Chapter Four

A Contrast and Comparison
Having prepared a very general introduction on a fraction of ethical themes from both Islam and the Confucianism, it is presumed that there must be inquiries on explicit contrast and comparison between seemingly relevant themes from the two traditional doctrines. There are, indeed, many similarities in regard to social-ethic sphere between the two doctrines. But differences are also significant and apparent. It is the main aim and endeavor in this chapter to partially reveal those similarities and differences.

However, to cover all themes that have been introduced in the previous chapters may largely prolong discussion here, hence it is necessary to confine the discussion into a few themes in the process of comparing. Likely the topic will be fallen into the concept of God, human nature, man and his soul, and a small number of ethical values introduced in the previous discussions.
4. 1. A Comparison in Human Personality

4. 1.1. Human Nature in Islam and Confucianism

Every religion gives a salient account, being it explicit or implicit, on human nature. This is not because it has important religious implications, but because it is extremely relevant to man's wellbeing in this world as well as the world hereafter. The way in which human nature is understood, gives a great impact upon one's daily life. Islamic way of understanding it is apparently different from Christian way and Buddhist way, yet it lays unquestionable congruity with the way of Confucianism. It is intended here to expose through a brief comparison, those congruities, as well as dissimilarities.

The human nature in Islam is literally termed as "fitrah", which connotes the natural, inborn predisposition of man. And it is termed in Confucianism as "Ren xing 人性" which implies "what Heaven imparts to man".\(^1\) The heaven in Confucian teachings is an ambiguous transcendent entity, which Confucius himself did not give any detailed account, and his disciples too did not render much heed to it.

Fitrah, implied as the human nature, drown its origin from the following saying of the Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace):

"Every new-born child is born in a state of fitrah. Then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian or a Magian, just as an animal is born intact."\(^2\)
Obviously the term *fitrah* means "the natural constitution with which a child is created in his mother's womb." 3

However, *fitrah* has broader implications, which are manifested by the Qur'anic verse:

"Set your face to the din in sincerity which is Allah's *fitrah* (the nature made by Allah), upon which He created mankind (fattaran-nas). There is no changing the creation of Allah. That is the right din but most people know not." (Q. Al-Rûm 30: 30)

صِدِّقيَوَجَهْتُكِلِّدَيْنِحَبِيْمَاٰفَطَرَتْاللَّهُذَالِئِبَيْنَفَطَرْأَلْسَانَعَلِيْهَاٰلاَّسَيْدِيِّنِلِّخَلِقْاللَّهُذَالِئِبَيْنَالْقَبْدِٰمَوْأَكْرَمَأَلْسَانِٰلاَّيَعِمُّونَ

*Din* is the way of Islam, it is stretched for humankind by Allah, it is a natural way. In accordance to which human being is created, hence Islam is called *din al-fitrah*, the religion of human nature.

Since the fountain of *fitrah* is Allah Almighty, who engraved *fitrah* upon the human being, since the central point of Islamic teaching is *al-tawhid*, recognizing oneness of Allah Almighty. Therefore, to follow *al-tawhid* is integral entity of mankind, and to follow the *din* of Islam is a very natural inclination of mankind.

The reason of why Islam is called *din al-fitrah* is because its teachings and laws (al-Shari'ah) are in complete and full harmony with the natural inclination of the human to believe in and submit to the Creator.4

Regarding the doctrine of the human nature, a similar discourse is found in Confucianism. The only Confucius' teaching concerning the topic reads:

"Men are nearly alike by nature; they get to be wide apart by learning." (A. 17: 2).

性相近，习相远也。
Remember the Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying. The two sayings seemingly originated from the same source. How similar they are! The both emphasize that men are born in the state of the nature. What makes them different from one another is their parents' teaching and then learning from others. Still more, that the both doctrines single out that the nature is imparted and confirmed by a transcendent being, by Allah Almighty in Islam, and Heaven in Confucianism. Here the problem of difference lies, which will be probed into the problem later.

Allah Almighty engraved *fitrah* upon the man, and made Islam, the *din al-fitrah*, as the way for him to follow. But man, unfortunately, is extremely forgetful of the true nature, so Allah Almighty created signs such as the universe, the earth and all kinds of beings, for him to draw reflection on that nature. But still man is not so wise to get lessons from it. So Allah sent prophets and revealed Holy Books to remind and guide them to the very point. Where as in Confucian point view, the Heaven has endowed the man with the human nature. "To follow this human nature is called the way."\(^5\) Notwithstanding man bears endowment by the Heaven, his major task is not to realize the essence of the Heaven, but to cultivate himself through Confucian values, and to achieve the unity of him and the Heaven. "Therefore, the way is nothing other than the actualization of true human nature." "The relationship between the Heaven and man is not that of creator and creature but one of mutual fidelity."\(^6\)

Though the founding point of the human nature in both doctrines is quite similar, it yields variant interpretations in both Islam and Confucianism. Muslim interpretations of it, inspired by above-mentioned Prophet's saying and the verse
of the Qurān, are quite various, scholars hold different views on it, which generally can be classified into four interpretations. It is attempted to clarify them in brief, and at the same time contrast them with the generally similar views from the Confucianism.

Positive view of fitrah in Islam holds that fitrah is a state of intrinsic goodness, in which every child is born. What causes an individual to deviate from that state is a social environment. Since man's nature is innate with goodness, since Islamic teachings, namely the knowledge of Allah, are basically good decrees, providing the ideal condition for sustaining and developing man's innate qualities, the man is but suited for din al-Islam and responds automatically to its teachings. Hence it may be said that “the child's state at birth is in harmony with Islam, in the widest sense of submission to Allah Almighty.” The further implication of this view of fitrah is that, “while good constitutes the inner state of a person's nature, evil is something that happens after the person is born.” Other Muslim scholar who holds the positive view defined fitrah “as the unconfirmed state of imān before the individual consciously affirms his belief.”

In a quite similar sense, the Master Meng of Confucianism holds that man's nature is good. He believed that men are born with four “nascent moral senses: benevolence 仁, righteousness 义, propriety 礼, and wisdom 智.” These senses are Heavenly conferred. Hence, to develop and cultivate them is to fulfill a design inscribed by the Heaven. To follow the natural tendency, then, is to obey the Heaven; and to develop oneself is to serve the Heaven. But from where are these moral senses generated? It is from xin 心, mind and heart, where naturally possesses an ability of thinking and reflection. Those moral senses are intrinsic to
the heart, they are automatically manifested as long as one starts to think.\textsuperscript{11}

Mencius has given a clear account of this nature:

"Benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom are not infused into us from without. We are certainly furnished with them. And a different view is simply owing to want of reflection. Hence it is said: 'seek and you will find them; neglect you will lose them.'" (M. 6: A6)

仁义礼智非由外而生我也，我固有之也；非议也，思也；求则得之，舍则失之。

However, solely reflection of man's good nature is not enough. Man must attemptedly cultivate those moral senses, or they would be, otherwise, clocked by man's dense involvement into worldly affairs. The attempted self-cultivation is termed by Mencius as "Jin xin 尽心", which in other sense, can be understood as "expansion of those senses". The expansion reaches to a certain degree, man will realize the nature that he was born in. The realization of the human nature will lead to the realization of the Heaven, and further he will achieve the status of unity with the Heaven. Mencius made this clear:

"He who has exhausted all his mental constitution knows his nature, knowing his nature, he knows Heaven. To preserve one's mental constitution, and nourish one's nature, is the way to serve Heaven." (M. 7: A1)

尽其心者，知其性也。知其性，则知天矣。存其心，养其性，所以事天也。

The neutral view of human nature in Islam asserts that fi'rah is neither a state of intrinsic faith imān (faith in Almighty Allah), nor a state of intrinsic kufr (disbelief in Allah). The child is born in a wholesome state, a blank state, as it were, with no cognition of belief or disbelief, which become manifest only when the child attains maturity (taklīf),\textsuperscript{12} when he may consciously acquire knowledge of right and wrong from the external environment. His parents in the first place give him great influence. Considering that he is born in a state of ignorance and
innocence, there is no any innate forces within him to guide him, thus, external
guidance becomes extremely decisive in point view of the neutralist perspective.

Gao zi  of Confucianism advocates that the human nature is indifferent to
good and will, in other words, it is neutral. “Nature is what we are born with”
Men are born with many desires and dispositions. The most explicit of them are
appetite and loving of colors. “To enjoy food and delight in colors is nature.”
Appetite and delight by itself have no characteristics of good or bad. Thus Gao zi
says: “Man's nature is neither good nor bad.” “Man's nature is like water
whirling round in a corner. Open a passage for it to the east, and it will flow to the
east, open a passage for it to the west, and it will flow to the west. Man's nature is
indifferent to good and evil, just as the water is indifferent to the east and
west.” Neutrality of the nature lead Gao zi to conclude that human heart and
mind have no innate sense of benevolence and righteousness, they are external
influence, not internal stimuli. Man by nature has no sense of ethical virtues, a
possible way to have it is through cultivation of external enforcement.

The predestinarian view of fitrah in Islam asserts that each individual is
Divinely decreed either good or evil by nature. A child is born either in a state of
belief or unbelief. The view further confirms that the all actions of the man are
created by Almighty Allah, just as He creates all the world and the laws of the
nature. And from this it is concluded that both right and wrong actions are part of
Allah's creation. Allah's creation is unchangeable. Thus the individual is bound to
live a life already designed for him in pre-existence, regardless external guidance
or misguidance.
In regard to this interpretation of *fitrah*, no similar account from the Confucianism is found. However, if one defines the predestinarian view of *fitrah* as a negative interpretation of it, one may classify Confucian Xun zi's *fi* conception of the human nature as evil as a negative point view too. He holds that “man's nature is endowed by the Heaven, can not be learnt and can not be changed.” 18 His conception is based on his observation that “man is born with the desire for gaining profit. If this tendency is uncontrolled, strife and rapacity will occur, and deference and compliance will wither away; man is born with the passion of envy and hatred of others, if those passions are uncontrolled, killing and destruction will occur, and loyalty and faithfulness will wither away; man is born with the possession of the desires of ear and eye and delight for sound and beauty, if these desires are uncontrolled, lewdness and licentiousness will occur, and order of propriety and amity will wither away.” 19 Obviously man's indulgence into those desires and passions will lead him to destructive behaviors. How can man curb those tendencies? It is teachings of rituals of propriety and righteousness can do this. “From this point of view, it is clear that the nature of man is bad and that his goodness is the result of external activity.” 20

There are other viewpoints on the human nature, in both Islam (modern dual interpretation of *fitrah*), and Confucianism (three degree of high, middle and lower nature of man). Since, unlike other three views, they have too little in common with one another to be included in the comparison, so they are deliberately left out here.
4. 1. 2. Man in Islam and Confucianism

The issue of man is an extremely important one. Both Islam and Confucianism have given a lengthy discussion on the issue. Man is regarded in both doctrines as center amongst created being in this universe, he plays very decisive role in developing and enlarging himself, and maintaining the earth and the universe.

Islam advocates that man is created being like other creatures. He is created by Allah from clay and then He breathed His spirit into the dry clay and man came into being. The purpose of his creation is that he represents Allah as His vicegerent on earth. Allah Almighty says: “I will create a vicegerent on earth.” Hearing this decision from Allah, angles protested saying. “Will you put there a being who will work mischief on the earth and shed blood, while we sing Your glories and exalt Your utter holiness?” The question connotes some negative reality of man's nature, such as his tendency of forgetting Allah's favor bestowed on him, fighting, and other mischief. But Allah did not deny these allegations against man, and replied: “I know what you do not know.” 21 Allah has bestowed upon him something special which enables him to carry on his task of the vicegerent on the earth. Allah showed this tremendous ability of man to angels, through asking the latter to “name things” (to describe their natures). Angels failed to do so while Adam, the first man created by Allah, did it. That ability is the faculty of reasoning, which is solely possessed by the man.22

Since man is made of clay and Allah has breathed His spirit into the dry mud, he is a “two-dimensional being” 23, one dimension tends to lowliness and stagnation like nature of the mud in a river, while the other tends to be exalted,
sublime and lofty. So man is composed of two contradictions: mud and Allah's spirit. He could be in the highest position as the one nearest to Allah, and could be the lowest of low. It is up to man to choose where to go, toward the lowest as mud or the highest as the providential intimate.

Man's creation is still more perplexed, for he possesses not only the faculty of reasoning or intellect ("Aqli) and spirit (rūḥ), but also qalb or fiād (heart) and self (nafs), and desire (hawā'). "Aqli is the functional aspect of man's brain. Its major function is a very complex one, here is not the place to discuss it, but it is sure of that man learns knowledge through it, and it can reason based on the experience and the knowledge he learnt before. Rūḥ of man is breathed into him by his Creator, so it is a very lofty one, always inclines to angelic states.

Qalb (heart) is another important possession of man. It is regarded as the true center of man, from which engender all kinds of normative qualities good or bad. For instance, purity, piety, confirmation, softness, peace, love and repentance and so on, are located in heart; whilst sin, evil, hardness, harshness, hatred, anxiousness and so on, are also possibly made the heart as their basement. The heart is the place where Allah looks, purifies and puts virtues in, it is also the place where hypocrisy grows out; whilst faith also grows up in it. The heart is the place where Allah reveals himself to human being. It is the place of vision, understanding, and remembrance. Guidance turns the heart to the right direction, whereas misguidance leads it astray. The heart is the place where satan puts his tremendous effort to instill misguidance and all kinds of mischief. The heart should be soft and receptive to the divine guidance, light and love. But the hearts of the wrongdoers are hard and harsh.²⁴
Obviously, the heart never stands still, it is easily affected by whatever comes into it. This nature of the heart is consistent with its root meaning: fluctuate, change or go back and forth. Satan knows this nature very clear. He uses every possible means to make man forget his origin, and his purpose of life. Satan normally succeeds in most of his tries, except those cases in which his objects are really virtuous persons. Satan is an anti-man force; he starts this career when the first man Adam starts to achieve his mission. Satan was one of the jinni who are made from smokeless fire; he asserted his own superiority over Adam, who is made from mud. For this reason he disobeys Allah's command to honor Adam when he was called to do so. His disobedience leads to his dismissal from his position. The starting point of his misfortune is the creation of man. For this reason he hates man most, stands as anti-man force. He "waylays man from all sides," no man is immune from his temptation. Here lies the serious test upon man. Though man is endowed with the intelligence, the powerful ability of reasoning, and the fountain of all kinds of sentiments (heart), he still always being led strayed by his opposition.

Forgetfulness is a vital defect of man, with the passage of time he forgets his primordial nature (fitrah) and his ultimate purpose of life -- the realization of God and worshiping Him alone. He needs to be constantly reminded of the truth by Messengers chosen by Allah amongst men themselves. Yet so many man's conscience is so severely disturbed that they cannot even listen to the voice of their high true nature. They go further, reject that truth. The Qur'an terms this behavior kufr, which attracts punishment of Allah, the true God.
It is in the concept of man lies the major difference between Islam and Confucianism. The latter does not offer any explanation on the creation of man by God. Questions like where man comes from, why he comes to this world, and so on, are not serious problems in the Confucianism. But Confucius did answer the problem of how man can be a good one, what he ought to be and ought to do.

Man in the Confucianism is a social being. He is restricted by many social relations, existing in a network of duties and obligations, his all efforts are for the socialization of the Confucian ethical ideals. Man is trained to live in a hierarchical society, in which the rulers and the ruled are divided by observing particular rules respectively. Those who successfully cultivate themselves with and constantly observe Confucian values are titled as Jun zi 君子, noble man or profound person; those who fail to do so or do not observe it or timely offend the values are called xiao ren 小人, small-minded people. Confucius believed that, despite great differences in intelligence, ability and talent, all human beings are endowed with the potentialities to actualize themselves as the profound person so that they can further achieve the ideal of the unity of man and the heaven. The potentiality of a complete realization of the ideal of the unity is also inherent in each man's nature. Man naturally possessing those qualities does not mean that all men will definitely become good persons. They need to undergo an ordinary process of self-education. To experience this process is the human way, or we may say "the way to be a human". This way is claimed by the Confucians to be near at hand and the mode of pursuing it is also easy and simple. What a practitioner of Confucian needs to do is to be "watchful over himself when he is alone." This

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self-disciplined form of learning is sedulously enlarged by Confucius, to whom, learning is to learn to be human.

The qualifying characteristics of the profound person are fully proposed in the Analects. The profound person is imperturbable and resolute. He is firm and decided, proud but not quarrelsome; He is dignified but never haughty; he is brave and bold. The profound person is conciliatory, modest, humble, and even mild. The profound person must not only learn to be qualified in those positive virtues, he also must know not to over exercise them, instead he should acquire a well-balanced character, should maintain a mean path between two opposites of values. The true profound person is conciliatory but not accommodating, affable but not adulatory, brave but not fierce etc.²⁷ Besides, ethical values must be observed with ritual li 礼. The Master said:

"The profound person who takes the right as his material to work upon and ritual as the guide in putting what is right into practice, who is modest in setting out his project and faithful in carrying them to their conclusion. He indeed is a true profound person." (A. 15: 17)

君子义以为质， 礼以行之， 逊以出之， 信以成之， 君子哉。

Being the profound person is not final end of the Confucian ideal. It is only an inevitable procedure to the ideal. Through this process man can achieve a complete realization of this ideal of the unity of him and the heaven, which, the Confucian believe, is inherent in every man's nature. That is the Confucian ultimate end, wherein man himself is united with the heaven. In other words, he has become the heaven. This point is in a sharp contrast with Islamic teaching and other world religious teachings as well, which provoke that man, after his hard struggle in this world life, is only a member of the heaven; moreover the definition
of the heaven in Islam and the Confucianism is also deeply varied. To clarify the varieties of this aspect needs a special treatment.

4. 1. 3. Self in Islam and Confucianism

Self is another important issue of human possession. The nature of its complexity immensely bewilders human mind since long in human history. Islam and Confucianism both have given a great concern to the issue with their respective characteristics. By contrast, Islam gives more detailed concern than that of the latter.

In Islamic term there are two words nafs and ṭūḥ, which connote human inner existence. The latter normally translated as soul or the holy spirit (in case of ṭūḥ al-qudus), whilst the former has several implications, which include "soul", "person", "self", "one's inner desire or feeling", and "willingness". The Qurān uses the word nafs and its plural form anfus or mufs in two senses: (1) the human soul, (2) the human self or person. It is not wanted to discover the mystery of the soul here due to its nature of complexity, which may stretch to a prolonged discussion. The discussion here is confined to the meaning of nafs as self and person.

One of Islamic tenets is that the ultimate purpose of man's life in this world is to realize Almighty Allah's existence. He created man and spirit only to serve Him. The realization of the existence of Allah can be obtained through several ways: Holy Scriptures; prophets; discovery of one's self; and observance of material existences in this universe. The self-discovery or self-knowledge is one way to
realize one's Creator -- Almighty Allah, hence is one of the purpose of his life in this world. The Prophet of Islam (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "He who knows himself (nafsahu) knows his Lord (Rabbahu)."  

In striving to unveil one's self he journeys to Allah. So the self-discovery is an ongoing inward process, it may be disrupted by Satan's interference into any stages of the process, and leads him to a wrong end, which is ultimate goal of the process. In order to protect oneself from this interference, he needs an outer guidance, which is served by the Holy Scriptures and Prophets' admonishment.

It has been seen in the previous chapter, that Islam advocates that man is made inclined to the recognition of Allah's existence as his primordial nature, he is self-consciously aware of Allah, and is spiritually yearning for genuine submission to Allah. But his engagement into mundane life, as well as ever-active effort of Satan shade the primordial nature and mislead him to false deity. To avoid this unfortunate consequence, man must make effort to discover self inwardly and seek the guidance of the Holy Scriptures outwardly. Self-discovery involves three major stages, which are reflected in a person's ever-intensifying conscious obedience to Allah, and his ever-enhancing yearning for Allah's approval:

- darkness, shadows, and light. The characteristic of spiritual darkness is embodied by man whose soul is infatuated with the present world, is oblivious of the purpose of life. His worldview is materialistic. He regards the knowledge he learnt through the physical senses as reality. He is deluded and bewildered by the superficial knowledge, which could only lead him to falsehood. But he still has two ways to choose, either deeper indulges onto the darkness of falsehood, or trivially uses his consciousness ("Aql), to wither the darkness off. If the former
way prevails, the self, its desire dimension becomes more intense, the man loses all spiritual yearning. If the latter way prevails, he will uplift to the level of shadows.

At the level of the shadows, self desires to seek the source. Yet he has no clear vision of how to recognize the creator from the self and creation. He has just struggled out of endless false darkness, and is still bewildered by false practice adopted in his earlier life. His situation resembles shadows caused by an object blocking direct rays of light. Such practices and beliefs are veils kept the self out of light, the truth. The self may not truly realize the veils, he needs outer guidance from his Creator, or Holy Scriptures or prophets. Upon uncovering the veils the sincere self makes effort to remove them so as to see the true light, realizing the ultimate truth: there is nothing worth of worship but Almighty Allah.

As the self is guided toward the light, his deep inner consciousness is illuminated by the light, which uncovers the veils of darkness and false practices. He explicitly recognizes his Creator and His relative attributes. He can now distinguish the real from unreal, the truth from the false. He sees, from his self and creation, the multiple reflections of Almighty Allah's existence and His beautiful Names. He says: "Glory to Almighty Allah, who leads me found this ultimate truth." He submits himself to Allah, and acts in accordance with the principle of "taking what the Messenger brings to you, and refrain from what He prohibits you."

After experiencing these three stages the self discovers the truth, recognizes the source, and practices the commandment. He uplifts to the status of the spiritually
nearest person (*muqarrabīn*) to His Creator. Thus, the self achieves the ultimate
goal of his life.

A similar account, to some extend, on the issue of self has been taken in the
Confucianism, which advocate that man is endowed with good nature (Mencius
line) "To follow this nature is called the way, cultivating the way is called
teaching."\(^{15}\) The way is inherent in human nature, what need a person to do for
discovering the way is to cultivate self with Confucian values. This self-
cultivation is a ceaseless process of self-knowledge or self-realization.

One may have noticed that both Islam and Confucianism advocate self-
consciousness of human nature, which is endowed with certain characteristics of
embracing true qualities, realization of Allah and yearning for the ultimate truth in
Islam, all sorts of ethical religious values in Confucianism. To see the ultimate
truth and possess those values, the adherents of respective group must undergo a
long process of self-knowledge, or self-discovering or self-cultivation, because the
truth and values do not simply reveal themselves to self.

However, Confucian way of getting possession of values is quite different from
the realization of the truth by stages in Islam. A Confucian must constantly engage
in the process of learning the values, and put what he learnt into practice
immediately in every aspect of his life. Solely learning is not enough, he must also
reflect deeply upon the meaning of what he learnt and practiced. The Master said:

"If one learns without reflecting, he will be bewildered; if one
reflects without learning, what he learnt will be wasted." (A. 2. 15)

学而不思则罔，思而不学则殆。

It is mentioned before that ren 仁, as a comprehensive general ideal,
encompasses five relations and all sorts of ethical virtues, which are only concrete
concepts. It is li 礼 rituals actualize them in complex social situations. Without actualization of li, ren and its components are almost inconceivable. This importance of li gives rise to the idea of that the Confucian self-cultivation can be regarded as a process of ritualization, which implies a dynamic process of self-cultivation in the spirit of filiality, brotherhood, friendship, discipleship, and loyalty.

The self-cultivation is not an isolated individual work, it involves a family and a society. In other words, it only can be completed in a societal context. It is inconceivable to practice five relationships and other rituals without one's participating in a community. Confucius' saying "Wishing to establishing oneself, one establishes others; wishing to enlarge oneself, one enlarges others" explains this well. Further more, the self-cultivation is a ceaseless, ever deepening and broadening process. One can not fully realize his nature until he obtains the last goal of life -- the unity with the Heaven and Earth.
4. 2. A Comparison in Ethical Values

Ethical values in both Islamic and Confucian traditions are numerous. It is impossible to enlist all of them here to give account. Nevertheless a selection of a few of them to make a close comparison and contract between some relatively similar values of both traditions is a feasible way here.

4. 2. 1. The straight way vs. the mean path

The two values have been discussed from their semantic perspective in the chapter two. Here their deeper implications from an interpretive perspective would be intended. The Islamic straight way can be elucidated through several dimensions.

Firstly, in practicing ethical values or divine injunctions, one may go, beside the right path, to two extremes: either excessive or deficient, which are both disapproved by a mutual consensus of people. The truth is in the right path. This elucidation is justified by a Qurānic verse: "Thus have We made of you a nation justly balanced." Justly balanced (wasāṭa) connotes "mean" or "right". A believer, after he realizes Allah through knowledge, becomes a rightly guided person. Hence he must realize the mean or right path, which is normally set between the extremes led by all sorts of desires, sentiments and so on. The believers pray to Allah Almighty, to guide them, in their every action, to avoid the extremes, and arrive at the right path. This view of interpretation of the Islamic straight path is, to some degree, compatible with Confucian (mainly of Song
Dynasty 宋) interpretation of zhong yong 中庸 (the Mean Path), which is rendered as "by zhong (中) is meant what is not one-sided, and by yong (庸) is meant what is unchangeable. Zhong is correct path of the world and yong is the definite principle of the world."  

42 Prof. Tu Wei-ming further explains "the term zhong (中) can be rendered as centrality yong (庸) as commonality.  

43 What sounds accorded to the Islamic straight way is the zhong yong's implication of "mean" or "middle". Its implications of opposing unity and moderate, which was discussed in the chapter two in considerable details, are congruous to the Islamic straight path in the sense presented here. In the light of this interpretation, it can been found that the method of realizing the ultimate truth from both Islam and Confucianism, in some aspect, is founded on one similar principle: the mean path, provided their ultimate concerns are quite different.

Secondly, the straight way connotes that a believer must keep himself away from worshiping the things other than Allah Almighty, turning toward Allah with his full heart, thinking and prayers. All prophets have been sent as his good samples so that he can get lessons from their lives. Those prophets are bestowed grace by Allah Almighty, therefore, the way they undertake is the straight way, and through which the believers must go. One interesting book titled *The Straight Way*, by Shaikh A. Kādir, should be mentioned here, in which the author seems suggesting that the implication of the term is the whole Islamic teachings derived from the absolute sources: the Qurān and Hadīth. "One must believe correctly as directed by God as well as lead oneself according to the commands of the Creator. This opportunity is available in Islam and described in the Qurān as the "straight way."  

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The Confucian interpretation of zhong yong 中庸 comparable to this dimension of the straight way, is the zhong yong's implication of that man is the being which embodies the centrality of heaven and earth. The centrality is an intrinsic characteristic of man, it lies in deep consciousness of him, with the tremendous progress of self-cultivation, man becomes united by the centrality with heaven and earth.45

Thirdly, the straight way in this sense implies the meaning of "even", or "flat", or "smooth" without any obstacles. Human life is pervaded with all kinds of difficulties, pitfalls and diseases. As one walks along his way of life, he finds many of his friends induce him to one way, his enemies show him another way, and Satan lures him to the third way. And at the same time, he is bound to be worn out by desires, anger, hatred, and envy. He is certainly to undergo the test of denying Allah, associating anyone or anything with Him. His power, ability, hope, thread, refusal, separation and so on, all of these made him suffering under dense darkness. Besides, his intelligence is limited, life is short; his needs endless, attempt dangerous, decision difficult. He is absolutely deluded by all these. He has to bend down to his Creator and pray Him to guide him to a way devoid of all these unavoidable troubles.46

Fourthly, from technological perspective the straight line is the shortest line among the lines joining two points. Applying this sense to the Islamic straight way, it may be elucidated that:

(1) The straight way is the nearest and shortest way to obtain the ultimate truth, which might not be achieved by one due to his impotence, except through the straight way.
(2) The straight way is only one, there is no other way like it or can substitute for it, whilst other ways are all tortuous, resembling to one another and hence can substitute for one another. The straight way refrain one from fears and diseases, and is most adjacent to peace.

(3) The straight way leads one to the end purpose, whilst the tortuous way leads him to astray.

(4) The straight way remains unchangeable whilst the tortuous way changes frequently. \(^{47}\)

For this third and fourth dimension of interpretation of the straight way, we can not find comparable interpretations of the mean path. The reason is explicit, that the Confucianism is, at least to Confucius himself, basically devoid of faith in transcendent being, they regard self as absolute existence.

4.2.2. *Birr*, *Ikhlās* and *Ihsān* vs. Zhong 忠, Shu 恕, and Xiao 孝

*Birr* connotes several meanings, for each of them we can find a counterpart from the Confucian values. *Birr* implies serving Allah piously, with loyalty or to be true to Him. The very basis meaning of Confucian Zhong 忠 is loyalty, dedication or truthfulness. However, this implication of the both values is not completely compatible. The ultimate object of loyalty is different, *birr* is attributed to Allah Almighty, whilst zhong is served to one's king or his superior or friend or his wife. Here again modifies the characteristic of secularity of the Confucianism.
Birr implies dealing with others kindly or benevolently. This sense is absolutely accorded with one of the implication of Confucian shu (恕) reciprocity, which is defined by the Master Kong as "do not do to others what you do not wish to do to yourself." Both values, in this particular sense, indicate a gentle and enthusiastic relationship of a society, in which people should love and be kind to each other. That is one of the most important prerequisites of a peaceful society. Individuals of the society should realize not only his own existence and hence enjoin his rights, but also respect others' existence and hence respect their rights. One should be neither an extreme egoism nor an extreme altruism, but be balanced between these two.

Birr connotes a sense of respectfulness, dutifulness and kindness to one's parents, which is agreeable to the Confucian Xiao 孝 (filial piety), which should be paid by a son towards his father, and which indicates one side of the father and son relationship; another side is expressed by ci 慈 or kindness or benevolence or ai (love), which should be manifested from the father towards the son. This type of "dyadic relationship" is the main characteristic of the Confucian ethical system; it is particularly evident in five relationships.

The filial piety is another ethical value completely compatible to each other. It is necessary to briefly discuss its implications in the Islamic teaching here; since a considerably detailed discussion of the Confucian xiao 孝 has been given in the chapter three.

Islamic birr of this sense should be taught to every child by his parents since his small age, so that he can accommodate to it and practice it when he becomes matured. The Holy Qurān and Hadīth both give great importance to the birr. A
Qur'anic verse, talking about the prophet Yahya, reads: "And kind to his parents, and he was not overbearing or rebellious." 50 One Hadith says: "The pleasure of Allah (to some one) is resided in his pleasure with his parents, the resentment of Allah (to some one) is resided in one's resentment with his parents." 51 Islam even grants birr superior over struggling for the course of Allah. The Prophet's answer to a man who has parents at home, who come to him asking for his allowance to jihād "you do jihād to your parents" is a good prove to this statement. The similar statements are ample in the Hadith. Thus it may be said that the birr, the filial piety in Islam has no less importance than it has in the Confucianism.

Birr connotes abundant meanings, several of them have been discussed for the sake of comparison with the implications of xiao 🎀 introduced before. The rest are as following:

(1) Being reverence to one's parents. The Holy Qurān addresses the believers being reverent to parents, "whether one or both of them attain old age in their life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them but address them, in terms of honor." 52 With speaking kindly and politely to parents, not speaking loudly to them, not complaining them if they did something the son does not like, admonishing them of their mistakes, and helping them when they are working, and so on, one expresses his utmost reverence to his parents.

(2) Being obedient to parents. "Out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility." 53 The metaphor shows one's complete obedience to his parents, promptly responding to their request at any time except their request to commit sins, doing no things they prohibit you to do.
(3) Being kind to them. "The Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents." Here, the spiritual and moral duties are brought into juxtaposition, indicating the great importance of the filial piety to parents. Men solely worship Allah because only Him is worthy of worship. He is the supreme Creator of every one. Men are kind to parents, because they give birth to their lives and cherish them in their childhood.

(4) Providing service to them. The service varies. The first of all is to provide plenty of sustenance, protect their fame and esteems, dignity and property. And to precede service to whatever they require from you, assist them in every sorts of work, respond to their calls immediately, respect their friends and guests in their life time and after.

(5) Being careful and watchful when they grow old. The aged people enter problematic period, the son should be more careful of them then before. Don't say any word of contempt, don't show disrespect to them, observe timely their feelings and sentiments.

(6) Praying to Allah Almighty for blessings to them, saying: "My Lord! Bestow on them your Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood." A Muslim asks Allah's forgiveness in every prayer for whatever sin his parents had committed before.

Thus it has been seen that the implications of the filial piety in both Islam and the Confucianism are compatible except in two points, where differences lie. The first of which is that the performance of remembrance after parents' death. Islam advocates that believers utter prayers and ask Allah's forgiveness of his parent's sin, big or small; whilst the Confucianism advocates keeping mourning of one's
parents for three years, and also following his father's will for three years after the father's death.

The second of it is that Islam favors respecting one's mother than his father for three reasons:

(1) The mother bears with him before he is born, then gives birth to him, feeds him, takes care of him and teaches him. The father plays lesser role in these matters. The Qurān speaks this frequently:

"We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents, in travail upon travail did his mother bear him. And in years twain was his weaning, (hear the command) show gratitude to Me and to your parents, to Me is your final Goal. " (Q. Luqmān 31: 14)

(2) The mother, due to her love, affection and kindness, pays much more devotion, solicitude and care for her child than the father does. For these reasons the mother deserves more respect from the son.

*Ihsān* is another term of Islam, which can find similar counterpart from the Confucianism. *Ihsān* basically means acting nicely, conducting in good moral, and being loyal or true or sincere to one's Creator. All these implications are perfectly consisted with Confucian Zhong 忠 connotations, with one exception of that the loyalty of *ihsān* is embodied towards Allah and to other people as well; whilst the loyalty of zhong is solely expressed to other people by the agent. Further more, *ihsān* implies improving one's relations with others, whereas Confucian shu 信 is mainly construed as establishing good relationship with other members of a society.
4.2.3. Taqwā, īkhlāṣ vs. Cheng

It has been discussed in the Chapter two that the īkhlāṣ of Islam connotes sincerity and devotion, and in the chapter three that the cheng of Confucianism is construed as sincere, true, real and honest. A common implication of sincerity is also matched between the two traditions. īkhlāṣ denotes one's sincerity and truthfulness in his service to his Creator, whereas cheng expresses one's sincerity and honesty to the Confucian way of self-cultivation throughout its process. īkhlāṣ signifies sincerity and purity of one's service to Allah (subhanahu wata'ala); it distinguishes his service from all kinds of imperfections in his service, as if milk distinguishes itself from blood and sheet. In other words, īkhlāṣ denotes a full concentration in one's worship of his Creator, the Omnipotent, his mind, thinking and actions of all physical organs must absolutely discard all other things and solely serve the One Most High, the All-Knowing, and the All-Hearing.

Earlier in this chapter, it was mentioned that the Confucianism asserts that human nature is imparted from the Heaven and following the human nature is called the Way. Man needs to educate himself in order to cultivate the Way. It further asserts that "sincerity is the way of Heaven. Thinking of how to be sincere is the way of man." The Heaven is a very abstract notion, which leaves void for all kinds of interpretations and makes rooms for the import of other progressive religion, particularly Buddhism. The specific connotation of the Heaven is much a disputed Confucian term amongst Confucian scholars, ancient as well as modern. It will be discussed in a bit more profound sense, but here suffice it to say that the Heaven is a counterpart of God, who is necessarily
existent one, omnipotent and merciful. By this interpretation, we not only can resolve problem arose here, but also can explain some common belief of Chinese culture, for instance, the proverb: "The Heaven changed his face," or "the Heaven opened His eyes". It is inconceivable and very contradicting if it is comprehended that the Heaven is a solely physical and senseless nature.

If this premise is acceptable, the aforementioned text should go this way: sincerity is one of the virtuous attributes of Heaven. To realize and understand the Heaven, one must try to be sincere, since "human nature is imparted from the Heaven, to follow human nature is called the way, and to cultivate the Way is called teaching." 57 So, to obtain the realization of the Heaven, one must to be sincere in the process of self-cultivation at first hand, and to be sincere in following the human nature. Sincerity is a mutual quality that matches man and Heaven, and brings them together.58

From this aspect, it is found that the connotation of Islamic *ikhlās* is perfectly compatible with that of Confucians cheng 诚, in the process of service to their respective ultimate goal, worshiping Allah (subḥanahu wata'ala) in Islam, and achieving unity with the Heaven in Confucianism.

Another Islamic term closely related to *ikhlās* is *taqwā*, which means, as has been discussed in the chapter two, Allah mindedness, keeping in accordance with Islamic commandment, restraining from all kinds of evils that criticized by Islam. This instruction necessitates that the agent must behave properly in private as well as in public, his actions must be sincerely accorded with God's commandment. He must always keep consistent with this practice, unaffected or perturbed by changing surrounding conditions. This implication of *taqwā* is also compatible
with that of Confucians shen-du 慎独 "vigilant solitariness." The common interpretation of the term by the Confucian scholars is "watchful when one is alone", which can only lead one to understand that the emphasis is on behaving properly in private as well as in public. But in fact, it implies a much deeper sense of connotation. As Prof. Tu Wei-ming suggests that "being alone" (du 獨) refers "to the self in terms of its singularity, uniqueness and innermost core. Du or 'solitariness', in this sense, means a personal aloneness and the loneliness that can not be affected or perturbed by changing surrounding conditions". Here tauqwâ and shen-du seem to meet a nice consistence.

4. 2. 4. Maghfîrah vs. shu 慎

Maghfîrah is an Islamic term, which embodies a relationship between man and his Creator. Man, due to his "impatient" nature\(^{59}\), is bound to make sins, and the Creator forgives them if the man truly repents sooner afterwards. One, out of thousands and one, of Creator's attributes is the Oft-Forgiving. Allah forgives all sins\(^{60}\), provided that the sinner must make repentance to Him upon those sins, especially that of associating partners with Him, that is the most tremendous sin in the sight of Him\(^{61}\). In this relationship -- repentance by the sinner and forgiveness by the Creator, the Creator understands the vital weakness that the man was endowed with. Man is His best-designed creature, He knows him well. Out of his mercy, He opens the door of repentance for him to reaffirm his primordial nature - realization of the oneness of God. This is the God's stand. For man's part, the situation is perplexed, his, nature of haste normally leads him to misuse his
intellect to make a wrong choice in face of confused and delusive situations. He is used to be easily deceived by superficial material veils, and devoid of seeing the true source behind them. The ending of accepting these false veils as the true source is dreadful, incurring a severe punishment by the true source -- his Creator. Yet the punishment is the final choices. Before it is enforced upon an unforgivable sinner, the Creator has provided many means, such as sending prophets to every ummah (human race or nation)\textsuperscript{62}, revealing Holy Scriptures and endowing him with the faculty of intellect and reason, and more encouraging tidings: forgiveness of sins after committing them and so on, for man to readjust his false position, to get rid of false veils and realize the One true Creator. But still, some people, out of their arrogance and conceitedness or ignorance, do not realize the truth. They deserve the severe chastisement. So maghfirah is a great tiding for those people who had gone astray from the straight path. The door of repentance is open forever. A Qur'anic verse well expresses this, saying:

"O My servants who have transgressed against the themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Q. Al-Zumar 39. 53).

\begin{equation}
\text{عَلَىَّ إِنَّ الْلَّهَ يَغْفِرُ مَّا مَّا مَّا فِيْلَدُنَا عَلَىَّ إِنَّ الْلَّهَ أَنْتُهُمْ لَمْ تُعْقِبْنَ مِنْ لَّهُمْ}
\end{equation}

Oft-forgiving (ghafūr) is one of the beautiful names of Allah, who encourages his believers to call on Him by them\textsuperscript{63}, and encourages them to contemplate them and embellish themselves by actualizing them through learning and acting. One Hadīth expresses this truth: "Allah has one-hundred minus one Names, whoever believes in their meanings and acts accordingly, will enter paradise"\textsuperscript{64}.
That is the Islamic *maghfirah* indicating a relationship between man and his Creator. A similar ethical value shu 慈 in the Confucianism is attainable. A distinctive feature of shu (reciprocity or altruism) is expressed by one Confucius saying: "One ought not to do to others what the one would not want others to do to him." 65 This is a mutual understanding of human relationships. An individual, as a member of a society, should respect others, and expect others to do the same to him also. The society, based on this principle, is a peaceful, harmonious community. Every member of the community feels the happiness. importance of his existence, realizes the importance of other's existence.

Shu (reciprocity), thus is a value indicating the relationship between man and community where he is living, and lastly between man and Heaven. Still more, it is seen by the Confucians "as the human way par excellence. It connects the individual person to the human community, The basic dyadic relationship, including the five cardinal relationships (parent and child, husband and wife, sibling and sibling, friend and friend, and ruler and minister), are all governed by the principle of reciprocity." 66

From the Analects text quoted above, one may understand that the context of shu is merely altruistic, forgetting oneself benefits others. In fact, it is essential to one's own self-cultivation. How this can be? The principle of reciprocity requires one put himself into the position of his action's bearer. This self-reflective assumption leads to two consequences: establishment of a reciprocal relation with others, and personal self-transformation. 67

Reciprocity is not only the Confucian way of harmonizing individual and social relationships but also the way of connecting the individual with nature and the
Heaven. Through reciprocity, man becomes interfused with the cosmic transformation and thus forms a trinity with Heaven and Earth.68

In the light of above discussions, it is found that Islamic maghfarah and Confucian shu (reciprocity) are similar in a sense that the both establish itself on one common base: understanding. In the case of Islamic maghfarah, Allah the One understands human weakness of that he is unavoidable from making sins, so opens a door for repentance. And the repentance is effectively reciprocated by the One. Whereas in the case of Confucian shu, every member of a community must understand others position so to make a harmonious social situation, and hence sublimate himself to the unity with Heaven. The common approaches of the both values are reciprocal and dyadic. Yet a major difference lies there. Maghfarah connotes a direct relation between Allah and man; whereas shu meanly denotes a relationship among men. Maghfarah strengthens the relationship between Allah and man, leads the man to act in accordance with the principle of “enjoining on the people the good deeds and forbidding people from all kinds of evil deeds.” 69 Its aim is to establish a just, healthy and harmonious society; while shu sets its mean objects upon establishing a harmonious society. The way of approach is different, Maghfarah in Islam and shu in the Confucianism, but aim is same: to establish a peaceful society.

4.2.5. Šāliḥin vs. Jun zi 君子

In Arabic, the root word of šāliḥin is “ṣalaha”, which means “to be good, right; to be pious, righteous.” 70 Šāliḥ is the doer of these actions and šāliḥin is
the plural form of *sālih*, which denotes a meaning of "the conductor of good deeds". What are the good deeds? It is carrying out of all commandment of Allah (subhanahu wata‘ala) with the sincere intention of earning the pleasure of Allah. It involves not only the performance of the deeds but also the attitude with which one performs them. Good intention and attitude already won reward from God. Good action and consequence will win manifold reward from Him.

Good deeds are often mentioned together with faith (*imān*) in the Holy Qurān.\(^71\) This integration is not difficult to understand, since having right faith should necessarily lead to the good deeds, while the good deeds must naturally spring from the faith.\(^72\)

In the light of above discussions, it may be understood that *sālihin* are some people who only perform righteous things devoid of doing any bad things. Further more, *sālihin* is not only engaged in cultivating the good behaviors of one self, but ardently involves in improving the condition of this globe, where man is inhabiting in. Remember that man is vicegerent of Allah on this earth, his major task is to realize the true Creator and rightly manage the affairs of this world and the universe. Enjoining in righteous things and forbidding all evils. Upon achieving this, his abode is definitely the paradise. Yet the task, to his impotence, is heavy and the journey of life is long. Many people fail to stand against multiple testing (luring of satan, seeing through many kinds of veils and so on), only a fraction of people stand firm with the truth, and act as *sālihin*. *Sālihin*, thus, is noble and sublime character, which partly imparted by the Creator, and partly cultivated through knowledge and self-learning. Their final abode is admirable, entering ever-lasting paradise.
The characteristics of ُسَلِيمُنِ َِّهِ are clearly stated in the Qurān:

"They believe in Allah and the last day, they enjoin good conducts, and forbid all evils, and they hasten in all good works. They are among the ُسَلِيمُنِ." (Q. Āli 01mān 3: 114)

"All who obey Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad), then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace of the prophets, the sincere (loves of truth)/honest, the martyrs, and the ُسَلِيمُنِ, and how excellent these companions are!" (Q. Al-Nisā' 4: 69)

It is due to this nobility and sublimity, all Muslims, including all prophets, pray from time to time to Allah to bless them, and place them among the ُسَلِيمُنِ. 

A perfectly compatible feature to ُسَلِيمُنِ in Confucian ideals is jun zi 君子 (the profound person or nobleman), which has been briefly discussed in several places. The jun zi (the profound person) is the ideal personality of the Confucianism, who engages in an unceasing process of self-realization. He always acts in accordance with the Confucian values, until he internalizes those values, and manifests them in his every action and behavior. Yet this internalization is not a psychological process, it "seems to be a creative process of self-realization fostered by a self-generating source of strength." 74 Since this process is often private, it can hardly be recognized by a set of behavioral criteria. However, it would make its appearance through one's natural daily conduct.

The major characteristics of Jun zi are embodied through those sublime virtues, such as doing justice in personal interactions with others as well as in his social
affairs, doing what is proper to his social position and going not beyond this; never being tired with making any further effort. "His words correspond to his actions and his actions correspond to his words. The profound person is indeed earnest and genuine." 75 His tougher test lies in embodying the principle of centrality, which "signifies the way of being able to act in accordance with the best possible structure of affairs in a given situation." 76 The profound person stands firm with his way, maintains harmony in his nature and conduct and does not waver.

The duty of the profound person is not only to struggle to achieve his inner peace, to cultivate himself with the Confucian values, he must also points out to others what they themselves are capable of learning and knowing. He establishes himself with the intention of establishing others. An established jun zì (profound person) is a sage, who is already a moral being, and who acts only what is in accordance with the Confucian moral system. He is now a truly exemplary teacher at personal level, and can exert long-lasting influence upon society at social level. He further can reach cultivational ultimate in the unity of Heaven and man.77

Thus it may be concluded that šāliḥin and jun zì are both sublime personalities of Islam and the Confucianism, with high moral qualifications. Both are truthfully exemplary teachers at personal level and have strong influence upon society at communal level. The abode of the šāliḥin is ever living in the paradise and will be one of those who are near to Allah (subḥanahu wataʿala), while the final aim of jun zì is the unity with the Heaven and the Earth.
4.2.6. *Haq* and *dao* 道

*Haq*, as it was discussed in the chapter two, in Islam generally implies the meaning of "truth", which specifically denotes Allah Himself; His words; His messages and the Holy scriptures sent to mankind through His messengers, the Prophet's words; the true things which are definitely coming into being, and even the natural laws. All these have been underlain as *haq*.

A defining characteristic of this Qurānic assertion is the belief that Islam, which has been chosen by Allah as the supreme truth for the whole mankind, is the true religion (the *Haq*). Islamic teachings are truth, its source is truth, message is truth, messengers are true, hence the Holy Qurān is the true scripture, and the great tidings stated in it are truth. Throughout the Qurān this line of thought is clearly manifested.

Truth is a great thing, when it is accepted and approved by empirical facts, it can bring a great effect to individuals and societies. The Qurān asserts:

"Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish." (Q. Al-Isrā' 17: 81)

وَقَالَ جَمَآءُ الْحَقِّ وَرَهَقَ الْبَطُولُ إِنَّ الْبَطُولَ كَانَ رَهَقًا

The counterpart of *haq* in the Confucianism is *tao* 道, which is normally translated by almost all Confucian scholars as "the way". The importance given to the way by Confucius can be seen from his remark: "He has not lived in vain who dies the day he is told about the way." The implication underlying this statement seems to suggest a sort of truth concerning the ultimate purpose of human life and their relations with the universe. It seems also suggesting that
Confucius was willing to listen to other alternative way beside his way, the Confucian way, which he described as the “one thread” running through his way. His disciple Zeng zi 曾子 interpreted it, saying: “Our Master's way is zhong 忠 and shu 恕, nothing more.” 80 Zhong signifies the loyalty and sincerity in the process of self-cultivation, in other words, zhong helps one to be a strict rule follower. It helps him to do what is right, according to li. But this rule-following manner may lead one to mechanistic superficial actions. Shu comes to resolve this problem; it helps one avoid becoming a slave to the rituals. It injects into the mechanistic rituals a benevolent element. 81

Thus, haq and dao 道 both denote a sense of truth in their respective implications. Haq implies the Islamic way of life, whilst dao implies the Confucian way of life. Both the ways intend to insure one to be morally justified at individual level, and to effectively exercise their obligations towards others at communal level.
4.3. Concept of God

The concept of God is one of the most important themes in which a sharp contrast lies between Islam and Confucianism. The God of Islam, Allah is a very specific transcendent Being; while the god of the Confucian Tian is a very ambiguous notion, which has been one of the major disputed topics since the very foundation of Confucianism by the Master Confucius till present Confucian scholastic arena. It is intended here to discuss briefly the theme aiming at a precise comparison between two notions.

4.3.1 Al-Tawḥīd and Confucian Way of Religiousness

*Al-Tawḥīd* is the most important and fundamental teaching of Islam, it lies at very core of the entire Islamic system. The first article of the Islamic faith is: there is no god but Allah. The first thing of a Muslim must do is to confess "there is no god but Allah." *Al-Tawḥīd*, Al-Ghazzālī asserts, is the central foundation and bedrock of Islam. "Who ever confess 'there is no god but Allah, He is only One, has no partner, He is the dominion, and to Him belong all the praises and thanks, and He is able to do all things,' his Islamic belief established." 82 He is now distinguished from a non-believer.

This step is very significant for especially a new believer, it is a watershed of his life. From this point he fashions his life in virtue in accordance with the Divine Will. He denounces all other kinds of deities and lowers his head in obedience to
Allah (subhanahu wata‘ala), the Almighty. He must follow His command in his word and deed.

*Al-Tawhīd* sums up the Islamic way of life and presents the essence of the Islamic civilization, it presents the crux of the prophetic mission which was entrusted to a chain of prophets from the first man Adam till the last Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

*Al-Tawhīd* is man’s mission of being in this world, is the essence of being human. For he is created from nothingness by the One Creator, he is imparted with the principle of *al-tawhīd* in his nature. He himself and even the whole universe manifest the principle of *al-tawhīd*. they are from the One Creator, and the One Creator makes all these myriad things. The universe, the heaven, the earth, the human kingdom, animal kingdom, vegetable kingdom, and all other seen and unseen matters, all are uttering the principle of “there is no god but Allah” in their own form.

*Al-Tawhīd* signifies one’s relationship with the only One, this signifies exclusion of a similar relationship with anyone else. Regarding this point Nejatullah Siddiqi has a right elucidation:

"*Al-Tawhīd* is man’s commitment to Allah, the focus of all his reverence and gratitude, the only source of value. What Allah desires of man becomes value for him, the end of human endeavor. Man, who commits himself to the Will of Allah, recognizes no authority except His and accepts no guidance other than His. This commitment involves love and worship, obedience and submission combined with an eagerness, to do His will and the sense of a mission."  

*Al-Tawhīd* requires of man’s commitment to Allah to be genuine and sincere. It emancipates man from all human and man-made super-human bondage, and restores man’s essential freedom. “Man is free. He is bound to no other man,
group of men, or to their mores and manners, customs and traditions, social institutions, laws, modes of thought, views and presumptions, theories and philosophies.” 84 “Man must be fully conscious of this essential freedom and independence before he can enter into the relationship with Allah required of him by his own nature and consciousness. Al-Tawḥīd presupposes a consciousness in man of his stature independent of all being and dependent on the One Being alone.” 85 “The consciousness that al-tawḥīd presupposes gives man the sense of being equals. All men are equally free and independent of one another while they are equally dependent on Allah.” 86 Al-Tawḥīd signifies that Allah unifies the whole universe, human submission to al-tawḥīd unites all Muslim with existing cosmic unity.

Thus al-tawḥīd assumes a very fundamental and comprehensive concept of Islam. It occupies a pivotal position in the whole Islamic civilization.

In contrast with this explicitly defined characteristic of Islamic religiousness, Confucian way of being religious is quite unique. If we define Confucian way in the context of other three great world religions, it would be excluded from being the fourth religion of the world. In this respect the Confucianism can only being regarded as a secular moral philosophy with no religious import at all. In China, however, the Confucianism has for centuries been mentioned along with Buddhism and Taoism as one of the three religions (the so-called san jiao 三教). 87 A book entitled “The Three Religions of China”, introducing them to students designated for Christian mission work in China, 88 has been written by W. E. Soothill in 1929, who was then one of the professor of Chinese at Oxford University. In which the author categorized the Confucianism as one of religions.
Indeed almost all Confucian scholars, Sinologists or Confucians, agree that the Confucianism has certain religions implications, but devoid of certain implications that other world religions possess. The important dogmas advocated by other regions, such as attributes of God, creation of the universe and man and all myriad things, the concept of angels, revelations of the holy scriptures, life in the hereafter, and so on, are totally absent from Confucian teachings. But still it shares some significant religious characteristics. The concept of God, though is very ambiguous, is existing, ghost is right there living in this world, the purpose of man's life and his happiness lies definitely in cultivation of humanity, deeply hiding in human nature imparted by the Heaven. Its religious import is ardently advocated by some Confucian scholars, like Prof. Liu Shu-xian who sincerely and confidently argued that "the Confucian tradition certainly has its unique way of expressing its ultimate and therefore religious concern." “The message of the transcendent permeates the Confucian tradition.” It is "certainly not without its aspiration towards an ultimate concern. Thus it should be seriously considered as one alternative in world religions.”

If this argument is acceptable, further interpretations are very necessarily to be made. The slightly mention of Confucius about the subject has caused a handful divergent understanding of the subject. Modern secularism even the communism traced the relevance of their ideology in the Analects. Those Confucian scholars who advocate the religious nature of Confucius' teachings are also have different interpretations towards the same text of the Analects. Some of them like Prof. Tu Wei-ming emphasizes the secular material aspect of the text; whilst others like D.
C. Lau and Liu Shu-xian are inclined to transcendent implications of it. Let us sketch out the latter's viewpoint first.

Confucius' belief in God is stemmed from two sayings attributed to him: "At fifty, I understood (知) tian ming 天命." 92 Tian ming seems to mean the decree of the heaven. 93 The passage shows that the Master was used to contemplate the matters of human destiny. He received the commandment 命 of the Heaven 天 at his fifty, and knew what he should do (following the Decree of Heaven). When he entered his sixty all the decrees of the heaven embodied through his every moving and actions 耳顺. At seventy he could only speak, act and behave within the confine of Heaven's decrees (不逾矩). He now already became a very good examplor to others. Thus this line of implication is definitely consistent with other religious teachings of the same respect.

The only other mention of tian ming in the Analects is when Confucius said that it was one of the things the gentleman stood in awe of. 94 The profound person, who has the knowledge of self, stands in awe of Heaven's decree, because the profound person realizes, through long and hard process of self-cultivation, the existence of God (Tian) and its significance. Hence he naturally restrain himself from doing evil thing discouraged by Confucian teachings, which imparted by the Tian upon man's nature.

Behold! The realization of the Heaven lies in one's process of self-cultivation.

"He who knows his nature knows Heaven." 95 This teaching is completely in accordance with the Islamic teaching of that "he who knows himself recognize his Creator Allah." 96
It is this deep sense of believing in Tian and importance of his mission conferred by Tian, when Yan Yuan 颜渊 died, the Master lamented that "Alas! Heaven has bereft me! Heaven has bereft me!" 97 Because Yan Yuan had treated him as a father, yet he had not treated him as a son.98 He felt a sense of violation of his own teachings by himself. If he is really bereft by Heaven, he has nowhere to ask for forgiveness.99 He mentioned "My prayer has been carried on since long."100 This further confirms that Confucius not only believed in the Heaven, but also regularly performed his prayers. Yet the form of his prayers is unknown.

The religiosity of Confucius' teaching is interpreted by other Confucian scholar, like Tu Wei-ming, as "being engaged in the process of learning to be fully human."101 He defined "the Confucian way of being religious as ultimate self-transformation as a communal act and as a faithful dialogical response to the transcendent." 102 This statement is further explained by him, that men, as common human being, are born with minimum humanity, which conditioned them as human. That humanity can be further developed into fuller or maximum humanity through self-transformation. He expounded 'Ultimate' refers to the greatest possible realization of that humanity.103 'Self-transformation' suggests that although men are not what they ought to be, they can reach the highest state of humanity through personal cultivation.104 Yet one can not develop himself through only spiritual transformation without encountering like-minded people."

To reach the fullness of self-transformation one can not isolate oneself from a community. "The preferred course of action is to integrate all levels of the community (family, neighborhood, clan, race, nation, world, universe, cosmos) into the process of self-transformation." 105 But still this communal participation
falls short of achieving the fully humanity, “one must establish a constant dialogical relationship with the Heaven.” How is this possible? Human nature is imparted by the Heaven. So man possesses mutual characteristics with Heaven. This mutuality provides a basement for man to perceive the transcendence of the heaven as the immanence of man. This perception makes it possible for man to establish a dialogical relationship with the Heaven. The process of self-cultivation is actually one’s dynamic response to the Heaven. Its ever-deepening and enlarging nature decides that response should be constant. And to complete this process needs the agent to be devoted and faithful, engaging his whole life in this ever-expanding process.

Thus the nature of Confucian religiosity is ultimate self-transformation as a communal act and as a faithful dialogical response to the transcendent.

4.3.2. Allah in Islam and Tian 天 to Confucians

*Al-Tawhid* is not only the main characteristic of Islam but also the defining trait of the concept of God, Allah. He is only One. This matter of monotheism is well expressed through the Qur’anic verse:

“Say: He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute, He begotten not, nor is He begotten, and there is none like unto Him.” (Q. Al-Ikhlas 112: 1 - 4)

قُلْ هُوَ أَلِلَّهُ أَحَدٌ لا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَمْ بْدَ لَّهُ وَلَمْ يُولَدْنَ لَّهُ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كَفِيْوَا أَحَدُ
Allah is the personal name of the One true God. Nothing else can be called Allah. This proper name is applied to the Being who exists necessarily, by Himself comprising all attributes of perfection. In Muslim traditional writings Allah is classified as *ism al-dhat*, which means the proper name, which is the greatest of all other names. It refers to the essence, which unites all the attributes of divinity; it is also the most specific of the names, since no one uses it for anyone other than Him, neither literally nor metaphorically. The use of word Allah as a proper name appears as around 2,000 occasions in the Holy Qurān.

Besides the proper name Allah has other beautiful names. This is informed by the Qurānic verse:

"Say: ‘involve Allah or invoke the Most Gracious (al-Rahmān), by whatever name You invoke Him, (it is the same). For to Him belong the Best Names.” (Q. Al-İsrā’ 17: 110)

قَلْ أَدْعُوَّا اللَّهَ أَوَّلَادَهُ مِثْلَ هَذِهِ الْأَمْسَاكَ أَيْنَ مَا قَدْ تَدْعَوْا فَلَهُ الْأَمْسَاكَ الْكَحْمَسَ

The Beautiful (Best) names informed in the Qurān are over 100, and of this number the Prophet recommended 99 names, one hundred minus one, for Allah loves odd numbers. Apart from the proper Name Allah, each of the remaining names only refers to a single attribute. They can be used to name things other than Allah. It is commonly found that many Muslims are named Malik, Majid, Wali, and so on. Those Names are as following.107

He is (1) Allah and there is no other god but He, (2) Al-Rahmān (The Infinitely Good), (3) Al-Rahīm (The Merciful), (4) Al-Malik (The King), (5) Al-Quddūs (The Holy), (6) Al-Salām (The Flawless), (7) Al-Mu’mīn (The Faithful), (8) Al-Muhaymin (The Protector), (9) Al-‘Azīz (The Eminent), (10) Al-Jabbār (The Compeller), (11) Al-Mutakabbīr (The Proud), (12) Al-Khāliq (The Creator), (13)
Al-Muqaddim (The Promoter), (72) Al-Mu'akhkhir (The Postponer), (73) Al-Awwal (The First), (74) Al-Ākhir (The Last), (75) Al-Ẓāhir (The Manifest), (76) Al-Bātin (The Hidden), (77) Al-Wāli (The Ruler), (78) Al-Muta'āli (The Exalted), (79) Al-Barr (The Doer of Good), (80) Al-Tawwāb (The Ever-Relenting), (81) Al-Muntaqim (the Avenger), (82) Al-Ṣafu' (The Efficient of sins), (83) Al-Ra'ūf (The All-Pitying), (84) Mālik al-Mulk (The King of Absolute Sovereignty), (85) Zul al-Jalāl wa al-Ikhrām (The Lord of Majesty and Generosity), (86) Al-Muqsit (The Equitable), (87) Al-Jāmi' (The Uniter), (88) Al-Ghaniyy (The Rich), (89) Al-Mughni (The Enricher), (90) Al-Māni' (The Protector), (91) Al-Ḍār (The Punisher), (92) Al-Nafi' (He Who Benefits), (93) Al-Nūr (The Light), (94) Al-Hadi' (The Guide), (95) Al-Badī' (The Absolute Cause), (96) Al-Bāqi (The Everlasting), (97) Al-Wārith (The Inheritor), (98) Al-Rashid (The Right in Guidance), (99) Al-Sabūr (The Patient). 108

Allah enjoins that He should be called by His beautiful names. Muslim scholars strongly vindicate that those names are untranslatable. M. I. H. I. Surty asserts: "In translation they lose their faculty, clarity, precision, impact and comprehensiveness. The richness of the Arabic language, its lexicographical clarity, the eloquence of the Qurān and its fāajaz, inimitability, remain undisputed to this day." 109

Defining the characteristic of Allah has been the greatest problem faced by finite human beings. It is due to the fact that Allah is infinite and His characteristics can not be placed in given limits. Man is finite, confined by his natural limits endowed by the Creator. He is not able to clearly define Allah, who is existing beyond all material forms. One Qurānic verse clarifies the
anthropomorphic way of defining Allah: "nothing is as His likeness". His attributes always remain absolute and perfect. Each of His attributes manifests the most perfect state of that particular sense. If a man get a slightly share of it becomes a sublime figure. One Hadith concerning the attribute of Mercy has clarified this point:

"Allah has divided mercy into a hundred parts, out of which He retains ninety nine parts with Him and sent down one part to the earth. From one part emanates all the compassion that the entire creation exercises towards each other, so much so that a horse lifts its hoof above its young one lest it receives a hurt."  

One may note that 99 Attributes can help one conceive the essence of Allah. Contrasting with man -- His tiny index, Allah is not a body composed of substances or elements. He is not an accident inherent in a body nor does He dwell in any particular place. He sees and hears but its perception is not similar to man's own. He is free from forgetfulness, negligence, error and all other human weakness. He is immutable without figure, form, color or parts. He is beyond all kinds of limitation that a man possesses. He is eternally active and neither sleeps nor slumbers, nor feels tired. He does not need eating, and drinking, is free from human desires. He requires nothing. He is unrivalled, unequalled, unchallenged, and omnipotent. No imaginations can conceive of Him and no understanding can comprehend Him. He is the only Creator of the sky and the earth, the universe and everything, inside, outside and between them, and He has absolute control over everything. He maintains them, nourishes them and will destroy them one day.

The beautiful names of Allah are also perfect, the examination of a few of those attributes may support this view.
A. Al-Ghafār, He who is full of forgiveness.

Which means "concealing". Allah conceals what is ugly and makes manifest what is beautiful. Sins are amongst the ugly things, He conceals them\textsuperscript{113} for the sake of the sinners own favor lest the sinner being disgraced before all creatures. The concealing concerning man is embodied in other aspects that He Allah put the ugly parts of his body to be enclosed inside it covered over by the beauty of its exterior. If his interior parts are seen by the eyes found disgusting and vomiting. How great this concealing is! And how beautiful this concealing is!

Man's share in this name is obvious, that he should conceal ugly aspects of others and make his beautiful aspects public. One Hadīth states:

"Whoever has concealed the weak spots of one of the faithful, Allah conceals his weak spots on the day of resurrection." \textsuperscript{114}

Every creature has by its nature certain weaknesses and aspects of goodness or ugliness and beauty. So whoever looks at good and beautiful aspects over weak and ugly aspect is one who shares in this attribute.\textsuperscript{115}

B. Al-ʾAdl, The Just;

Which means one who is just, and He is one from whom just action emanates. The just is clarified by one's justice, and the justice is embodied through one's action. To understand how Allah is just must comprehend the actions of Allah from His creations. If one contemplate for a second even in a tiny leaf of a tree, it exists in its proper position. One may see the orders of the heavenly bodies, for instance the sun, the stars, the earth, water and air. The earth is turning round the sun, the stars are farther than the sun from the earth, and the water is above the
earth and the air above the water. Imagine if this arrangement is to be reversed, what will happen? The whole universe would definitely be destroyed.

The wonders like this exist in every thing, the physical and the spiritual. The just One has created man's body parts in an order as every one can see. If the positions of arms and feets reversed, how would he feel? If man's eyes were put at back of his head, what would he see? You would call him abnormal, whose parts are not properly justified.

Such examples are uncountable. One can randomly pick anyone up and exam it. With the development of the modern sophisticated sciences this just action of Allah appears more manifest and evident. Many scientists from only scientific field especially astronomy and physics are astonished in front of those wondrous orders, and embraced Islam, which tells them the truth of sciences.

Man's share in justice is well known. He must put his desires under the guidance of reason and religion, otherwise he causes injustice to them. Such is the case with one who treats his family members or friends; he must deal justly with them. Just treatment is required in every level of social structures. This is especially the case with a king to his ministers, and them to their subjects. How many monarchs in history have failed of doing justice to their subjects, and were overthrown by the subjects! The just monarch can last long while unjust one is destined short. The absolute Just One will last forever.

C. Al-Shakūr, The Grateful,

Which is another beautiful attribute of Allan, for He rewards the practice of man's good deeds manifolds, and grants him uncountable happiness for his
countable good actions. The one who rewards a good deed manifold is said to be grateful for that deed, while whoever commends the one who does a good deed is also said to be grateful.

One of the things of being grateful is to praise one's work. If one is given something and he goes on to praise the giver the one is said to be thankful. But Allah is the Creator of man, and is the direct creator of man's good action also, yet He still gives praise for man's action. This great job deserves even more gratefulness.

Man's share in this attribute is obvious, that someone has done good deeds to him, he should praise him and even repay him with the good deeds. This is praiseworthy quality. The Prophet criticized the one who does not pay thanks to his friend who has done good deed to him, saying: “whoever does not thanks man does not thank Allah.” 117

It is so for mentioned only a fraction of knowledge concerning the concept of God (Allah) in Islam. To get an overall view of it requires an independent research. It is here suffice to say that Islam provides a perfect notion of God.

In contrast to the comprehensive notion of God in Islam the notion of God in Confucianism is obviously simple and even obscure. The Master undoubtedly avoided himself from deeply involving into this topic. In response to his disciple Zi Gong's 子貢 question on the topic he simply said: “I do not wish to say anything.” 118 At another occasion he said: the profound person “offers reverence to God and spirits but keep a respectful distance from them.” 119 But he also undoubtedly affirmed that he understood the decree of Heaven at his fifties.
His disciples also confirmed that the topics the Master did not speak of "were prodigies, force, disorder and gods." His main concern was man's moral commitment and his cultural achievement.

The idea of God existed in pre-Confucius time, when a Supreme Being was denoted as Shang Di 上帝 or Di 神. During the Xia 夏 (2100? - 1600? B.C.) and Shang 商 (1751?-1112 B.C.) Dynasties, that was a supreme personal god, and was the primary object of worship. Shang di means the Ruler above, the Over Ruler. He is aided by a multitude of spirits in conducting his decrees towards man and the universe. He is also helped by sages and rulers in managing affairs of man. Only sages and rulers have sole right to sacrifice to Shang di. Who, however, gradually gave way to Tian, Heaven, which is also a supreme personal god, in the early Zhou 周 (11 century - 771 B.C.) period. The usage of tian as a god was continued by Confucius alongside Chinese history till contemporary time.

In classics of Chinese, especially that of the History and the Odes (the Poetry), certain qualities, as they may be found almost the same from other world religions, are attributed to Shang di or Tian, that Shang di gives birth to people, grant them their respective nature. It gives good values to the good as well as bad to the bad. It sends down rain that benefits people and that destroys people as well. It has super powers, ordains the social order, the religion and social ceremonies. It is aided by sages and kings in managing human affairs. It rewords the good and punishes the evil. It hears and sees, accepts and enjoys offerings of people. It is a just being and great. It nourishes people, gives comfort and hates as well. It is a Supreme Being, does what a man is not able to do.
In the light of above discussion it may be seen that the ancient Chinese believed in monotheistic truth, which has been strongly asserted by Islam for a thousand years that all prophets in human history, from the first man and the messenger of God Ādam to the last Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), have been teaching one truth, that God is one.

However, the monotheism truth could not last long. As Confucius the great reformist came to play his role, the position of Tian (the Creator) degraded and man (the created) is given a focal position. Though he definitely believed in Tian's transcendent nature, Tian's interference in human affairs is nullified. "Does Tian say anything? The four seasons run their course and all things are produced. Does Heaven say anything." 124 What he saw is natural orders and phenomenon, the real course behind it is not in his concern. To this point a modern faithful Confucian scholar Liu Shu-xian 刘述先 has synthesized:

"Heaven for Confucius, symbolizes the origin of a definite natural as well as moral order,125 its mandate is understood not through revelation, but through man's commitment to wisdom and humanity, that is the principle of knowledge and the principle of realization respectively. Therefore whether or not Heaven has a personal character is not even a relevant question for Confucius." 126

The absolute sovereignty of Tian was restored in Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220AC) by a famous Confucian scholar Dong Zhong-shu 董仲舒, who advocated that Tian's will is unoffendable. It chooses the righteous to be kings, the kings are its sons, are representatives of Tian. They are sent down to embody the will of Tian. He further asserted that all the classics of Confucians, its context, sentences and even every letters are symbols of Tian, expressed through the tongue of sages. Here he definitely regards Confucius as sheng 圣 the sage.
Not long after the restoration of the absolute sovereignty of Tian into Chinese mind, Buddhism was introduced into China and was soon partially adopted by Confucians. Confucianism underwent a process of polytheistic transformation. Since then monotheism gave way to polytheism. Innumerable host of divinities has been brought into worship. Those divinities are every where, in the heavens above, in the firmament, water upon the earth, and underneath it, until the air is full of spiritual beings, good and bad. The worship of those gods remained amongst common people alone side Chinese history till the modern time.

4.3.3. Confucians Regard Secular as Sacred.

"The secular as sacred" is the expression of the whole Confucian worldview by Herbert Fingarette in his seminal book, *Confucius — The Secular as Sacred*. This statement is basically correct if the analysis confined into only Confucius' words read in the Analects, wherein the concepts like God, angels, spirits, ghost, the resurrection of lives, and the life in the hereafter, are all obscured and even absent. His attitude towards these concepts was obvious: "respect spiritual beings but keep distance."\(^{127}\) "Devote oneself to man's duties."\(^{128}\) He never talked of "prodigies, feats of strength, disorder, and spirits."\(^{129}\) His answer to the question of his disciple Ji lu 季路 concerning the service to spirit and god was clearly worldly oriented: "Until you are able to serve men, how can you serve spiritual being? Until you know about life, how can you know about death?"\(^{130}\)

A brief examination of the major themes of the Analects text would more explicitly prove this stand. That the topics and chief concepts of the Analects...
pertain primarily to human nature (the first section of this chapter), comportment (ren 仁, li 礼, de 德, and other cardinal values introduced in the chapter three), and relationships (the five relationships 伦), which are evidently identical to man's worldly life. This worldly orientation is further emphasized by the practice of self-cultivation, an inward and internal process of ever-deepening self-realization, which is devoid of any reliance on any sources or forces of external. Constant practice of this teaching would only lead the practitioner to adoption of the attitude of the self-independence, rejection of the transcendent existence, self-affirmation, proud, greedy, arrogance, ingratitude, and so on.

Thus this worldly, materialistic and moral feature of the Confucianism is obvious. Scholars, both Sinologists and Confucians from varied parts of the world, who disagree in many ways pertaining to the Confucianism, almost all tend to agree on the material, humanist, rationalist orientation of Confucius. The problems, which disquieted Confucius, were not the realization of God and worshiping Him, but rather his saying: "The leaving virtue without proper cultivation; not thoroughly discussing what is learned; not being able to move towards righteousness of which knowledge is gained; and not being able to change what is not good — these are the things which occasion me solicitude." In this paragraph a complete process of cultivation is actually manifested, that is the process: learning values, digesting them, then practicing and replacing bad values. This process of learning is the process of proper cultivation of virtues.

The secular, worldly and humanist orientation of the Confucianism is best explained by ren 仁 system, which owes its very foundation to Confucius. Ren 仁 is the core of the system, li 礼 is external expression of ren values, and other
cardinal values are means helping to achieve ren value, whose perfection is embodied by the profound person 君子, the sage 神人, and finally unity with the heaven 天人合一. The values are conferred onto man by the heaven, but man in turn owes no gratitude towards the heaven. Man's task, since his birth to this world, is to realize and cultivate those values, he will involve into a process of constant "cutting, filing, carving, polishing"133 in order to become a ideal being, the profound person 君子. This profoundness can not be achieved without other worthy participant of the society wherein he lives. If his life ends the cultivation also finishes. There is definitely no other world of life. Modern Confucian scholar Tu Wei-ming agrees on this secular appearance of Confucian doctrine.