

# On Influence of Zhou Gong on the Political Thoughts of Huang School



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## Abstract

It is well known that thoughts and administration measures of Zhou Gong (Duke of Zhou) 周公 are the source of Confucianism. However, Huang School is good at learning from other Schools, and has absorbed the administration methods and political thoughts when Zhou Gong ruled the adherents of Shang Dynasty. With the study of existing and excavated documents, the paper conveys the idea that the virtue-punishment thought of Huang School learns from the Zhou Gong's thought of "illustrate his virtue and be careful in the use of punishments." he put forward the idea of learning from and following the administration methods of former ancient emperors of Shang Dynasty. He regarded former wise emperors of Yin as models of governance. He knew the history of Xia and Shang Dynasty, and learned from their experience, and values the natural law. He used the methods of Shang Dynasty to make enfeoffment, rites and calendar. These measures achieve great effects. His thoughts and measures have great influence on the political thoughts of Huang School. Of course, Huang School prevailed in the Warring States of Period, and some thoughts did not exist in Zhou Gong's period.

**Keywords:** Zhou Gong; Huang School; Political thoughts; Adaptation

## Introduction

Throughout the ages, the systematic thoughts and theories all experience the development from birth to completeness. After a long time of practice, accumulation and assimilation, some learned from others' strong points to offset their weakness as time advanced and things changed. It gradually becomes systematic, develops into a metaphysical aspect, and eventually forms a complete systematic theory including metaphysical theory and practice after continuous improvement. It is true for both Confucianism and Taoism. After the development of the pre-Qin period, Han, Wei, Jin, North and South Dynasties, Sui, Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasty, Confucianism has absorbed different thoughts to have rich contents, and become the mainstream in Chinese culture [1]. Taoism is no exception. It has the complete metaphysical theory and practice that have great influence on Chinese history. A theory will have great or small influence on other theories, politic, economy, society, academy, art and history in different aspects. Meanwhile, these mutual influences can be positive or negative [2]. In the whole humanistic society, all factors interplay.

## Issues and Academic Contributions of this Paper

This paper mainly solves a problem: as Zhou Gong, who has an important influence on Chinese traditional culture and has an important position, in addition to having an important influence on Confucianism, he also has a great influence on the pre-Qin Taoism, especially his influence on the Huang School. Huang School is one of the Huang Lao School. The Huang and Lao have the same and different ideas. Scholars often confuse the two. However, if you read the related texts in pre-Qin and Han dynasties carefully, you will find that there is a difference between Huang School and Lao School. This article is to explore the influence of Zhou Gong on Huang school's thought. The author has checked relevant papers at home and abroad in China, and almost none of them have devoted to this. This article discusses the influence of Zhou Gong on Huang School, one fills the space of Zhou Gong's research, and the other distinguishes the internal differences in Huang Lao School, which is quite innovative in academic research.

In terms of politics including politicians and political events, Zhou Gong is an important figure in the early of Zhou Dynasty<sup>1</sup>.

He has thoughts in politic, society, ethic and military. As the founder of Chinese culture and pre-Qin theory [3], he established the social ethic, individual morality and concept of land under Heaven, advocated rule by rites, virtue and civilization, and worshiped Hou-ji and emperor Wen. His words and deeds have great influence on the future academic theory, politic and political system. He has influence on not only Confucianism but other theories including Huang School.

Every systematic theory is good at learning from others' strong points and offset their weakness to better its own theory, improve its level and strengthen its depth, which is also true for Taoism. It has absorbed different theories especially in political theory, and doesn't neglect the influential figures in history. When scholars explore the origin of Huang School, Zhou Gong should not be neglected. Weihua, Runtian [4] think that Huang School originated from the legend related to the Yellow Emperor in the Spring and Autumn Period. Xi [5] believes that the study of Huang-Lao is related to Fan Li. Xi and Kangsheng [6] both believe that the study of Huang-Lao originated from Laozi. During the development of Huang-Lao political theory, it has many theory origins. Author believes that some Zhou Gong's theory should be one of the origins of political theory of Huang School, which it has absorbed [7]. The paper will talk about the influence of Zhou Gong's words and deeds and administration on political theory of Huang School, and provide a new perspective for the origin of Huang School and origin of Confucianism and Taoism.

### Methods

Before the political theory of Huang School is talked about, the relations among Taoism, Huang School and Lao Thoughts should be discussed. Generally, Taoism refers to the school and group that express their academic purpose, including Huang-Lao School, but Huang-Lao School can't cover Taoism fully [8]<sup>2</sup>. Huang-Lao School is the general term for Huang School and Lao Thoughts. They are two schools of Taoism in pre-Qin and have different and similar thoughts. Scholars believe that lost ancient Lao Zi, Jing Fa or *Four Classics* of Hunag Emperor (hereinafter referred as *Four Classics*) are the important classics of Huang School. The Huang School in the paper is quoted only from this book. According to the study, it is hard to tell which came first. They have similar thought on Taoism, but have difference in applying Tao into society and politic. Lao Zi emphases that "It should keep to the role of the female" [9] and "The submissive and weak will overcome the hard and strong" (1982:53). *Four Classics* advocates "discriminating between

feminine and masculine conduct" (Chang et al., 1998:163). Lao Zi talks about the Tao not laws, and emphases that "The way never acts yet nothing is left undone" [9]. The chapter of Tao and Laws emphases that "It is out of Tao that the law come into being [10], and no success comes without struggle, and values laws. Lao Zi values nature, and believes that it should "keep people innocent of knowledge and free from desire" [9]. *Four Classics* acknowledges the effect of human, and believes that human can conform to nature to change it. *Four Classics* values judging status, while Lao Zi doesn't [11].

Although there are similarities and difference between Huang School and Lao School, they care called together as Huang-Lao School. There are two reasons for this. The first one is they are not differentiated from each other in The Grand Scribe's Records. The second one is that Lao is used to replace Huang, and books of Huang School are not available. From generation to generation, it is not being corrected (1989:152).

Besides, because of the close relation between Zhou Gong and political theory of Huang School, the paper will introduce the political theory of Huang Thought first. Scholars believe that the Tao in the "On Principle of Six Schools"<sup>3</sup> written by Sima Tan refers to Huang School [12]. The Huang School he talked about is concise and clear:

"The doctrine of Taoism proclaims that people should concentrate their attention on activities and take action with empty forms, and meanwhile the essence is to nurture the nature of all things on the earth. Besides a reference to what Yin-Yang says about the seasonal alteration, Taoism has found its way to obtain the merits of Confucianism and Mo Tzu (Mo Zi), to extract the essence of Ming Chia (Ming Jia) and Fa Chia (Fa Jia) and to evolve compatible with the current situation. Therefore, the creed of Taoism can easily exert its force on almost everything with a good understanding of the simple intention so that a minimal effort can produce a maximal effect [13]."

"The term "Wu Wei" is rendered in Taoism as "doing nothing" and "Wu Bu Wei" as "accomplishing everything". Although the notion of the two terms is too profound to comprehend, what it advocates is easy to implement. The theoretical foundation of Taoism is emptiness so that it has neither external forms nor constant state, which will enable it to explore the reasonable nature of all things only if it applies itself in a practical way and obeys the nature law. This kind of emptiness is depicted as the Tao, which can be the governing principle of all things, because

<sup>1</sup>Most of the documents in the early Zhou Dynasty are related to Shangshu: Book of Zhou. Scholars also call it as Dagao, Kanggao, Jiugao, Zicai, Zhaogao, Luogao, Duoshi, Wuyi, Junshi, Duofang and Lizheng, which directly record the words and deeds of Zhou Gong. For more details, please refer to Gu Jiegang, Liu Qihua, On the Annotation and Translation of Shangshu, Beijing, Zhonghua Book, 2005; Du Yong, Study on Eight Admonitions of the Early Zhou Dynasty, Beijing, China Social Sciences Press, 1998, pp. 8-91.

<sup>2</sup>More discussions about Taoism, please refer to Creel HG (1956) What is Taoism. Journal of the American oriental Society (JAOS) 76(3): 139-152.

<sup>3</sup>Smith K (1992) in "The Concept of 'Six Schools' Created by Sima Tan" (Chinese Culture, No. 2) points out that for the first time in the history of Chinese thought, Sima Tan used "家" to refer to different schools. Taoism is a new comprehensive category.

it neither surpasses everything nor lags behind. The rules within the Tao are not postulated but cater to the needs of situation and the dimension of the Tao should contain the varied forms of all things. So, the reason why the achievements of the sage are indelible in spite of the elapsing time is that they accomplish things in tune with times. Emptiness is the eternal rule of the Tao and the adaptation of times is the elementary step for an emperor to tackle the national affairs. The emperor should have a clear idea about the distinction between honest courtiers and sycophantic ones. A person is lively with ardent spirit that resides in the physical form of the body. The overuse of spirit will make it exhausted and the overwork of the physical body will cause it collapsing. What's worse, an isolation of spirit from the physical body means death. Once the isolation takes effect, it cannot be restored to its original state just as the dead cannot come to life again, so the sage has paid great attention to both the spirit and the body. In this regard, the physical form supports life while spirit is the fundamental force that endows life with vitality. Without the mental and physical tranquility, it is a hollow and preposterous to say that "I have an efficient way to manage the world." But how can you start without spirit and body to rely on?" (2004:6338).

In the essay, Sima Tan mainly talks about political theory. He believes that Huang School has the merits of Confucianism, Mo Tzu (Mo Zi), Ming Chia (Ming Jia), Fa Chia (Fa Jia) and Yin Yang. Its thoughts are as followed.

First, "emptiness" and "action with empty forms". "Emptiness" refers to the objective laws and rules. "Action with empty forms" means that all activities (cultivation, behavior and administration) of emperors should conform to the objective laws including natural law. Emperors should consider the natural law as the foundation of social order and rule the country [14]. Emperors need not add or reduce their own desire, but could nurture the nature of all things on the earth. This involves the relation among emperors' administration learning from natural law, the concept of "three talents" and politic [15].

Second, "Adaptation". Therefore, the creed of Taoism can easily exert its force on almost everything with a good understanding of the simple intention so that a minimal effort can produce a maximal effect. The wise emperors should follow the objective laws, but as the things (time and objective things) change, it applies itself in a practical way and obeys the nature law. Emperors should conform to the objective situations in action. Emperors should change as the situation changes, enable to explore the reasonable nature of all things, master the nature of all things, comply with the changes of everything and take "adaptation as the foundation. So, the adaptation of times is the elementary step for an emperor to tackle the national affairs. Adaptation is the important content of Taoism. Huang School emphasizes that in administration, the emperor should do nothing, and the subjects should do their duties, and the emperor should own the rights of

reward and punishment. The emperor should have a clear idea about the distinction between honest courtiers and sycophantic ones. The subjects should do their own duties and show their talents. The emperor needs reward the virtuous and talented people and punish the mediocre and the disloyal. This is the Thought of Emperor Judges and subjects work and the thought of reward and punishment [15].

Third, keep the spirit and physical body. "The purpose of this is to make the emperor rest the spirit and body. A person is lively with ardent spirit that resides in the physical form of the body. The overuse of spirit will make it exhausted and the overwork of the physical body will cause it collapsing. What's worse, an isolation of spirit from the physical body means death. Once the isolation takes effect, it cannot be restored to its original state just as the dead cannot come to life again, so the sage has paid great attention to both the spirit and the body." In this regard, the physical form supports life while spirit is the fundamental force that endows life with vitality. The emperor understands that the goal of politic is to ensure the rest of his spirit and body without much overuse. So, Huang School puts forward the theory of keeping the spirit and body of the emperor [15].

So, for the political theory of Huang School, Sima Tan believed that the emperor should comply with the natural law and master the objective situation to conform to the changes, and use "adaptation" to ensure the rest of spirit and body. This is the key points of political theory of Huang School [16].

### Results and Discussion

The above-mentioned is the political theory of Huang School, which has been influenced by Zhou Gong. Generally, scholars believe that Taoism and Jiang Ziya are closely related, and Zhou Gong has a close relation with Confucianism, which can be seen from the opinions of Ban Gu. The category of Taoism in Han Zhi has recorded 237 essays. Ban Gu considered Tai Gong as one of the Taoist [17]. Historical Records has recorded that "when T'ai-kung arrived at his state, he cultivated administration, adapted their social customs, simplified their social codes" [13]. And it also has recorded that Jiang Ziya said: "I simplified the ritual codes between the lord and his vassals. I followed its customs in governing" (2004:2287). It is obvious that "adapting their social customs" and "following its customs" are the important measures of Jiang Ziya's administration, which are also vital contents of political theory of Taoism. During his administration, he valued "adaptation", and this is why Ban Gu considered him as one of the Taoist. So, it is seen that Ban Gu believed that "adaptation" is an important part of Taoism.

In fact, Zhou Gong's words and deeds have great influence on the political theory of Huang School. The paper will discuss about it from the following aspects.

## Influence of Zhou Gong's thought of "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments" on the virtue and punishment of Huang School

### Zhou Gong's thought of "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments"

"Illustrating virtue and be careful in the use of punishments" is the important content of Zhou Gong's political thoughts. It is in the chapter of "The Announcement of Kangshu". In this essay, Zhou Gong warned Kang Shu that "Your father, great and bright King Wen, advocated moral education, cautiously employed punishments but he did not bully and oppressed those who were helpless, he employed those who might be employed, respected those who might be respected, and threatened those who might be threatenable, it was his rule to respect and love people" [18]. Scholars have different explanation of "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments". In the Spring and Autumn Period, Sheng Gong thought that it meant that the monarch should not have sexual conduct [19]. *Shangshu* quoted Zi Xia's words to explain that "be careful in the use of punishments" meant that the monarch should think about the punishment really carefully [20]. *Pseudo-Confucius Biography* believed that putting virtuous one in an important position was as vital as being careful in the use of punishments (2011:647). Kong Yingda [21] thought "illustrating virtue" as "using virtue", which meant the virtuous ones. Sun Xingyan [22] and Wang Xianqian [20] regarded "be careful in the use of punishments" as probation. Modern scholars such as Jianhua [23] and Yubo [24] think that "illustrate virtue" requires that the emperor needs to improve moral cultivation, and "valuing virtue" is for protecting people. All these opinions are different from the original meaning of "illustrating virtue and be careful in the use of punishments".

When scholars discuss about the virtue in "illustrate virtue", they always stick to morality. In fact, the meaning of virtue has a development process in pre-Qin Period. In Shang Dynasty, it meant following, gain, behavior, regulation and laws. In Western Zhou, it meant the God will-emperor-people relation, moral conduct and good thoughts. In the Spring and Autumn Period, it meant the virtuous men, morality rules, external criterion, ritual culture, culture and education, national destiny, and good diplomatic relations (Zhao-gui, Year? 243-253)<sup>4</sup>.

ffff4

When Zhou Gong put forward the thought of "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments", he opposed the virtue and punishment. Virtue meant to do someone a favor and soften someone. "Illustrate virtue" was Zhou Gong's ruling measure of winning people over, and didn't mean his virtue and

morality cultivation. Punishment was the opposite if virtue, which meant the compulsory punishing measures. In the chapter "The Announcement of Kangshu", Zhou Gong put forward the principles and implementing guideline of punishment, including being careful in the use of punishment, opposing punishment to kill the innocent, heavy sentence to criminals that commit crimes on purpose and recidivists and light sentence to the criminals with negligence and causal offenders, abolishing collective punishment and cruel torture, opposing random punishment and killing, and advocating proper punishment.

Zhou Gong's virtue and punishment thought was still used in the Spring and Autumn Period. They often compared the virtue and punishment. In "Twenty-Fifth Year of Duke Xi" in *Zuo Zhuan*, it is said that "It is virtue by which the people of the Middle State are cherished; it is by severity that the wild tribes around are awed." In "Twelfth Year of Duke Xuan" in *Zuo Zhuan* it is said that "when it submitted, be forgave it—his kindness and justice were established. There was the justice of punishment in the attack of revolt; there was the kindness of virtue in the gentle dealing with submission. Both these things were shown" [19]. Virtue and punishment are two aspects of political principles in the Spring and Autumn Period, which was called virtue-punishment principle [25].

Zhou Gong valued virtue and illustration. *Book of Zhou* records that Zhou Gong liked to use illustration, such as "illustrate virtue", "show a great discrimination", "give them bright distinction", "the enlightener and sustainer", and "shines brightly" there are also some in Chinese bronze inscriptions, such as "illustrate regulations", illustrate virtue, "show Heart", "illustrate punishment" and "shines brightly" [26]<sup>5</sup>. It also uses "illustrate punishment" in *Huang Men* [27]. In *Mister Lv's Spring and Autumn Annals*, it says that illustration exists because of ration [28]. Zhou Gong used the "Ming" frequently. He emphasized the human's ration and the ability of ration, and distinguished his thought and administration measures from that of Yin people to emphasize the importance of the thought of "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments" to rule country and suppress rebellion in the critical period [29]. Besides, in the documents of Qin and Han Dynasty, "Ming" has the religious meaning, and maybe reflects the ancient worship of light. Zhou Gong emphasized the destiny of Heaven and valued the "illustrate virtue". In Heaven, "de" was called "virtue of Heaven", and on earth, it was called "illustrate virtue" [30]. "Virtue of Heaven" meant that people were endowed with "virtue of Heaven", which was a religious and political words [31]. Obviously, Zhou Gong transformed the "illustrate virtue" from a religious word to a political word, and granted it with new meaning.

<sup>4</sup>On the development of the connotation of "Virtue" in the pre-Qin Dynasty, please refer to Fulin C (2005) *The Origin and Development of the Concept of "Virtue" in Pre-Qin Period*. China Social Sciences, 4. Delong L (2013) *A Study of the Origin of "Virtue" in Pre-Qin Period* (PhD's thesis). Jilin University.

<sup>5</sup>For more information, please refer to *The Anthology of Bronze Inscriptions of Yin and Zhou Dynasties*. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1984.



Besides, the punishment in “be careful in the use of punishments” should include penalty. In the chapter “The Announcement of Kangshu”, it says that “you must see that those punishments, as well as the penalty of death, be righteous”, which means the rational punishment and penalty of death [32]. In the chapter “No Ease”, it says that “(your ministers will imitate you) so the correct laws of the former emperors, both small and great, will be changed and disordered”. In *Pseudo-Confucius Biography*, it explains the punishment as law [21]. Liu Qihua [18] believed that punishment and penalty were the same. In a word, the meaning of “illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments” is to not only benefit people, but also be careful when using the punishments and laws. Different methods need be adapted in the administration of Yin people.

### Combination of virtue and punishment of Huang School

Political theory of Huang School advocates the combination of virtue and punishment, and appreciation of civil and military. *Four Classics* advocates handling their relation from the theory of Yin and Yang, and believes that they supplement each other. In the chapter “Investigation”, it says that “Instead, rectify affairs with punishments and rewards (by bestowal of benefits). Spring and summer are the seasons for reward; autumn and winter are the seasons for punishment. Give priority to virtue over punishment in order to nourish life...So brilliantly evident are punishment and reward as are the sun and moon set in turn to illuminate according to the brilliance proper to each, and to wax [and wane] without error...the ruler above and the subjects below will be in great harmony and both will satisfy their ambitions. Heaven will complete (these) in accordance with (their natural tendencies). Nourishing the affairs of people according to the right timing, and giving priority to reward rather than punishment, are following Heaven” [11]. In the chapter “Contention of Clans”, there are similar words, saying that “The supreme measures of rectification are punishment and reward. So, manifests are punishment and reward that they are like the sun and the moon calling on each other (in coordinated complementarity) ...Manifest as the reward of Heaven is, it cannot function without punishment. Awesome as the punishment of Heaven is, it will lose its efficacy without reward. Punishment and reward nourish one another and thereby the distinction between compliance and rebelliousness is established” (1989:300). *Four Classics* puts the virtue and punishment together, showing that they are the ruling tools. Virtue is the opposite meaning punishment, which is reward in chapter “Er Bing” of Han Fei Zi. It points out that “what virtue and punishment are? Killing is punishment and reward is virtue. Subjects are afraid of punishment but enjoy virtue. So, when emperors are good at using virtue and punishment, the subjects will fear his power and respect him” [33]. Han Feizi was influenced by Huang-Lao School. The virtue and punishment are important concepts of Huang School, and it is an important method for emperors to rule their subjects. Huang School advocates virtue before punishment, and virtue over punishment.

Besides the combination of virtue and punishment, Huang School also advocate the appreciation of “wen” and “wu”. In the chapter “Correct emperorship”, it defines the meaning of “wen” and “wu”. It says that following the vitality of life ordained by Heaven to nourish life is called wen (governing by civil administration). “Following the (destiny) of death ordained by Heaven to administer the severe sanction of death to those who should be killed is called wu (governing by coercive administration). If both [wen] and wu function well, then all-under-Heaven will obey the ruler” [11]. “Wen” means that people can get a rest and emperor should promote the policies of benefiting people. “Wu” refers to the armed suppression and attack. And it means that the emperor should overthrow the evil government with righteous power. The emperor should use both, overthrowing the evil government with force to expand his lands and promoting people-benefit policies to win people’s support. And in this way can he rule all the lands. “If one is performing the ways of wen and wu carefully, one will gain the allegiance of all peoples under Heaven” (1989:251). “Wen” and “wu” are two methods for an emperor to rule all the lands.

During the relation between virtue, and punishment and “wen” and “wu”, “wen” is the manifestation of virtue, and “wu” is the representation of punishment, so the relation between “wen” and “wu” is dominated by the relation between virtue and punishment [11]. According the above-mentioned, “wen” refers to the people-benefit policies and conciliation policy, and “wu” refers to the armed form of suppressing rebellion and overthrowing evil government. “Wen” and “wu” are the two methods of governance and ruling all lands. So, the meaning of “wen” and “wu” is larger than that of virtue and punishment.

### Influence of Zhou Gong’s thought of “illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments” on the combination of virtue and punishment of Huang School

According to the above-mentioned, the virtue in thought of “illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments” has the same meaning as the virtue in Huang School. Both refer to the conciliating reward measures adapted by emperors. Zhou Gong’s thought of “illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments” has direct influence on the combination of virtue and punishment of Huang School.

Besides, from the development of virtue’s meaning, the influence of Zhou Gong’s thought of virtue on Huang School can be seen. The meaning of Zhou Gong’s virtue includes original virtue, emperor virtue, people virtue, ancestor virtue, etiquette, and people’s mind and thoughts (Zhao-gui, Year:253-266). In summary, virtue includes politics, religion, society and self-cultivation. Zhou Gong implemented these virtues in order to consolidate the emperorship given by Heaven, so he put forward the thought of “illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments” in the hope of getting the support of Zhou people and Shang people to secure the emperorship [34]. *Four Classics* was written in the Warring States Period, and the thought of

virtue was affected. Besides inheriting and developing Zhou Gong's thought of "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments", it has both metaphysical theory and practice. Metaphysical theory means that virtue falls on everything from its nature - Tao. This is a basic common recognition that Taoism in pre-Qin Period has for virtue.

Zhou Gong put forward the thought of "careful punishment", which meant the principles and criterion of using punishments and. Penalty and punishment had the same meaning. In *Er Ya*, it says that punishment is law, so law and punishment have same meaning. Huang-Lao School in pre-Qin period values punishment, and one of contents of punishment is law. Huang School also value law, emphasizing that law is born from Tao. In the chapter "Tao and Laws", it says that "It is out of Tao that the law come into being. These laws, prescribed according to calculus of gains and losses, are yardsticks to measure and to distinguish what is correct from what is incorrect" [10]. Law is metaphysical and scared, and transcends politic and times to have independence, transcendence and fairness. "Laws and regulations represent the supreme rectitude" (1998:112). With law, the right and wrong can be told. "The distinction between right and wrong should be determined by laws. One should be empty and quiet (to be able) to listen carefully so as to accord with the laws" (1998:143). If everything conforms to the law and fairness, emperors and law-executors are very important. So, in Law, it emphasizes that "those who formulate laws and regulations are not allowed to create confusion (in given priority)" (1998:112) and "only one who is (devoted to) the common good without selfishness and can see and know without confusion" (1998:142). "Only when the law is executed fairly without selfish desire can the country be ruled effectively. Only when pure impartiality without self-interest (is given priority), and all punishments and rewards are fully carried out" (1998:112). So, Huang School on law has inherited the Zhou Gong's thought of "careful punishment".

### **Influence of Zhou Gong's administration measure on political thought of Huang School**

The paper will talk about influence of Zhou Gong's administration measures on the politic.

#### **Zhou Gong learns from the ruling experience of emperors of Shang Dynasty, studies its law, and critically accepts its traditions**

Wei district was the old capital of Shang Dynasty, and its adherents lived here. It was hard to rule them. Zhou Gong enfeoffed his brother, Kangshu, to this land. Before leaving, he warned him carefully. Besides putting forward the thought of "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments", he also required Kangshu to learn from Shang Dynasty's experience. "Now your management of the people will depend on your reverently following your father Wen; --do you carry out his virtuous words which you have heard, and clothe yourself with them. Moreover, where you go, seek out

among the traces of the former wise emperors of Yin what you may use in protecting and regulating their people. Again, you must more remotely study the old accomplished men of Shang, that you may establish your Heart, and know how to instruct the people. Further still, you must seek out besides what is to be learned of the wise emperors of antiquity, and employ it in tranquillizing and protecting the people. Finally, enlarge your thoughts to the comprehension of all Heavenly principles, and virtue will be richly displayed in your person, so that you will not render nugatory the emperor's charge." Zhou Gong requires Kangshu to use the people of Shang Dynasty, listen to their suggestion of ruling country, and seek the governance of ancient wise emperors to gain the method of protecting people. In this way, the people in Wei district can live a happy life and the emperor's order will not be neglected.

Zhou Gong regarded former wise emperors of Yin as models of governance. He said, "When I think clearly of the people, I see that they are to be led to happiness and tranquility. I think of the virtue of the former wise emperors of Yin, whereby they tranquillized and regulated the people, and rouse myself to realize it. Moreover, the people now were sure to follow a leader. If one do not lead them, he could not be said to exercise a government in their State" [35]. He emphasized that whether the life of people is improved, they all must study and master the way of ruling people like the former wise emperors of Yin and use them successfully. Tang was the one he needs to learn from. In the chapter "An Announcement for Many Countries", Zhou Gong praised Tang that "he paid careful attention to the essential virtue of a sovereign, in order to stimulate the people, and they on their part imitated him, and were stimulate" (1991:498). He praised that Tang is careful in the use of punishment, and people were moved and learn to do good deeds. He punished the criminals and people were afraid and try do good deeds. In the chapter "The Establishment of Governmental Institute", Zhou Gong praised that Tang used three talented subjects and the virtuous ones. "Tang employed to fill the three high positions those who were equal to those positions; and those who were called possessors of the three grades of ability could display that ability. He then studied them severely and greatly imitated them, use the utmost of them in their three positions and with their three grades of ability. The people in the cities of Shang were thereby all brought to harmony, and those in the different quarters of the empire were brought greatly under the influence of the virtue thus displayed" (1991:512-513). He praises that Tang can use the three talented subjects and other virtuous ones, so that he can "rule with folded hands". Emperors rules using the right ones, the subjects take their responsibilities, and everyone is on his own duty. This is the ideal politic of Confucianism and Taoism.

Zhou Gong knew history and valued tradition including the tradition of Shang and Zhou Dynasty. In the chapter "The Announcement of Banning Wine", it says that "let the young also Hearken diligently to the constant lessons of their fathers.

Let them look at virtuous actions whether great or small in the same light" (1991:403). He demanded Kangshu to remember the lessons from ancient generations, and promote all traditional virtues. He valued the tradition of Zhou clan and had a critical attitude to the tradition from Yin clan. Zhou Dynasty replaced the Shang Dynasty, and they could not only follow the political tradition of Yin clan, but also promote policies to rule the Yin people. One feature of politic in Shang Dynasty is valuing law and punishment. In the *Book of Rites*, it says that Yin people respect the god and lead its people to serve the god; the ghost is before the rite and punishment before reward. This show that Shang Dynasty values law and punishment. In the chapter "The Announcement of Kangshu", Zhou Gong emphasizes that "in things beyond your immediate jurisdiction, have laws set forth which the officers may observe; and those should be the panel laws of Yin, which be right-ordered" (1991:390), and "in setting forth the business of the laws, the punishments will be determined by the regular laws of Yin. But you must see that those punishments, as well as the penalty of death, be righteous" (1991:391). This requires that when Kang Shu handles the cases, besides the regular law of Shang Dynasty, he needs to take the reasonable law and punishment. The reason that Zhou Gong values the law of Shang Dynasty is because he wanted to master the key points of laws of Shang Dynasty and learn its advantages to transform laws of Shang Dynasty into the laws of Zhou Dynasty. This is his smartness.

### **Zhou Gong's administration measure of following the tradition of Shang Dynasty**

#### **Zhou Gong followed the tradition of Shang Dynasty of enfeoffment**

After overthrowing the Shang Dynasty, Zhou Gong relocated the Yin clan to different enfeoffment areas. Their clan groups and orders were not collapsed but kept. In *Zuo Zhuan*, Zi-yu talked about the enfeoffment:

When emperor Woo had subdued Shang, emperor Ch'ing completed the establishment of the new dynasty, and chose and appointed [the princes of] intelligent virtue, to act as bulwarks and screens to Chow (Zhou). Hence it was that the duke of Chow gave his aid to the royal House for the adjustment of all the emperordom, he being most dear and closely related to Chow. To the duke of Loo (Pih-K'in, the duke of Chow's son) there were given a grand chariot, a grand flag with dragons on it, the hwang-stone of the sovereigns of Hea (Xia), and the [great bow], Fan-Joh of Fung-foo. [The Heads of ] six clans of the people of Yin, the Teaou, the Sea, the Senou, the Soh, the Chang-choh, and the We-choh, were ordered to lead the chiefs of their kindred, to collect their branches, the remoter as well as the near, to conduct the multitude of their connexions, and to repair with them to Chow, to receive instructions and laws of the duke of Chow. They were then charged to perform duty in Loo, which thus the brilliant virtue of the duke of Chow might be made illustrious. Lands

[also] were apportioned [to the duke of Loo] on an enlarged scale, with priests, superintendents of the ancestral temple, diviners, historiographers, all the appendages of State, the tablets of historical records, the various officers and the ordinary instruments of their offices. The people of Shang-yen were also attached, and a charge was given to Pih-K'in, and the old capital of Shaou-Haou was assigned as the centre of his State. To K'ang Shuh (The first marquis of Wei) there were given a grand carriage, four flags, of various colored silks, of red, of plain silk, and ornamented with feathers, and [bell], Ta-leu, with seven clans of the people of Yin, the T'aou, the She, the Po, the E, the Fan, the Ke, and the Chung-k'wei. The boundaries of his territory extended from Woo-foo southwards to the north of Poo-teen. He received a portion of the territory of Yew-yen, that he might discharge his duty to the emperor, and a portion of the lands belonging to the eastern capital of Seang-t'oo, that he might be able the better to attend at the emperor's journeys to the east. Tan Ke delivered to him the land, and T'sou Shuh the people. The charge was given to him, as contained in the 'Announcement to K'ang,' and the old capital of Yin was assigned as the centre of his State. Both in Wei and Loo they were to commence their govt. according to the principles of Shang, but their boundaries were defined according to the rules of Chow (Zhou). To T'ang Shuh (The first lord of Tsin) there were given a grand carriage, the drum of Meihseu, the Keueh-kung mail, the bell Koo-seen, 9 clans of the surname Hwae, and five presidents over the different departments of office. The charge was given to him, as contained in the 'Announcement of T'ang (New lost),' and the old capital of Hea (Xia) was assigned as the centre of his State. He was to commence his govt. according to the principles of Hea (Xia), but his boundaries were defined by the rules of the Jung. Those three princes were all younger brothers, but they were possessed of excellent virtue, and they were therefore distinguished by those grants of territory and other things [35]."

Zhou Gong made the enfeoffment of Lu, Wei, and Tang country, and granted them with lands, positions, and people of Yin sixth clan and seventh clan that are skilled one, craftsmen and people of Huai clan, cars, religion things, weapons, and jade objects. These the Yin clan moved as a whole. Shirakawa Shizuka [36] pointed out that this Yin clan still kept their form and order, and pronounced the ruling policies that "they were to commence their govt. according to the principles of Shang, but their boundaries were defined according to the rules of Chow (Zhou)." Xu Zhuoyun [37] has the same opinion. He believed that Zhou Dynasty used the combination of Zhou Dynasty, Shang Dynasty and oriented old groups as the basic principles of administration, and they use the policies of Xia, Shang, and Jung to humour the local culture. Author agrees with Chao Yuepei's opinion. He said that "(Both in Wei and Loo) they were to commence their govt. according to the principles of Shang, but their boundaries were defined according to the rules of Chow (Zhou)." And "he was to commence his govt. according to the principles of Hea (Xia), but his boundaries were



defined by the rules of the Jung.” That “their boundaries were defined according to the rules of Chow (Zhou)” means that in terms of land management, they adapted the agricultural production methods of Zhou Dynasty and following their production and operation methods instead of changing their long-standing living habits. That “he was to commence his govt. according to the principles of Hea (Xia)” is to adapt the living habits of Jung in the early of Dynasty and keep the order. The rules of Zhou and Jung are different land rules, namely agriculture and stock farming. Tang Shu promoted the rule of Jung to respect the living habits of nomadism [38].

When Zhou Gong made the enfeoffment, he followed the tradition of Shang Dynasty. Besides the clan groups, he also let them have their own faith, like altar of Poh in Lu country. In 496 BC, “Yang Hoo imposed another covenant on the duke and the 8 Hwan clans at the altar of Chow (Zhou) and one upon the people at the altar of Poh” [35]. He aimed to gain the support of Yin people [39]. So, we can see that from the early of Zhou Dynasty to the end, Yin people in State of Lu still had their clan group and faith.

The State of Qi is considered as the one to use the method of following tradition. The Grand Scribe’s Records has recorded that when Jiang Ziya arrived at the State of Qi, he followed the tradition, simplified the etiquette, developed industry and provided convenience for the fish and salt industry. People preferred the State of Qi [13]. The following tradition means to keeping the custom and habits of original residents. Simplifying the etiquette means keeping their rite system instead of promoting the rites of Zhou Dynasty. Oriented area has old clans. State of Qi followed its customs and habit of inheriting the family name, and organized the mixed ruling powers [37]. Obviously, the administration of Jiang Ziya followed the customs of original residents, which is the same in principle as State of Lu’s commencing his govt. according to the principles of Shang, and State of Jin’s commence his govt. according to the principles of Xia.

Zhou Gong knew that promoting the method of following tradition could help them gain their positions and achieve better governance. *Shuo Yuan* recorded the words that Zhou Gong warned his son -- Bo Qin in State of Lu with much meaning of Taoism. He said that it is noble for the ones in high positions that could protect the humble, it is smart for the majority to protect the fear ones, and it is reasonable for the smart ones to protect the fool. All these are the virtue of modesty. And he quoted from the chapter “Khien” in the *Book of Change* that “it is the way of Heaven to diminish the full and augment the humble. It is the way of earth to overthrow the full and replenish the humble. Spiritual and beings inflict calamity on the full and bless the humble. It is the way of men to hate the full and love the humble” [40]. The “Khien” is a work in the Warring State Period [41]. The words are quoted from the Khien by later generation to show that Zhou Gong valued modesty. Modesty is valued by Confucianism and Taoism, and they have similar origin of that. This also shows the influence

of Zhou Gong’s thought on Taoism.

### Zhou Gong’s other measures of ruling Yin people

Besides the above-mentioned measures of following Shang Dynasty’s rules in his administration, Zhou Gong also followed Shang Dynasty’s rule in other aspects to achieve success. Zhou Gong appointed some nobility of Shang Dynasty, and in the chapter “The Announcement of Kangshu”, it says that “from the Hou, Teen, Nan, Ts’ae, and Wei domains, the various officers stimulated this harmony of the people, and introduced them to the business there was for Chow (Zhou). The duke of Chow (Zhou) encouraged all to diligence.” “Bo min” refers to the Yin people relocating to City of Luo and they take positions in the government. In the chapter “The Announcement of Zhaogong”, it says that “after seven days, on Kea-tsze, in the morning, from his written specifications he gave their several charges to the people of Yin, and to the chiefs of the States from the Hou, Teen and Nan tenures. When the people of Yin had thus received their orders, they arose with vigor to do their work” [35]. Zhou Gong appointed the emperors of Hou, Teen, and Nan as the Dukes with the same positions. Some Yin people were appointed as presbyters wearing the formal clothes of Shang Dynasty. In the “Wen Wang” of *The Book of Poetry*, it says that “the officers of Yin, admirable and alert, Assist at the libations in (our) capital;--They assist at the libations, Always wearing the hatchets on their lower garment and their peculiar cap. O ye royal ministers of the emperor, ever think of your ancestor!” (1991:430). Yin people were selected as the presbyters wearing the formal clothes of Shang Dynasty, which shows that Zhou Dynasty respects the customs of Shang Dynasty’s nobility [42].

Zhou Dynasty still used some rites of Shang Dynasty. In the chapter “The Announcement about the City of Luo”, it said that “the emperor’s guests, on occasion of the killing of the victims and offering the sacrifice, all made their appearance” [35]. Wang Guowei explained that “𤝵” means killing the animals and “𤝶” means offering the sacrifice. In the *Rites of Zhou Dynasty*, it offers the sacrifice to Hao Tian Emperor, Sun, Moon, Sizhong, Siming, Fengshi and Yushi. They burn wood to cause smoke that goes up. They also use this to offers the sacrifice to ghost. In Wu Cheng, it says that it happens in temples, which shows that in the early of Zhou Dynasty, the Shang Dynasty’s rite of offering the sacrifice are still used.

Besides, in the early, Zhou Dynasty used the calendar of Shang Dynasty. In the chapter “The Announcement of Kangshu”, Zhou Gong told Kang Shu that “in examining the evidence in criminal cases, reflect upon it for five or six days, yea for ten days or three months. You may then boldly carry your decision into effect in such cases” [35]. The system of Ten days belonged to Shang Dynasty. They divided a month into three Ten days, and at the beginning of the week, a month was divided into four part. This essay was used by Zhou Gong to tell Kang Shu to follow and use the system of Shang Dynasty. Zhou Gong used the calendar system of Shang



Dynasty. Calendar played an important role in ancient politic and economy.

So, we can see that when Zhou Gong ruled the country, he valued the “following the tradition” and achieved great results.

### Relation between administration measures of Zhou Gong and “adaptation” of Huang School

Huang School values the “adaptation”. “Adaptation” is one of the cores of Huang School and political theory of *Four Classics*. In the “On Principle of Six Schools”, Sima Tan has emphasized the adaptation of times is the elementary step for an emperor to tackle the national affairs, and pointed out that Huang Thought used the adaptation of times. Adaptation means the changes in accordance with the changes of things, so adaptation also values time. *Four Classics* values adaptation and puts forward the adaptation of Heaven, earth and people after seeing the achievement of Zhou Gong’s adaptation administration. They will be talked about next.

The chapter “Cheng” puts forward the thought of following Heaven and says that “a sage is never the first one to act; nor is he obstinate. He does not make decisions before the opportunities are at hand. He does not acquire things (for his own purpose); (on the other hand,) he does not refuse good fortune. Accordingly, he follows the principles of Heaven. If one loses the support of Heaven, he will die. If one deceives his lord, he will likewise suffer death. If one does not treat his superior with respect, he will be in danger” [10]. A sage doesn’t act first or be obstinate, but waits for the right time and chance to act so that he will not lose the fortune. The wise emperor should follow the natural law, or his rule will be in danger. So, it is important for the emperor to value natural law and take the timing. The chapter “Cheng” also says that “if (a naturally suitable) opportunity to achieve something is not yet at hand, one should not be eager to do it prematurely. (So also) if a proper time is not yet at hand, one should not enjoy the honor (of high position and great wealth)” (1998:189). It means that plants cannot grow against the natural law to bloom, which emphasizes the importance of timing. Its meaning is expanded. The wise emperor should seize the timing in time instead of early or late, so when the time is right, everything can be successful, or it will fail. The chapter “Guan” says that “The ruler of people should restrain himself from the three pleasures, he ought not to create disorder in people’s affairs, nor should he go against the timing of Heaven. In so doing, the five grains will abundantly bear fruit, people (will) multiply, the ruler above and the subjects below will be in great harmony and both will satisfy their ambitions. Heaven will complete (these) in accordance with (their natural tendencies)” (1998:150). The wise emperor should arrange proper time for agriculture and military, and military should be avoided in the planting seasons. In this way can agriculture be developed, emperor and his subjects be harmonious, people live affluently, and Heaven bless them.

The chapter “The Four Principles” points out “timeliness of Heaven”. It says that “according to the timeliness of Heaven, launching a punitive expedition against (countries) that are suffering destruction ordained by Heaven is called wu. If the military sword (of control) is followed by wen, then success will be achieved. He who utilizes two measures of wen and one measure of wu will become a king” (1998:126). It emphasizes that the wise emperor should comply with the law of Heaven and he can overthrow the country that is bound to destruction. After the success with force, the wise emperor should pacify his people so that he can rule all the lands. So, we can see the importance of timing in the military. The chapter “The Function of an Army” also values the importance of timing. It says that “the reason the sage succeeds is because he (knows how to) seize the opportunity in time and make use of it. (If one can) follow up the timely (opportunity) and seize...one will surely succeed. The sage never rescinds punishment when it is due, nor does he break contracts. Instead, he abides by the proper timing of Heaven and makes decisions accordingly. When a decision should be made, and yet not fails to make it, then one will suffer disasters caused by himself” (1998:166). As long as the wise emperor is good at taking advantage of timing and following the timing and chances, he will be successful. Otherwise, he will suffer disaster.

In terms of adapting earth and people, the chapter “Aphorisms” says that “according to what the earth provides, one must replenish one’s (military) supplies, and, relying on (the support of) people, one must recruit a new army. If one does not follow (the natural course of events), he will not attain good fortune” (1998:188). Besides following the natural law, emperors need to act in accordance with the earth and people to succeed. Otherwise, if emperors crave for greatness and success and fight against natural law with his people, his country will be in danger. The chapter “The Function of an Army” says that “in the midst of confusion and disturbance, they will exploit the strength of people to rebel against the ultimate of Heaven. If they still achieve something by doing so, their country will be in jeopardy, their state will be in chaos and actually nothing will be achieved. Even if an achievement is celebrated, it cannot be enjoyed (because the name falls short of the reality and the country will suffer turmoil). This is the Tao of Heaven” (1998:167).

It is obvious that *Four Classics* believes that wise monarchs should apply adaptation to politic, military, and agriculture, and can have a good result. Adaptation is one of core concepts of politic of Huang School. Chen Ligui [12] says that the seeming negative Huang and Lao Thoughts contain tenacity to achieve the positive results, and the key is adaptation.

That Zhou Gong’s administration measures emphasizes adaptation has great influence on the adaptation of Huang School. His administration measures are in politic, including founding of a nation, requiring dukes to study and follow Yin emperor’s

administration method, keep and respect customs, religion and organization of Yin clan. It is the same as Huang School, which believe that monarchs arrange staff and they should follow the rules and their duty [16]. Of course, Zhou Gong's adaptation is mainly used on the administration measures, and his other measures are not following adaptation. The adaptation of Huang School has broad meaning, and is expanded and improved by Zhou Gong's adaptation. It also includes requiring monarchs to follow Yin and Yang and respect the nature laws, and putting the society and politic into the category of adaptation. Huang Thoughts emphases that theoretical foundation of adaptation is emptiness and it is supported by Taoism. Zhou Gong emphases "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments". The virtue he talks about is closely related to the Heaven and God will, but the God will is different from the Tao of Huang School. God will is from God, while Tao means nature law. Huang School has a Tao theory including the theory of universal formation, and it talks about the political theory based on that universal formation theory. This is what Zhou Gong doesn't have.

## Conclusion

Confucius said, "The Dynasty has followed the regulations of Yin; wherein it took from or added to them may be known." From the development of the ritual culture of Shang and Zhou Dynasty, Confucius pointed out that ritual culture in Zhou Dynasty has inherited and selected from the ritual culture in Shang Dynasty [43]. In fact, from Zhou Gong's administration measures, we can see his "adaptation" method [44]. The reason he uses "adaptation" method is because that Zhou Dynasty is just founded, and its power is not strong. Zhou Dynasty couldn't rule Yin people by force. Zhou Gong had a good understanding of the history of Xia and Shang Dynasty. He learnt from their experience and emphases that the government should rule its people with virtue, and it is destiny that Zhou Dynasty replaces the Shang Dynasty because of its emperor's virtue. Zhou Gong won people over in his administration measure, unites with neighboring countries, reduced rebellion and inherited critically the culture of Shang Dynasty. Zhou Gong put forward the thought of "illustrate virtue and be careful in the use of punishments" and implemented measures to rule Yin people to achieve great effects. His thoughts and methods have great influence on the birth of Huang School in the Warring States Period. Huang School prevailed in the Warring States of Period, and has the ideas of Taoism like valuing natural law and emphasizing Yin and Yang. These thoughts did not exist in Zhou Gong's period. During its development, Huang School learned from others' strong points. As an important figure, Zhou Gong's thoughts and politic should be valued and absorbed by Huang School. The relation between them is obvious.

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