to adapt him or herself to the surrounding conditions; in other words, the ruler must follow (*yin*, 因) every thing and every situation that lies under Heaven.[137] Like non-action, here again *adaptability* is considered the

[136] *Huainanzi*, 1/27.
[137] Ibid, 1/36.

fundamental standard for non-government. For this reason, a sage is the ideal political ruler. If non-action and non-government are actions for the sage whom governs, it is possible to say the sage is the ruler and the ruler is the sage: a sage-king.

The Sage-King and Using the Masses

Though the term *shengwang* 聖王, sage-king only appears thirteen times in *Huainanzi*, there are passages describing a sage-like king and kings who have sageness. The five highly praised sages, Shennong 神農, Yao 堯, Shun 舜, Yu 禹, and Tang 湯 in chapter 19, "Xiuwu hun 脩務訓," are all legendary kings in the ancient Golden Age who sacrificed themselves for the benefit of the people. For example, Shennong taught people seeding, Yao transmitted Confucius moral values, Shun built houses, Yu controlled the flood, and Tang enriched the people's life.[138] All of the actions of these five sage-kings benefited civilization, producing facilities and conveniences or establishing moral systems that affected the whole country. Without political authority, these sages could not have brought about such drastic social improvement. According to *Huainanz*i's, even Yao could not have changed people living in a small town if he did not have any power (*quanshi*, 權勢).[139] Therefore, neither the sage nor the

[138] Ibid, 19/629-631.

[139] Ibid, 9/287. Based on this passage, Xiong Tieji 熊鐵基 says that the purpose of non-government does not intend to weaken the emperor's power and strengthen the feudal kings'. On the contrary, *Huainanzi* supports central government and the emperor's political rank. (see, Xiong Tieji 熊鐵基, *Qinhan Xindaojia* 秦漢新道家 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe 上海人民出版社, 2001), 366.

king is the ideal leader; rather, the sage-king, as an emperor who has realized the Dao, can govern best.[140]

However, according to the authors of *Huainanzi*, though the sage-king is described as one who possesses the power and authority to control the people, in reality the sage-king admits that social change cannot be accomplished by one person's ability. Similar to Hanfeizi's 韓非子 thought, even a 3x3 meter house cannot be built by one person.[141] As such, the sage-king needs to lean on the abilities of others to accomplish whatever tasks he decides to do.[142] And this thought naturally lead us to the idea of *yongzhong* 用衆, "using the masses."

> A long time ago, Yao had nine assistants, Shun had seven, and Wu had five. Compared to their assistants, the three kings were not good at any task. Yet, the reason they accomplished their tasks while folding their arms is because they used the dispositions (*renzhizi*, 人之資) of others properly. Therefore, a person cannot beat a horse that runs one thousand *ri* (里) in one day, but if the person rides on a wagon, that horse cannot beat him.[143]

[140] Though not using the term "sage-king," *Daodejing* shows a similar thought with *Huainanzi*. *Daodejing* insist that one can enhance or promote "benefits" of others if the one practices self-restraint, i.e., self-cultivation. (see Russell Kirkland, *TAOISM*: *The Enduring Tradition* (2004), 60.
[141] Ibid, 1/15.
[142] For an example of the incapacity of one man's ability in *Hanfeizi*, see *Hanfeizi*, 48/331. For an example of the importance of using the masses, see *Hanfeizi*, 38/288.
[143] *Huainanzi*, 12/387.

As the allegory at the end of the passage describes, when the sage-king uses the abilities of others by following their dispositions, he can achieve his own goals without effort, a method of non-government. Though the above passage only mentions "disposition," elsewhere there are several other things that the sage-king can rely on. For example, chapter 9, "Zhushu hun 主術訓," says that if the sage-king can use the knowledge and strength of the masses, there is nothing that cannot be done or defeated;[144] therefore, the sage-king "has to see, listen, think, and fight using the eyes, ears, knowledge, and strength of others."[145]

This kind of thought in *Huainanzi* is a deeper explanation of *Daodejing* chapter 47, which says, "the sage can know everything without stepping out the door."[146] In *Huainanzi*, the sage-king is able to do so because the assistants will be his eyes and ears to carry information for him.[147] This delegation is possible because he first appreciates the servants' abilities or dispositions and then puts them in the right place:

> Therefore, when the ancients built wagons, the painters did not draw the blueprint, and the mechanics who drilled did not cut down trees. Mechanics do not have two sets of skills, and literati do not work in two places. If people perform their duties without

[144] Ibid, 9/284.
[145] Ibid, 9/293.
[146] *Daodejing*, 47/125.
[147] *Huainanzi*, 9/283.

interfering with others, all will obtain their proper place (*yi*, 宜) and peace will remain (*an*, 安).[148]

After realizing the abilities or dispositions of others, the sage-king should decide which person will fit in each position. As a carpenter can make a grinder or bracket with the right kind of wood, a sage-king needs to find a proper outlet for people's abilities no matter how skillful they are and no matter what skills they have.[149] For example, a raincoat is helpful on a rainy day but not for working in office.[150] As such, everyone and everything has its own usage depending on its capacity and the situation. Following this principle leaves no room for discrimination (i.e., everything becomes equal (*wanwu yiqi*, 萬物一齊) in value).[151]

Huainanzi's thoughts on the equality of everything stem from *Zhuangzi*, though the former extends the idea to governmental management. In *Zhuangzi*, the argument states that everything is equal so one must emancipate oneself to contemplate everything as it is.[152] While *Huainanzi* preserves this basis, it explains how the sage-king can use others by letting each individual express his or her abilities to contribute to society.[153] Using the masses in this way is

[148] Ibid, 9/281.
[149] Ibid, 9/291-292.
[150] Ibid, 11/349.
[151] Ibid, 11/348.
[152] See Zhen Guying 陳鼓應, *Laozhuang xinlun* 老莊新論 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji chubanshe, 1992), 131. "Emancipating oneself" in this paragraph means that one should break through the restricted functions of the sense organs (i.e., overcome the "empirical-self," as Rur-Bin Yang also mentioned). According to Yang, one can truly be an "I" only by losing or emancipating oneself by overcoming the empirical-self and "be fully integrated by the vital energy." (see, Rur-Bin Yang, "Realm of the True Man and Its Corporeal Basis," in Scott Cook ed., *Hiding the World in the World* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 98.
[153] Roger T. Ames, *The Art of Rulership* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 150-151. The

presented as a method of non-government for the sage-king in *Huainanzi*. Though this form of management seems to promote egalitarianism, in fact the main purpose is to support the political ruler's authority, not to encourage self-realization of the people.

Necessity of Law and Moral System

Besides the idea of using the individual's ability, "Confucian" moral systems, values, and laws are also considered to be factors in non-government. While both the law and "Confucian" morality are refused and degraded by *Daodejing*, the authors of *Huainanzi* emphasize the importance and positive effect they have in non-government.[154]

Basically, the authors of *Hauinanzi* criticize any kind of harsh law (*kexiaozhifa*, 刻削之法)[155] that distresses people or violates the moral value *renyi* 仁義, benevolence and righteousness.[156] Such a negative view of harsh law comes from the concern that people will lose respect for it and find a way to escape punishment. According to the text, harsh law is too strict

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difference between *Zhuangzi* and *Huainanzi* also can be noticed between *Zhuangzi* and "Neiye." According to Michael Puett, "Whereas the 'Neiye' teaches one to control things, the *Zhuangzi* teaches one to accept the ceaseless flux of the world." (see, Michael J. Puett, "The Notion of Spirit in the *Zhuangzi*," in Scott Cook ed., *Hiding the World in the World* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 254.

[154] For example, in chapter 57 of *Daodejing*, law is described as a cause of more burglary and not a thing that supports non-action. And degrading Confucian morality is explained in chapter 38. However, even though *Daodejing* degrades Confucian moral values, this does not directly implicate that *Daodejing* excludes "morality" from its sayings. As Russell Kirkland has pointed out, a practitioner can pursue the benefits of both self and others by "self-restraint," such as restraint regarding thoughts, feelings, and desires; this restraint comes from a different moral perspective from that of the Confucians. For further explanation about "morality" in *Daodejing*, see Russell Kirkland, "Self-Fulfillment Through Selflessness: The Moral Teachings of the *Daode Jing*" In *Varieties of Ethical Reflection: New Directions for Ethics in a Global Context*, ed. Michael Barnhart, 21-48 (New York: Lexington Books, 2002)

[155] *Huainanzi*, 6/215.

[156] Ibid, 20/692. Though the passage only mentions "righteousness," here I followed Wang, Niansun 王念孫's commentary that "benevolence" was mistakenly omitted by the editor. Wang's assertion is based on the fact that benevolence and righteousness are mentioned together throughout the whole paragraph.

and too complicated for people to follow from the very beginning.[157] Along with this reason, the criticism against harsh law is motivated by the lesson learned from the collapse of the Qin government (*wangqin*, 亡秦). This collapsed was caused by "the guilt-by-association system (*xiangzuozhifa*, 相坐之法)," a law enforced by Shangyang 商鞅 that punished three generations for one family member's guilt.[158]

Though law was blamed as the major cause of the depravity and fall of the Qin dynasty, it still has advantages when used under certain conditions. For law has the power to "transform custom and moderate people's behavior" and "establish appropriateness (*yi*, 宜) and propriety (*shi*, 適)."[159] The function of law is to control the everyday lives of individuals and to regulate the selection of people for a certain office or task. Instructing people to live a moral life or selecting the right people for an office does no harm to each individual. However, the main purpose of law is not for the people but for the government, for if the culture is morally ruined, the government cannot but lose authority and fall down; the Jie 桀 and Zhou 紂 dynasties both fell for this reason.[160] Thus, law seems to have the same meaning as legislation, which is to establish control for the government.

[157] Ibid, 11/371.
[158] Ibid, 20/696-697.
[159] Ibid, 13/431. In this passage, based on Yang, Shuda's 楊樹達 commentary, I translated *lun* 論 as *yu* 諭, which is rendered here as "transform." (see, He, Ling 何寧, *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1998), 931.)
[160] Ibid, 20/680.

One important thing about law is that it treats everyone equally regardless of social status. It is clear in *Huainanzi* that once the law is established, "even the nobility cannot lighten his punishment, and the humble one will not be punished severely."[161] Though there is no direct statement or known regulations about punishing a ruler, *Huainanzi* insists that "the ruler take the lead in observing the law" and "practice it without any selfish preference or prejudice," which means that the ruler's actions are also restricted and that his obedience to the law must be grounded in self-cultivation.[162]

That a ruler should have no prejudice or preference when practicing the law has a strong resemblance to the so called "Daoist-Legalism" (*daofajia*, 道法家) in *Huangdi sijing*. The first chapter "Daofa 道法" stresses that the ruler must "master the Dao" and "hold no opinion and self."[163] However, whereas *Huangdi sijing* clearly explains in the very first sentence that "the Dao creates law," there are no passages mentioning the Dao as the origin of law in *Huainanzi*.[164] As R. P. Peerenborn wrote, if Daoist-Legalists are those who explain the Dao as the source of law, then *Huainanzi* definitely comes from a different school of thought.[165]

Next, along with the law, moral values are considered a method of non-government but receive more emphasis than the law, which performs as a supplement: "the birth of law is to

[161] Ibid, 9/295.
[162] Ibid, 9/297, 276.
[163] *Huangdi sijing*, 102.
[164] Ibid, 100.
[165] R.P. Peerernboom, *Law and Morality in Ancient China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 76-78.

assist benevolence and righteousness."[166] The reason why moral values receive more attention from the authors is due to the different functions they serves. While law only prohibits wrongful behavior, moral values encourage people to develop and attain righteousness.[167] Therefore *Huainanzi* says, "the law can punish unfilial persons but cannot make them behave like Kongzi 孔子 and Zengzi 曾子. Law can punish thieves but cannot make them upright like Baiyi 伯夷."[168]

> When the sage-king establishes moral law, he follows (*yin*, 因) what people prefer and makes the items. By following (*yin*, 因) people's love of sensuality, the wedding ceremony (*hunli*, 婚禮) was established so there was distinction between male and female. By following (*yin*, 因) people's love of music, he set right the sound of Ya 雅 and Song 頌 so the culture did not become corrupted. By following (*yin*, 因) the intention to comfort the family and make the wife and son happy, the sage-king teaches individuals to follow the father so there is intimacy between father and son. By following (*yin*, 因) the fondness of friendship, the sage-king teaches brotherly love so there is order between elder and younger.[169]

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[166] *Huainanzi*, 20/692.
[167] See, Xu Fuguan 徐復觀, *Yanghan sishangshi* 兩漢思想史 (Shanghai: Huadong shifandaxue chubanshe 華東師範大學出版社, 2001), 172.
[168] *Huainanzi*, 20/691.
[169] Ibid, 20/670.

As mentioned in the first sentence, the sage-king creates a moral system based on the people's preferences. Though the original passage says "preference (*suohao*, 所好)," the word seems to refer more to the natural tendencies of the human disposition, including sexual desire. All moral systems are based on the tendencies every individual has and established by the sage-king to encourage or correct those dispositions and as a result improve social relationships.[170] Elsewhere, *Huainanzi* also emphasizes the social function of the four moral values emphasized by Confucians: "benevolence (*ren*, 仁) relieves conflicts, righteousness (*yi*, 義) prevents loss, proprieties (*li*, 禮) save one from lust, music solves worry."[171] The explanation of "righteousness" is not clear, for it does not elucidate what can be lost. Based on chapter 11, the object might be the "social harmony (*he*, 合)" of different social statuses or classes.[172] Moral values not only encourage personal morality but also stabilize social order, which is a stark contrast to *Daodejing*'s assertion that "proprieties are the beginning of disorder."[173]

Though the authors of *Huainanzi* concentrate on expressing the important role of the law and moral values, they did not want them to be applied strictly or in a complicated fashion. If they are complicated and difficult to observe then the ruler cannot govern nor harmonize the

[170] Kim Yongseop, *The world of Huainanzi's thought* (Kr.) (Kyungsan: Kyungsan University Press, 1997), 55.
[171] *Huainanzi*, 8/250.
[172] Ibid, 11/343.
[173] *Daodejing*, 38/93.

people.[174] As a method of encouraging people to be moral beings who can control themselves, it is important to make them simple and direct enough to follow without being confused by details.

Furthermore, according to *Huainanzi*, there are no constant laws or moral systems; they need to change when the situation changes, usually when there is a new regime comes to power. Basically, following what the *the Annals of Lü Buwei* say about altering the law when the times change,[175] *Huainanzi* also insists that the law and moral system must be reformed by "following" or "adjusting to the time" (*yinshi*, 因時/*yingshi*, 應時) in order to cope with social change (*yingbian*, 應變).[176] According to the text, if the three ideal dynasties Xia 夏, Yin 殷, Zhou 周 had to reform their laws and moral systems, the Han dynasty must do so and not adhere to the past.[177]

Even though systematic reform is required, *Huainanzi* does not directly refuse the legitimacy of the previous dynasties for the laws and moral values they established in their own eras or regions.[178] Therefore, any systematized government cannot serve as the ultimate, constant standard but merely as a means (*ju*, 具) to order that has to be reformed from time to time. And to allow for change, the ruler has to acknowledge what is needed, what the situation of his people

[174] *Huainanzi*, 14/484.
[175] *Lüshi chunqiu*, 15/8/936.
[176] For examples, see *Huainanzi*, 13/429, 15/510.
[177] *Huainanzi*, 13/431-432.
[178] Arima Takuya 有馬卓也, 1998, 231.

is, and who will perform well on a typical task (i.e., he has to be a sage-king who has completed inner self-cultivation).

Spiritual Transformation

The affirming of law and moral systems indicates a Confucian or partially Legalist influence on *Huainanzi*. Though they are effective for government, it is uncertain whether using these methods should be considered the most effective and ideal way to ruling:

> The sage lessens work to make the situation easy to govern. He seeks little so that he is easily satisfied. He does not bestow anything yet is considered humane, does not talk yet gains confidence, does not search for anything yet gains, and does not scheme but achieves. He solely preserves the essence (*zhen*, 眞), embraces the inner power (*de*, 德) and promotes integrity (*cheng*, 誠). Therefore everything under Heaven follows him as the echo responds to sound and the shadow imitates form. This is because he cultivate the fundamental (*ben*, 本). Punishments cannot transform customs and decapitation cannot stop cunning. Therefore only *shenhua* 神化 is the most venerable way.[179]

The first three sentences above show the sage's non-action or non-government, mirroring passages from *Daodejing*.[180] As explained in the passage, though the sage does not speak, crave, or scheme, people follow him and the sage can accomplish anything we wants without

[179] *Huainanzi*, 9/272-273.
[180] *Daodejing*, 37/91, 57/149-150.

depending on law and punishment. And "*shenhua*" is considered the idealistic path to non-government.

The meaning of *shenhua* in *Huainanzi* can be understood in three ways. The first is "spiritual transformation," which means that the sage or sage-king uses his cultivated "spirit" to transform the people. In this case, spirit can be understood as the "essence" in the above passage and treated as the most important agent for self-cultivation along with the heart. The second rendering of *shen* is "mysterious," which means the cause of the transformation is unknown, is beyond description, and has nothing to do with magic.

Both explanations can be applied reasonably and both of them make sense. Therefore, as the third translation of *shenhua*, I prefer to use both: "a spiritual transformation done unconsciously." Like chapter 57 of *Daodejing*,[181] the people will transform themselves into their natural state and the whole country will stay in order when the sage-king follows the principles of non-action. The method of transformation is indirect that the people seem to transform themselves by their own will or strength (*zihua*, 自化), when in fact they simply do not know who has made them do so.[182] Once they transform, their spirit (*shen*, 神) and energy (*qi*, 氣) will not tremble out of their body nor will they discriminate; they will live a life without poverty

[181] Ibid, 57/150. "When I perform non-action, people will transform by themselves."
[182] *Huainanzi*, 8/252.

or conflict.[183] This state is called the rein of peace or the "Great government (*dazhi*, 大治)"[184] achieved by the sage-king.

Though *Huainanzi* says that "everything will prosper without benevolence and righteousness (*renyi*, 仁義); everyone will obey without reward and punishment (*shangfa*, 賞罰),"[185] the usage of law and moral systems is not totally denied in terms of non-action or non-government. These two are considered methods for achieving the "Great government," which is still effective and indispensable for saving a declining society. However, law and morality are only "means" that have to be forgotten once the sage-king accomplishes his work and can govern the country without using them. As Wang Bi said, "a weir (*quan*, 筌) is for fishing. Once you catch one, you forget it."[186]

[183] Ibid, 2/48-49.
[184] Ibid, 2/49.
[185] Ibid, 2/50.
[186] Wang Bi, *Zhuyi Lüelie* 周易略例, in Lou Yulie 樓宇烈 ed. *Wangbi jijiaoshi* 王弼集校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1999), 609.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

The work that has been passed down to us under the name of *Huainanzi* covers a wide variety of topics from cosmology to geography and even war tactics. This article has attempted to explain how this text addresses the path to becoming an ideal ruler, or sage-king: self-cultivation and non-government.

As a representative text of syncretism, on some topics the twenty-one chapters of *Huainanzi* demonstrate inconsistency and theoretical conflict. However, the text is in itself evidence of the effort to unify different thoughts in the early Han dynasty and also express the accumulated scholastic conclusions of its predecessors.

As for self-cultivation, *Huainanzi* was significantly influenced by the "Neiye," which explains that the purpose of "emptying" the heart-mind is to make space for the spirit to reside. Both texts agree that one can realize the Dao by his or her spirit, or the clarified heart-mind that contains the spirit within. In this case, spirit and heart-mind manage precognition, allowing individuals to understand things that cannot be understood by sensual perception. Aside from this similarity with "Neiye," *Huainanzi* broadens the spirit's function, saying that it is also in charge

of everyday perception. Therefore, maintaining the right condition of the spirit will enable the practitioner to deal with everyday life in a proper way and eventually realize the Dao.

Huainanzi is also based on *Daodejing* or *Zhuangzi*. Despite the strong relationship with "Neiye," it follows the assertion of the two texts that the practitioner must remove selfish desires and knowledge from the heart-mind, the "golden rule" for most Daoists. Yet *Huainanzi* does not admit that knowledge must be removed or denied in all cases, even if knowledge can be considered the source of craving.

If someone can use knowledge systems in ways appropriate to a situation, then there is no reason to criticize it. Indeed, any kind of pre-knowledge must be challenged, reconsidered, and removed from the heart-mind to be awakened. But once the practitioner obtains a clarified heart-mind, then using knowledge system cannot be a threat. The point here is not to be enslaved by or obsessed with a knowledge system as the early Han Confucians and Mohists were, but to free oneself from its boundaries.[187]

Along with the concentration on heart-mind and spirit, how to nourish the physical body as a part of self-cultivation is one concern of *Huainanzi*, a concern that is hard to find in other

[187] Though it is not clear in *Huainanzi*, not being obsessive over a knowledge-system can also mean that the practitioner, the emperor in this case, is so in tune that he even forgets the exact "principles" and reacts to the situation naturally without analyzing and reasoning from first principles. One of the best examples of this situation can be found in *Zhuangzi*, and these kinds of people are the one who 'know how' rather than 'know that.' For examples and explanations of *Zhuangzi*, see A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Dao* (Illinois: Open Court, 2003), 186-191), and Rober Eno, "Cook Ding's Dao and the Limits of Philosophy," in Paul Kjellberg and Philp J. Ivanhoe ed., *Essays on Skepticism, Relativism, and Ethics in the Zhuangzi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 135-136.

classical Daoist texts. This topic possibly originated from the recently excavated text, the Mawangdui manuscripts and partially from "Neiye" or *Zhuangzi*. There is still not enough information to confirm the connection between the two, and studies about the late Warring States and early Han are still in process, and the textual histories and relationships during this time are still in a fog.

Nevertheless, *Huainanzi* initiated the Daoist interest in this topic. For example, the Eastern Han (*tonghan*, 東漢) legendary Master Heshang 河上 mentioned purifying the five viscera as one way to make the spirit reside inside the heart-mind.[188] He explained that the spirit is nothing but the spirit of each of the five viscera, so if the practitioner fails to nourish the viscera, then the spirit will leave and one's life come to ruin.[189]

The ultimate purpose of self-cultivation in *Huainanzi* is not to become a Daoist sage or a spiritual being. Though there are passages describing such figures, the text is aimed at government, and self-cultivation is encouraged as a way to perfect it. In other words, no ruler can perform non-government without self-cultivation because selfish desires and an obsession with knowledge can distort and threaten the lives of others.

[188] Wang Ka 王卡 ed. *Laozi daodejing heshanggong zhangju* 老子道德經河上公章句 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu 中華書局, 1997), 5/18.
[189] Ibid, 6/21.

Non-government, which is in itself a non-action performed by the ruler, was first mentioned in *Daodejing* and ever since has been passed down by syncretistic texts. The basic idea that the ruler must govern everything without distorting or hindering the inner nature of others was accepted and moderated by *adaptability*, which was developed by other Syncretistic texts, especially *Guanzi* and *the Annals of Lü Buwei*.

In *Huainanzi*, non-government and non-action do not simply mean that the ruler must follow others or adapt himself to the Dao. Instead it provides a much more elaborate explanation by listing the exact objects that should be followed: from the inner nature to special skills and from era to custom. Because the Dao is the source of every thing and all order, following the natural status of everything is directly equivalent to following the Dao.

Moreover, if the ruler thinks that the people, society, and custom have deviated from what it should be (i.e., drifted away from the Dao), artificial reform can be used, such as law and moral values. Institutional sanctions are only admitted when they are established based on the people's inner nature and are aimed at redirecting individuals to their natural state, the result of which is social order.

The interesting point is that *Huainanzi* uses Confucian moral values without hesitation, unlike any other classical Daoist text does. Though these Confucian moral values are not the ideal method of government, they are a useful but temporary way for the political ruler to govern

his country. Theoretically and ideally, once everything has been come under the order of the Dao, the "means" must be abolished and never used afterwards.

After *Huainanzi*, the usage of law and moral values can be easily found in "Daoism". Other than benevolence (*ren*, 仁) and righteousness (*yi*, 義), filial piety (*xiao*, 孝) and fidelity (*zhong*, 忠) are stressed. For example, Master Heshang mentioned that "when the Great Dao declines, benevolence and righteousness occur. When the Great Dao prospers, houses have filial children and small towns (*hu*, 戶) have loyal subjects."[190] Furthermore, as for benevolence, the text called *Taipingjing* 太平經 says, "One who is not benevolent will walk the same road with animals. It is better for them to die young."[191] Additionally, it goes further to define benevolence as the inner nature of human beings.[192] However, fidelity ranks the highest among moral values.[193] Of course these examples cannot be counted as direct results of *Huainanzi*, for there is a several hundred year gap and neither of these texts directly cites it. Nevertheless, *Huainanzi* can still be seen as the watershed of "Daoism" blended with "Confucianism".

I would like to close by proposing two issues. First, self-cultivation in *Huainanzi* and other Chinese syncretism is strongly related to non-government. It is not a theory or principle

[190] Ibid, 18/73.
[191] Wang Ming 王明 ed. *Taipingjing hejiao* 太平經合校 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1997), 49/66/158. (*abb*. *Taipingjing*)
[192] Ibid, 35/41/32. This and the former quotation from *Taipingjing* are in fact not a direct result of *Huainanzi* but of *Mengzi*. *Mengzi* defines a human being as a morally benevolent being and describes a non-benevolent person as nothing more than an animal. (see, *Mengzi*, 7b/16, 4b/28)
[193] Ibid, 45/61/113, 96/151/408, 114/192/593-594.

about any ‘individual’ but a guide for the ruler, mostly the Han dynasty emperor. Furthermore, the importance of self-cultivation does not simply aim at emancipating the ‘self’ to become a spiritual being but to become an ideal ruler who can perform non-action. Second, non-government means nothing but letting others do what they do best and making right decisions based on the situation. After all, the emperor probably does not have to do anything but wait for the accomplishments of his servants, and the government should work as a self-sufficient organic polity.

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