

ZHU Xi's Moral Psychology¹

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In this essay I discuss ZHU Xi's 朱熹 (1130-1200) views on the psychological makeup of human beings and the relation of this psychological makeup to the ethical life. I consider his views on the human psychological makeup, the sources of ethical failure, the self-cultivation process, and what it is to be fully ethical. Confucian thinkers do not draw a sharp distinction between what we would describe as the psychological and physical aspects of the person, and thus to speak of the psychological is already to frame our discussion in a way that goes beyond the way they would themselves present their views. Still, using the term is a convenient way of highlighting the focus of our discussion, which will be centered on the way ZHU Xi views the heart/mind (*xin* 心) in relation to the ethical. Before moving on to the main discussion, I will introduce a key concept and a related distinction in his thinking that will come up repeatedly in the paper. Although the focus of the paper is the psychological aspect of ZHU Xi's thinking, it will be difficult to avoid frequent references to his views on *li* 理 (pattern) and on the distinction between *li* 理 and *qi* 氣 (material force).²

In early Chinese thought, *li* is used verbally in the sense of "give order to," and is often related to another term *zhi* 治, which means "bring order to" or "be in order"

¹ Materials in this article are based on research on a book in progress on Zhu Xi's thinking. Parts of the materials have appeared in previously published articles listed in the bibliography, and I am grateful for copyright permission from the editors of Dao and of The Imperative of Understanding: Chinese Philosophy, Comparative Philosophy, and Onto-Hermeneutics (New York: Global Scholarly Publications, 2008).

² The following discussion of *li* and *qi* summarizes the discussion in Shun 2008b: 212-3.

(*Xunzi* 1965: 5.7a; *Hanfeizi* 1965: 6.6b; *Guanzi* 1965: 10.3b, 16.3a; *Huainanzi* 1965: 21.8a). *Li* pertains to things as well as to affairs such as orderly or disorderly government. (*Xunzi* 1965: 15.9b; *Huainanzi* 1965: 21.3a; *Liji* 1965: 11.15a-b; *Zhuangzi* 10.14a; *Hanfeizi* 1965: 20.7b.). It is also something to be conformed to or followed (*Mozi* 1948: 3/3/15-17; *Guanzi* 1965: 13.8b; *Hanfeizi* 1965: 20.8a; *Zhuangzi* 1965: 10.18a). So, *li* resides in things and affairs, is the order or pattern of the way things operate, and one should follow *li* in dealing with things and affairs. The notion of *li* continued to be developed by later thinkers. For example, GUO Xiang 郭象 (d. A.D. 312) regarded *li* as pertaining to everything and governing its operations, whereas SHAO Yong 邵雍 (1011-1077) emphasized the idea of responding to things in accordance with their *li*, putting this in terms of viewing things with things or viewing things with their *li* (Guo 1965: 1.19a; Shao 1965: 6.26a-b.). ZHU Xi continued to emphasize the notion of *li*. For him, *li* resides in things, and it accounts for the way things are (*suo yi ran* 所以然) as well as the way things should be (*dang ran* 當然) (Zhu 1986: 414, 863; Zhu 1983-1986b: 2.6a; Zhu 1983-1986a: 2.11a; Zhu 1983-1986c: 9.14b). Following the Cheng brothers, he regarded the nature (*xing* 性) to be constituted by *li* (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 22a.11a; Zhu 1986: 92-93, 1387, 2427). Furthermore, because *li* resides in human beings and constitutes their nature, it takes the form of the Confucian virtues (Zhu 1986: 63-64, 83, 92). So, for him, the nature is identical with *li* and is originally good, and badness is due to *qi* 氣 (material force).

Qi is viewed in early Chinese thought as something filling heaven and earth as well as the body of human beings; for example, *qi* grows in a person through the intake of the senses, and the proper balance of *qi* accounts for the proper operation of the senses (*Guoyu* 1965: 1.10a, 3.13b; *Zhuangzi* 1965: 3.11a). Thinkers, such as DONG Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104), continued to advocate the proper balance of *qi* in oneself, whereas other thinkers, such as WANG Chong 王充 (27-ca. 100), regarded

human beings as having different endowments of *qi* (Dong 1965: 10.3b; Wang 1965: 2.14a-b, 18.4a). By early Song, thinkers such as ZHANG Zai 張載 (1020-1077) spoke of the purity and impurity of *qi*, and referred to the nature (*xing*) that is constituted by one's endowment of *qi* as the material nature (氣質之性) (Zhang 1965: 2.3b, 2.18b-19a.). ZHU Xi regarded things as comprising both *li* and *qi*: *li* does not exist without *qi* and vice versa (Zhu 1986: 2-3). Thus, although the nature is constituted by *li*, this *li* must reside in an endowment of *qi* that the thing has (ibid.: 61, 64, 66, 88, 323, 1422). Although the nature in a human being is constituted by *li* and is perfectly good, the endowment of *qi* can be pure or impure, and this accounts for the ethical differences among people (Zhu 1965: 74.20a; Zhu 1986: 8, 56, 64-69, 72-74, 2429; Zhu 1983-1986d: 2.16a-b). The endowment of *qi* in a person is also part of the nature, and material nature refers to *li* that is embedded in *qi* (Zhu 1986: 67). Accordingly, ZHU Xi endorsed the Cheng brothers' distinction between two ways of viewing the nature—original nature (本然之性) and material nature (氣質之性)—regarding the former as perfectly good and the latter as having the potential to be not good (ibid.: 89, 2431).

The human psychological makeup

As ZHU Xi's view of the human psychological makeup draws on several ideas in early Chinese thought, we will begin with a review of these earlier ideas.³ The early Chinese viewed the different parts of the body as having their own distinctive capacities, such as the eye's capacity of sight, as well as certain distinctive tendencies, such as the eye's being drawn toward beautiful colors. These tendencies are referred to as *yu* 欲, a term that can also describe the tendencies of the person as a whole, such

³ The following discussion of the early Chinese view of the human psychology summarizes the discussion in Shun 2004: 184-6.

as the desire for life and honor. That human beings have such tendencies is regarded as a fact that is pervasive and difficult to alter; such a fact is referred to as *qing* 情. By the third century B.C., *qing* came to refer to what we would describe as emotions and feelings, including such things as joy, sorrow, and anger.

Of the various parts of the body, *xin* 心, the organ of the heart, is particularly important because it is viewed as the site of what we now would describe as cognitive and affective activities. *Xin* (the heart/mind) can have *yu* (desires, tendencies) in that it can be drawn toward certain things; it also has *qing* (emotions, feelings) and can take pleasure in or feel displeasure at certain things. One capacity that is particularly important for Confucian thinkers is its capacity to set directions that guide one's daily activities as well as one's life as a whole. These directions of the heart/mind are referred to as *zhi* 志 (goals, intentions); *zhi* can refer to specific intentions or general aims in life such as the goal of learning to be a sage. *Zhi* differs from *yu* (desires, tendencies) in that, whereas *zhi* pertains specifically to the heart/mind, *yu* can pertain to the heart/mind or to other parts of the body such as the senses. Also, while *zhi* involves focusing the heart/mind in a way that guides one's actions or one's life in general, *yu* involves tendencies that one may choose to resist rather than to act on.

Another term, *yi* 意 (thoughts), refers to tendencies that differ from both *zhi* and *yu*. *Yi* can refer to one's thoughts or opinions, as well as one's inclinations, which involve one's wanting to see certain things happen or one's thinking of bringing about certain things. Unlike *yu*, which can involve tendencies (such as those of the senses) that just happen to obtain without one's having a reflective awareness of one's wanting certain things, *yi* is something one is aware of as part of one's thoughts, which pertain to the heart/mind. On the other hand, *yi* is in a less directed state than *zhi* in that, while *yi* can be just a thought in favor of something without one's actually having decided to act in that direction, *zhi* involves one's actually forming the

intention to so act. That the heart/mind can form *yi* and *zhi* shows that it has the capacity to reflect on one's life and reshape one's life accordingly. In early Confucian texts, there is frequent discussion of self-examination and self-cultivation on the basis of such self-examination, and this capacity for self-cultivation is ascribed to the heart/mind.

Turning to ZHU Xi, he also emphasized the guiding role of the heart/mind, describing it as master of the whole person (Zhu 1986: 464; Zhu 1983-1986e: 2.16a-b). *Qing*, in the sense of emotions and feelings, include such emotional responses as delight, anger, sorrow, and joy, as well as likes and dislikes (Zhu 1986: 64, 96). In contrast to *xing* (the nature) which is inactive, *qing* is described as active and, more specifically, as the activation of *xing* (Zhu 1986: 96, 2514). ZHANG Zai held the view that the heart/mind encompasses or is the master of both *xing* and *qing* (心統性情) (Zhang 1965: 14.2a). Endorsing Zhang's view, ZHU Xi regarded the heart/mind as containing *xing* (nature), which is identical with *li* (pattern), as well as *qing* (emotions), the outward manifestation of *xing* (Zhu 1986: 91, 2513; Zhu 1965: 67.1a). The four beginnings highlighted by Mencius pertain to *qing* and are the manifestation of *li*, although *qing* can also take on other forms such as anger and joy and, as such, *qing* provides certain capabilities (Zhu 1986: 89, 1380, 2428). By contrast, *yu* (desires) involves one's being drawn toward specific things, unlike *qing* (emotions), which is less directed (ibid.: 93-94, 349, 2242). *Yu* is the specific form that *qing* takes; *qing* is like the flow of water and *yu* the waves: as water flows, it makes waves depending on what it encounters (ibid.: 93-94).

As we saw earlier, *yu* may or may not pertain to the heart/mind. To the extent that it pertains to the heart/mind, it is close to *yi* (thoughts). ZHU Xi describes *yi* as wanting to do certain things (ibid.: 349). The difference between *qing* and *yi* is that *qing* emphasizes certain capacities while *yi* is more directed; liking and disliking is

qing, but liking beautiful color and disliking bad odor is *yi* (ibid.: 96). *Yu* (desires, tendencies) is also more directed by comparison to *qing*, and the difference between *yi* and *yu* is that, whereas *yu* can just come about without someone consciously wanting such and such, *yi* is more deliberative and self-conscious (ibid.). As for the difference between *yi* and *zhi* (goals, intentions), although both pertain to the heart/mind, *zhi* is by comparison more crystallized and manifest. Whereas *yi* can be just a thought in favor of something, *zhi* involves some decision or intention that is directed toward action (ibid.: 2514). For this reason, ZHU Xi cited with approval ZHANG Zai's idea that *zhi* is public (*gong* 公) and *yi* is private (*si* 私), explaining that *zhi* involves one's actually making a decision and publicly acting, whereas *yi* involves one's private and submerged thoughts (ibid.: 96). *Yi* is the deliberating and pondering that lies at the root of *zhi*, whereas *zhi* involves the heart/mind pointing itself in a certain direction (ibid.).

A capacity of the heart/mind that ZHU Xi particularly emphasized is *zhi* 知, a term often translated as “understanding” or “knowing.” Understanding guides action in the way that the eyes guide the legs when walking; understanding precedes action although it is action that is the more important (ibid.: 148). In this regard, ZHU Xi is like Xunzi who also emphasized the guiding role of understanding. According to Xunzi, it is only when one understands the way (*dao*) that one will approve of it and abide by it (*Xunzi* 1965: 15.4a-b, 16.9b). And, when one's understanding is *ming* 明 (bright, clear), one's action will not be at fault (ibid.: 1.1a). The use of *ming* to describe understanding occurs frequently in *Xunzi* where *ming* is often compared to the brightness of the sun and moon and is supposed to enable one to discern *li* (ibid.: 4.6b-7a, 11.11a, 12.12a-12b, 13.15a, 15.7a, 20.12a). ZHU Xi likewise uses *ming* to characterize understanding, describing how *ming* of understanding can light up *li* (Zhu 1983-1986a: 5.8a; Zhu 1965: 67.18a-b). This characterization of understanding

suggests a perceptual metaphor for the relation of the heart/mind to *li*, and ZHU Xi on other occasions talks about how the heart/mind can see (*jian* 見) *li* or view (*guan* 觀) *li* (Zhu 1986: 1983, 2086). He also uses various metaphors that emphasize brightness or clarity to describe the ideal relation between the heart/mind and *li*: still and clear water, clear mirror, fire, the sun and moon (Zhu 1986: 177, 205, 206, 265). His difference from Xunzi is that whereas Xunzi regards *li* as something learnt, Zhu maintains that the heart/mind already has *li*, although it can be obscured. Thus, the heart/mind is originally like a clear mirror but it can be obscured by dust (Zhu 1965: 67.3b-4a; Zhu 1986: 267). It follows from this view that self-cultivation is a restorative process, comparable to the process of clearing the mirror to recover its original brightness (Zhu 1986: 92-93). Put in terms of the distinction between *li* and *qi*, whereas *li* is already in the heart/mind, the endowment of *qi* can be clouded and so one still needs to work on purifying *qi* to restore the proper perception of *li* (Zhu 1986: 1347).

To understand ZHU Xi's ethical views, we need to go beyond his views on the human psychological makeup and consider his views on the relation between human beings. Since all things are permeated by *li* and *qi*, he regards an individual as connected to all other human beings and things. This connectedness between oneself and others is reflected in his understanding of *ren* 仁 (humanity), which he characterizes in terms of two ideas: one's forming one body (*yi ti* 一體) with all things, and a ceaseless life giving force (*sheng sheng* 生生) running through all things.⁴

In early texts, heaven (*tian* 天), or the ideal ruler, is often described as forming one body with other people and things. The *Book of Rites (Liji)* describes the ideal ruler as someone who regards the common people as part of his body, whereas the

⁴ The following discussion of Zhu Xi's understanding of *ren* summarizes the discussion in Shun 2005: pp. 1-3.

Guanzi describes him as one who forms one body with the common people (*Liji* 1965: 17.16a; *Guanzi* 1965: 10.18a). *Zhuangzi* describes heaven and earth (*tian di* 天地) as forming one body with, and oneself as being one with, the ten thousand things (*Zhuangzi* 1965: 1.18a, 10.21a). Later thinkers continued to advocate similar ideas, and characterize *ren* (humanity) in these terms. For example, ZHANG Zai describes the ten thousand things as being one, and *ren* as embodying all affairs, just as heaven embodies all things without omission (Zhang 1965: 2.5a, 2.11b, 3.1a-2a). The Cheng brothers likewise describe the self as not separate from things and explains *ren* in terms of this idea (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 2a.3a-3b; Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 1.7b, 1.10b-11a). They use a medical analogy to present their views; just as medical texts describe the numbness in the four limbs as a lack of *ren*, one's failure to be sensitive to the conditions of other things is also a lack of *ren* (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 2a.2a-2b, 2a.15b; Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 1.4a; Cheng and Cheng 1965b: 3.1a-1b).

ZHU Xi endorsed similar ideas. He regarded heaven and earth and the ten thousand things as originally forming one body with oneself, and used the Cheng brothers' medical analogy as a way to describe how *ren* involves forming one body with all things (Zhu 1983-1986g: 2b; Zhu 1983-1986a: 3.18a-b; Zhu 1986: 2562). Ideally, one's heart/mind should be the same as the heart/mind of heaven and earth. Referring to ZHANG Zai's idea that heaven is all encompassing without exclusion (天大無外), he thinks that humans are originally also all encompassing, and that it is humans who have belittled themselves (Zhang 1965: 2.5b; 1.12b, Zhu's commentary). *Ren* involves being the same body as all things, and this idea is related to *gong* 公 (impartiality), which is contrasted with the *si* 私 (partiality, selfishness) of acting for oneself (Zhang 1965: 1.7a-7b, 1.9b-10a, Zhu's commentary). *Si* involves a separation of oneself from things, so that there is an opposition between the two; as a result, one's heart/mind regards things as external to oneself, unlike the heart/mind of heaven

which has no exclusion. The task of self-cultivation is to enlarge one's heart/mind, until one sees everything as connected to oneself (Zhu 1986: 2518-2519). Thus, for ZHU Xi, *ren* (humanity) and *gong* (impartiality) are related to heaven, and *si* (partiality, selfishness) is a separation of oneself from other things that removes one from heaven.

Early texts also describe heaven and earth as giving birth to the ten thousand things (Xunzi 1965: 5.7a, 6.6a, 13.2b; Zhuangzi 1965: 7.1b). The *Book of Changes* (*Yijing*) highlights the idea of *sheng sheng* 生生 (continuously giving life), and speaks of giving life (*sheng* 生) as the “great virtue” of heaven and earth (*Yijing* 1965: 7.4a, 8.1b). In later Confucian thought, ZHANG Zai refers to as the *ren* of heaven and earth its giving birth to and nourishing the ten thousand things (Zhang 1965: 5.4b). The Cheng brothers refer to giving life as the way of heaven; citing the idea of the heart/mind of heaven and earth from early texts such as the *Liji*, they describe giving life to things as the heart/mind of heaven and earth (*Liji* 1965: 7.8a-8b; Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 1.5a; Cheng and Cheng 1965b: 3.1a). The heart/mind of humans should be identical with the heart/mind of heaven and earth and should also be that of giving life (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 2a.1a). This is *ren*, which is compared to the life giving force of a seed (Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 1.4b; Cheng and Cheng 1965c 18.2a). The Cheng brothers relate this idea of ceaselessly giving life to the idea of forming one body with the ten thousand things; in giving life to all things it is as if all things are parts of one's own body (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 2a.15b).

ZHU Xi likewise describes the heart/mind of heaven and earth as giving life to things; this is *ren*, and *ren* is likewise compared to the life-giving force of seeds (Zhu 1986: 4, 85, 464-465, 1791, 2419, 2634; Zhu 1965: 67.20a-21b; Zhu 1988: 142). For him, the heart/mind of commiseration and that of not being able to bear the suffering of others described in *Mengzi* are illustrations of the life-giving force that

characterizes *ren* (*Mengzi* 1A.7, 2A.6;⁵ Zhu 1983-1986b: 2.13a; Zhu 1983-1986f: 26.8a-b; Zhu 1986: 1280, 2440). Just like the Cheng brothers, he relates the idea of giving life to all things to the idea of forming one body with heaven and earth and with the ten thousand things (Zhu 1986: 2810). Thus, on his view, every human being in the original and ideal state forms one body with all things by being sensitive to the conditions of things and by continuously nourishing and giving life to them. As for how human beings could have deviated from this state of existence, he would, as we saw, explain this in terms of the impurity of *qi*. In psychological terms, he would explain ethical failure in terms of *si* 私, a kind of separation of the self from other things, and a notion that we will consider further in the next section.

Ethical failure

Before considering how things can go astray, one useful point of clarification is that, for ZHU Xi, although *qing* (emotions) and *yu* (desires) can take on problematic forms, they are in themselves inevitable and not necessarily problematic. He explicitly opposes the elimination of all *qing* or *yu* (Zhu 1986: 1381; Zhu 1983-1986e: 2.19b-20a). The desires for food, drink, and sex are shared by all human beings, cannot be eliminated, and are not problematic as such (Zhu 1986: 2428; Zhu 1983-1986e: 2.19b-20a). Although he occasionally uses the term “human desires” (*ren yu* 人欲), a term often used pejoratively, to describe the desire for food when hungry and for clothing when cold, on other occasions he clarifies that eating and drinking is a basic part of the human constitution, and that it is only the desire for delicious food that constitutes problematic human desires (Zhu 1986: 224, 2009). Thus, what he opposes is not desires as such, but desires coming from the individual

⁵ Following the numbering of passages, with book numbers 1A-7B substituted for 1-14, in Yang (1984).

that go beyond the basic desires that all human beings share.

His views on the emotions are similar. Commenting on a passage in the *Lunyu* which describes how YAN Hui did not transfer his anger nor repeat his errors, ZHU Xi, following the Cheng brothers, acknowledges that even the sage will be angry when appropriate (*Lunyu* 6.3; Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 2.34b-35a; Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 18.22a; Zhu 1986: 2445). He refers to such anger as righteous anger (Zhu 1986: 239). Such anger is a response called for by the situation one confronts and is not due to one's own preconceptions; also, after the incident is over, the anger that was initially an appropriate response goes away and is not stored in oneself (ibid.: 2445). In this sense, he also describes the sage as having no anger (Zhu 1986: 776). So, what he opposes is not emotions as such, but emotions that are not called for by the circumstances but instead originate from one's own preconceptions.

In what way, then, are inappropriate desires and emotions generated?⁶ To answer this question, let us examine his view of the senses. In a number of early texts, the senses are presented as potentially problematic if not regulated by the heart/mind. For example, *Mengzi* ascribes ethical failure to the senses, regarding the heart/mind as the organ that should regulate their operation (*Mengzi* 6A.15). ZHU Xi likewise emphasizes the governing role of the heart/mind over the senses, while highlighting the notion of desires (*yu*) in this connection. His views derive from the “Yueji” chapter of the *Liji*, which talks about how, when human beings come into contact with external things, likes and dislikes arise, and how, if unregulated, such likes and dislikes can do damage to the pattern of heaven (*tianli* 天理). Humans are affected by things without limit, and if human likes and dislikes are not regulated, human beings become transformed into things and the pattern of heaven is lost while people are

⁶ The following discussion of Zhu Xi's view of the senses summarizes the discussion in Shun 2005: 4-5.

moved to exhaust their human desires (*ren yu* 人欲) (*Liji* 1965: 11.8b-9a). ZHU Xi endorses these ideas from *Liji*, from which he also takes over the contrast between the pattern of heaven and human desires. According to him, desires arise when the senses come into contact with external objects. Although desires are inevitable, external things are without limit and so such desires can become numerous (Zhu 1983-1986e: 1.5a-5b). When desires are plenty and are unregulated, they become problematic (Zhu 1983-1986b: 7.28a). Thus, it is one's own lack of regulation of these likes and dislikes that is the source of the problem, resulting in one's emotions and feelings being subordinated to things (Zhu 1986: 92, 262, 2253).

The *Liji* presents what is problematic as giving vein to and exhausting human desires (*qiong ren yu* 窮人欲), and it advocates using the Way (*dao* 道) to regulate such desires (*Liji* 1965: 11.8b-9a, 11.15b-16a). Thus, human desires as such need not be problematic, and it is only when one fails to properly regulate them that they become problematic. While Zhu Xi occasionally acknowledges this point, he, along with other later Confucians, more often speaks of human desires pejoratively because of the way they are contrasted with the pattern of heaven (*tian li* 天理). He also speaks of material desires (*wu yu* 物欲) pejoratively, at times using the two notions interchangeably (Zhu 1986: 224-225, 982; Zhu 1983-1986b: 2.13b, 2.14b; Zhu 1965: 67.8a-8b, 74.20a; Zhu 1983-1986g: preface, 1a-2a). Probably, the notion of material desire emphasizes the attractive force that external things exert on humans, whereas that of human desire emphasizes the human failure to regulate the likes and dislikes that arise when one comes into contact with things.

There is another contrast that is related by some later Confucian thinkers to that between the pattern of heaven and human desires. In the *Shangshu*, the human heart/mind (*ren xin* 人心) is contrasted with the moral heart/mind (*dao xin* 道心), the former being described as precarious (*wei* 危) and the latter as minute and subtle (*wei*

微) (*Shangshu*: 61). Some later Confucian thinkers, such as the Cheng brothers, explain the human heart/mind in terms of human desires, and the moral heart/mind in terms of the pattern of heaven (Cheng 1965b: 3.2a). Lu Xiangshan opposes this way of understanding the contrast between the human heart/mind and the moral heart/mind, insisting that this is a contrast between two different perspectives in viewing the same heart/mind (Lu 1965: 34.1b). Zhu Xi holds a similar view, opposing the position of the Cheng brothers on the ground that the way they interpret the contrast suggests the idea of two different heart/minds when in fact there is only one (Zhu 1986: 2009-2010).

According to Zhu Xi, the notion of human heart/mind focuses on the heart/mind viewed in relation to desires such as the desire to eat when hungry, drink when thirsty, or put on warm clothing when cold, as well as the desires of the senses. It is described as precarious (*wei 危*) in that these desires by themselves have no moral direction and can go astray if not properly regulated. By contrast, the notion of moral heart/mind focuses on the heart/mind viewed in relation to morality (*yi li 義理*). It is described as minute and subtle (*wei 微*) in that the initial manifestation of *yi li* in the heart/mind, as illustrated by the four beginnings that Mencius highlights, is minute and not easy to discern (*wei yin 微隱*; *wei er nan zhu 微而難著*), while the way the moral heart/mind operates is profound and subtle (*wei miao 微妙*). What is important is for the moral heart/mind to guide the human heart/mind; put more accurately to reflect the point that there is only one heart/mind, it is for that aspect of the heart/mind that relates to *yi li* to guide that aspect that relates to desires. The relation between the two is like that of the rudder to a boat, with the former guiding the latter (Zhu 1986: 1487, 2009-2011, 2864)

So far, we have considered how desires, if not properly guided and regulated, can become problematic. Zhu Xi also refers to the problematic forms of desires as selfish

desires (*si yu* 私欲), at times also characterizing material desires and human desires in terms of *si* 私 (Zhu 1986: 2584; Zhu 1983-1986b: 3.1a-1b; Zhu 1983-1986e: 2.17a; Zhu 1983-1986g: 5b). In addition, he also refers to the problematic elements of the heart/mind as selfish thoughts (*si yi* 私意), where the difference between selfish thoughts and selfish desires is that the former refers to thoughts about what to do that emerge from the heart/mind, whereas the latter refers more often to the desires associated with the senses (Zhu 1986:1046, 1585-1586; Zhu 1983-1986d: 3.31b). The notion of *si* 私 (partial, selfish, private) is quite prominent in his thinking and is contrasted with *gong* 公 (impartial, public). He regards this contrast as parallel to that between the pattern of heaven and human desires (Zhu 1986: 225). What, then, is *si*, and how does the contrast between *gong* and *si* relate to that between heaven and humans?⁷

Si, when used to refer to what has to do with oneself, does not by itself carry any negative connotations. However, in early texts, *si* often carries a negative connotation when contrasted with *gong*. *Gong* is opposed to another term *pian* 偏, where *pian* has the connotation of being one-sided or focusing on one part to the exclusion of others (Hanfeizi 1965: 6.4a; Xunzi 1965: 2.6a, 7.9b). *Si* is a kind of one-sidedness that is focused on oneself; it is to focus on what is related to oneself in a way that prevents a balanced perspective. Thus, *gong yi* 公義, or propriety that is “public” or “objective,” is contrasted with resentment that is self-centered (*si*), with private (*si*) affairs, or with selfish (*si*) desires (Mozi 1948: 9/8/20; Xunzi 1965: 1.13a, 8.5a). The notions of selfish desire and selfish thought, understood in a negative sense, already occur in early texts (Xunzi 1965: 1.13a, 4.6a; Guoyu 1965: 5.5b, 17.3a, 17.7a; Lüshi chunqiu 1988: 3.19b; Hanfeizi 1965: 17.14a; Huainanzi 1965: 16.11; Guanzi 1965: 21.11a). Likewise, the contrast between *gong* and *si* is also related to the contrast between

⁷ The following discussion of *si* summarizes the discussion in Shun 2005: 5-6.

heaven and humans in early texts, where the operation of heaven is often described as being without *si* (Creel 1974: 358; *Liji* 1965: 15.12b-13a; *Zhuangzi* 1965: 3.15a; *Mozi* 1948: 4/4/9; *Guanzi* 1965: 13.6a).

In later Confucian thought, heaven's operation continued to be described in terms of *gong*, and *si* is characterized as a separation of the self from other things (Zhou 1990: 40; Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 2.23b). ZHANG Zai describes the superior person as being without the *si* of the opposition between things and self, and the Cheng brothers characterize *ren* (humanity) in terms of *gong*, which involves equally illuminating both things and self (Zhang 1965: 2.25a; Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 15.8b). For the Cheng brothers, the sage is sensitive to and responds to everything, and in that sense is without the self (*wu wo* 無我), unlike someone who is *si* and has a special attachment to one thing to the exclusion of others (Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 1.30b).

Returning to ZHU Xi, he usually uses *si* in a pejorative sense, contrasting it with *gong*. To form one body with the ten thousand things is *gong*, whereas *si* has to do with focusing on oneself or on close associates in a way that inappropriately neglects other people and things (Zhu 1986: 117; Zhu 1983-1986e: 1.14a-b). When one does not regulate the many likes and dislikes that arise as one is affected by external things continuously, one is drawn along unthinkingly by things. The notion of selfish desires emphasizes the fact that the desires that emerge in this context involve one's putting undue weight on one's relation to certain objects, so that it prevents one from appropriately taking into account all things. The notion of selfish thoughts, by contrast, emphasizes the role of the heart/mind. Selfish thoughts are thoughts of the heart/mind that give undue emphasis to oneself or to one's close associates. Just like the Cheng brothers who speak of being without the self, Zhu's opposition to selfish desires and selfish thoughts is sometimes presented in a way that downplays the self. For example, citing and endorsing the Cheng brothers' view, he describes YAN Hui's

anger as residing in things but not in the self (Zhu 1983-1986a: 2.10b).

Thus, for ZHU Xi, *si* has to do with the heart/mind's failure to take a balanced perspective, and with its failure to regulate one's desires and shape one's emotions accordingly. This results in one's putting undue weight on one's own relation to things or on those close to oneself. *Gong* 公, by contrast, involves a balanced view that gives all things their appropriate place. Heaven exhibits *gong* in its operations, and the *ren* person is like heaven and earth in that the *ren* person nourishes things in the way that heaven and earth does (Zhu 1986: 977, 983, 2415; Zhu 1983-1986e: 2.41b).

Without *si* in one's heart/mind, one would be like heaven and earth in responding appropriately to everything one comes into contact with, but with *si*, one's responses would focus on oneself or on what is closely associated with oneself (Zhu 1986: 1814). So, for ZHU Xi, *si* involves an inappropriate focus on oneself that separates one from other people and things; as a result, the life-giving force of *ren* fails to reach other people and things as it should. One restores the *ren* state of the heart/mind by eliminating the *si* in oneself (Zhu 1986: 2833; Zhu 1965: 67.20a-21b).

Self-cultivation

Given the view that people originally have clear insight into *li* (pattern) and given the account of ethical failure described in the previous section, self-cultivation basically involves restoring the insight into *li* that has been lost because of the effect of *si*. In discussing self-cultivation, ZHU Xi emphasizes two aspects of this process, one directed to managing the inner activities of the heart/mind to pre-empt or eliminate *si*, and the other directed to actively seeking a clear grasp of *li*. These two aspects of self-cultivation roughly parallel Cheng Yi's idea of nourishing the heart/mind with *jing* 敬 (seriousness) and advancing learning through *zhi zhi* 致知 (extension of understanding), an idea that ZHU Xi often cites with approval and sometimes puts in

terms of dwelling in *jing* and exhausting *li* (居敬窮理) (Zhu 1986: 150, 403-404, 2779). In this section, we will consider these two aspects of self-cultivation in turn.

In relation to actively seeking clear insight into *li*, ZHU Xi takes this to be the content of *zhi zhi* 致知, one of the steps in a self-cultivation process highlighted in *Daxue*. On his view, this involves extending one's understanding of *li* by actively reaching out and probing things and affairs. He takes the idea *ge wu* 格物—another step in the self-cultivation process highlighted in *Daxue*—to mean reaching out to things and affairs to probe the *li* in them (Zhu 1986: 255, 257, 2752, 2878-2879, 2908). The process involves not just inquiring into and thinking through the way one should conduct oneself in a certain situation, but also personally acting and experiencing how it feels to so act. It also involves the study of the Confucian classics. According to Zhu, there are certain insights of the sages that might not be explicit but lie behind the ideas recorded in the classics; these insights are referred to as the sages' *yi* 意 (thoughts). Our most important task in reading the classics is to go beyond the analysis of texts and come to grips with such insights (Zhu 1986: 162). To do so, we need to relate what we obtain from the classics to our own personal experiences, and to practice and embody them in ourselves (ibid.: 161, 165, 176, 181). So, the process involves an interplay between our present experiences and the past insights of the sages, with the assumption that these insights are as relevant to the present as they were to the past. Since these insights are unchanging in their relevance, the process is like that of listening to the ancient sages through the classics, and we should empty our mind of any pre-conceptions so that we can accurately hear the voices of the sages (ibid.: 177, 179, 180, 185, 186). What one learns from the classics is something already in us, and one should embody what one has learnt from the classics in one's personal life and ensure that it does resonate with the *li* in us (ibid.: 161, 165-168, 2941).

As we mentioned earlier, although ZHU Xi regards understanding (*zhi* 知) as preceding action, he sees action as the more important of the two. Furthermore, to the extent that one apparently has understanding but does not act, one's understanding is still too shallow (ibid.: 148). The idea that one's understanding can be more deep or shallow reflects his view that understanding admits of degrees, a view that he sometimes put in terms of understanding being more or less "mature" (ibid.: 2744). It is only when one's understanding is fully mature that one truly sees *li* or becomes one with *li*, and it is only when one has genuine understanding (*zhen zhi* 真知) that one's understanding is truly in oneself (ibid.: 145, 157, 2810). The view that understanding can be more deep or shallow he took from CHENG Yi (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 15.16b, 18.5a). CHENG Yi also emphasized the notion of genuine understanding: to have genuine understanding is not just a matter of being able to speak about or having beliefs about something; one has to be personally engaged with what one understands in an intimate way. Cheng illustrates this idea with the example of someone who has in the past been attacked by a tiger: the way he reacts to news of a tiger approaching is totally different from the way someone who has not had such past experience would react, and it illustrates the personal and intimate way in which he understands the danger of the tiger (ibid.: 2a.2b-3a). Another example Cheng used comes from *Lunyu*, namely, the person who has genuine understanding would view badness as if it were to put one's hand into boiling water (*Lunyu* 16.11; Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 15.3b-4a). Thus, anyone who claims to understand but does not act accordingly does not have genuine understanding (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 15.6b). ZHU Xi endorses both the view that genuine understanding will necessarily lead to action, and the illustration of genuine understanding with the examples of the tiger and of dipping one's hand into boiling water (Zhu 1965: 72.35a-b; Zhu 1986: 309, 390, 2793; Zhu 1983-1986e: 2.12b; Zhu 1983-1986a: 8.13a). He also relates genuine understanding to the notion of

cheng 誠, a notion we will consider in the next section (Zhu 1983-1986a: 8.13a; Zhu 1986: 1436).

Two additional points concerning ZHU Xi's views on understanding are in order. First, although he describes understanding as preceding and guiding action, he regards the two as complementing each other in the self-cultivation process. That is, in order to "deepen" one's understanding, one has to act on it and personally experience it, and so the two should proceed simultaneously (Zhu 1986: 2816). Second, understanding of *li* is different from understanding that comes from the senses (*jian wen zhi zhi* 見聞之知); it is a matter of the insight of the heart/mind into *li*. Now, ZHANG Zai tends to downplay the importance of the understanding that comes from the senses, describing it as "small" and "narrow" and as something that can become a burden on the heart/mind (Zhang 1965: 2.17a, 2.21a, 2.22a). The Cheng brothers likewise distinguish between the two kinds of understanding, describing the understanding that pertains to morality (*de xing zhi zhi* 德性之知) as not dependent on the understanding that comes from the senses (Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 2.21b, 2.27a, 25.2a). ZHU Xi, by contrast, regards the former as building on the latter: one has to start with the latter although one should eventually go beyond it (Zhu 1986: 2518-2519). This position is understandable given his emphasis on the examination of things and affairs and on learning, both of which depend on understanding that comes from the senses.

Turning to the other aspect of the self-cultivation process that focuses on the inner management of the heart/mind's activities, two ideas are particularly worth highlighting: *jing* 敬, which we referred to earlier, and *shen du* 慎獨, which ZHU Xi uses to explicate that idea of *cheng yi* 誠意, another step in the self-cultivation process highlighted in *Daxue*. They differ from *zhi zhi* 致知 (extension of understanding) in that their focus is not on directly seeking an understanding of *li*, but on pre-empting or correcting any activities of the heart/mind that might adversely affect one's acting in

accordance with *li*.⁸

Jing (seriousness) is used in early texts to refer to an attitude directed not just toward deities or persons, but also toward affairs (*Lunyu* 1.5, 13.19, 15.38, 16.10). It is related to both *jie* 戒 (being on guard) and *shen* 慎 (being cautious), and so involves an attitude of caution (*Zuozhuan* 1965: 16.23a, 19.23b). It is presented as a way to cultivate oneself or to straighten what is within oneself, as well as a quality of the superior person (*Lunyu* 12.5, 14.42; *Yijing* 1965: 1.7a). The Cheng brothers see *jing* as a way to cultivate oneself, viewing it as a quality that one should have prior to interacting with things (*ibid.*: 1.17a). They also explain it in terms of having oneness as master so that one stays centered without being moved (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 15.5a; Cheng and Cheng 1965a: 1.3b).

ZHU Xi endorsed these views of the Cheng brothers. For him, having oneness as master means the heart/mind is not divided, so that one is not distracted by other things when focused on one thing (Zhu 1986: 2464, 2467, 2635). One should be like this whether active or inactive (*ibid.*: 2465, 2875). He relates *jing* to the attitude of caution and fearfulness found at the beginning of the *Zhongyong* (chapter 1),⁹ and characterizes it as a posture of being constantly alert (*ibid.*: 494, 2471, 2767, 2788, 2936). For him, *jing* involves a focus of attention, concentration, freedom from distraction, caution and alertness. It is a posture that one should have, whether interacting with things or not; even when one is not engaged in affairs, one should nourish oneself with *jing* (*ibid.*: 2456, 2779). When directed to something one is interacting with, whether a person or an affair, it involves a full devotion of attention, caution, and alertness to possible distraction or incorrectness. *Jing* pre-empts activities of the heart/mind that might lead to deviation from *li*. Referring to the idea of *ke ji* 克

⁸ The following discussion of *jing* and of *shen du* summarizes the discussion in Shun 2008a: 264-5, 268-9.

⁹ Following ZHU Xi's division of the text into chapters in Zhu (1983-1986g).

己 (overcoming the self) from *Lunyu*, which he interprets to mean overcoming one's selfish thoughts and desires, ZHU Xi observes that *jing* is like guarding the door while *ke ji* is like warding off a robber: if one practices *jing*, then there is no need to *ke ji* (*Lunyu* 12.1; Zhu 1986: 151).

Ke ji, on this interpretation, is close to *shen du* 慎獨 but still different. They are similar in that both are directed to the activities of the heart/mind. They are different in that *shen du* is directed specifically to the subtle and incipient activities of the heart/mind that are just emerging, and can be pre-emptive rather than corrective. *Shen du* is mentioned in several early texts; for example, it is related to an attitude of caution and fearfulness at the beginning of the *Zhongyong*. The character *du* 獨, literally meaning “alone,” probably refers to the subtle activities of the heart/mind, and *shen du*, or being watchful over *du*, to a kind of inner self-management. In the “Li Qi” chapter of the *Liji*, *du* is mentioned in connection with what is inside the heart/mind (*Liji* 1965: 7.16a-16b). At the beginning of *Zhongyong*, it is mentioned in connection with what is hidden and minute, suggesting that *du* has to do with the inner workings of the heart/mind. In the *Daxue*, its occurrence is preceded by a reference to how *cheng* 誠 (wholeness) on the inside takes shape on the outside, an idea bearing a similarity to the *Zhongyong* observation about how nothing is more visible than the hidden and more manifest than the minute. (*Daxue* chapter 6).¹⁰ Thus, *du* as it occurs in *shen du* probably refers to the inner workings of the heart/mind.

ZHU Xi interprets *du* in this manner, explicating it in terms of what others do not know but one oneself alone (*du*) knows, and taking it to refer to the thoughts of the heart/mind that others do not know about (Zhu 1983-1986h: 6a-6b; Zhu 1983-1986g:

¹⁰ Following ZHU Xi's division of the text into main text and chapters of commentary in Zhu (1983-1986h).

2a; Zhu 1983-1986d: 3.10b-11a; Zhu 1986: 567, 1504). For him, the observation in *Zhongyong* about caution and fearfulness regarding what one does not see and hear refers to one's attitude when one's heart/mind has not yet been activated (Zhu 1986: 1499; Zhu 1983-1986d: 3.13a-13b). By contrast, *shen du* refers to one's posture when one's heart/mind has already been activated; one should be cautiously watching over the minute and subtle workings of the heart/mind that are known only to oneself and not yet to others (Zhu 1986: 1502, 1503, 2469). It serves both a pre-emptive and a corrective function. Cautiously attending to these incipient activities of the heart/mind helps prevent their going astray, and also helps correct them as soon as they start to go astray. This posture relates to *cheng yi* 誠意 in that it is a way of managing one's thoughts (*yi* 意), thereby ensuring that one is thoroughly good both inside and outside (Zhu 1986: 326, 335). That *yi* (thoughts) rather than *zhi* (intentions) is emphasized in the inner management of the heart/mind is because such inner management should be directed to one's thoughts as they emerge, before they crystallize into actual intentions or actions.

The ethical ideal

Thus, for ZHU Xi, the process of self-cultivation involves seeking a clear grasp of *li* by inquiry and learning and by clearing the heart/mind, both preemptively and correctively, of any problematic influence. This clear grasp of *li* is put in terms of genuine understanding, which we saw earlier to be related to *cheng* 誠. The idea of *shen du* also occurs in relation to *cheng* in *Daxue*, and *cheng* for ZHU Xi provides another description of the ethical ideal in addition to *ren* (humanity) and *zhen zhi* (genuine understanding). Besides *cheng*, there are two other terms that ZHU Xi often used to characterize the ethical ideal, *xu* 虛 and *jing* 靜. In this final section, we will continue the discussion of ZHU Xi's conception of the ethical ideal by examining the

ideas *cheng*, *xu*, and *jing*.

Cheng is used in early texts with the meaning of what is truly so, and is often contrasted with *wei* 偽, what is fake or false (*Lunyu* 13.11; *Mengzi* 1A.7; *Liji* 1965: 11.17a; *Xunzi* 1965: 14.3a).¹¹ It is used to refer to a personal attribute in several early texts, and plays an important role in the thinking of several later Confucian thinkers, such as LI Ao and ZHANG Zai (Li 1983-1986a: 2.1a-3b; Zhang 1965: 2.17a). ZHOU Dunyi characterizes *cheng* in terms of an absence of deviance, an idea that he takes from the *Yijing* and that he interprets to refer to the absence of any activity that is not good (*Yijing* 1965: 3.5b; Zhou 1990: 38). The Cheng brothers, in addition to explicating *cheng* in terms of the absence of deviance, also relate it to what is genuine (*zhen* 真) (Cheng and Cheng 1965c: 21b.1b).

ZHU Xi endorses these explications of *cheng*, and in addition relates it to *shi* 實, what is real and has substance (Zhu 1983-1986g: 11a, 17b-18a). *Shi* refers to what is truly the case, and Zhu takes *cheng* to mean that *li* (pattern) is truly (*shi*) in oneself (Zhu 1986: 102, 1544). The *cheng* person is consistently good both inwardly and outwardly, and follows the way with ease and without effort (Zhu 1986: 543; Zhou 1990: 14, Zhu's commentary). *Cheng* is also related to oneness, which is contrasted with being two or being mixed, where being mixed is seen as a form of *wei* 偽 (fake, false) (Zhu 1986: 304, 338). The state of being mixed involves a discrepancy within oneself; it is like having two people within one's heart/mind, pulling one in different directions (Zhu 1986: 304, 1721). So, for ZHU Xi, *cheng* is a state of the heart/mind in which it is fully oriented in accordance with *li*, without any internal division and without any discrepancy between one's outer behavior and inner dispositions.

Let us next consider *xu* and *jing*.¹² In early texts, *xu* is often contrasted with *shi*

¹¹ The following discussion of *cheng* summarizes the discussion in Shun 2008a: 262-3.

¹² The following discussion of *xu* and *jing* summarizes the discussion in Shun 2006.

實 (being real) as well as with two terms meaning “being full” or “filled up,” *ying* 盈 and *man* 滿 (*Lunyu* 7.26, 8.5; *Xunzi* 1965: 6.11a, 13.11a; *Zhuangzi* 1965: 6.7b, 7.18a). Thus, *xu* has the connotation of being empty or unfilled, and it can also be used verbally in the sense of making empty (*Mozi* 1948: 5/5/24, 37/25/20). Although *xu* is often contrasted with *shi*, the two terms are also related in interesting ways. Some texts idealize individuals who, while *shi*, appears as if *xu*, and some texts refer to those who are also *shi* despite being apparently *xu* (*Lunyu* 8.5; *Huainanzi* 1965: 7.5a; *Lüshi chunqiu* 1965: 26.1a). Some even refer to how, starting with *xu*, one ends up with *shi*, or how *shi* comes from *xu* (*Zhuangzi* 1965: 2.16a; *Huainanzi* 1965: 1.11a, 2.5a). That *xu* is idealized in this way has to do with its connotation of receptivity and responsiveness. If one is *xu* in the sense of being vacuous or unfilled, then one is also open to receiving what is *shi*, namely what is real and substantive. Thus, a number of texts refer to how one uses *xu* to receive what comes in and to await it, including specific references to using *xu* to receive *shi* (*Yijing* 1965: 4.1a; *Hanfeizi* 1965: 2.8b; *Huainanzi* 1965: 7.5a). Furthermore, one whose heart/mind is *xu* will not have preconceptions and so will not have one’s thoughts constrained (*Hanfeizi* 1965: 6.1a). This receptivity and the lack of prior constraints allow one to have a proper understanding of things, enabling one to respond appropriately to situations (*Hanfeizi* 1965: 1.10a; *Huainanzi* 1965: 1.8a). So, *xu* carries the multiple connotations of being unfilled and without substance, being unconstrained, and being receptive and responsive in appropriate ways.

ZHU Xi uses *xu* in three related senses to describe the ethical ideal. First, the heart/mind is *xu* in that it is capable of storing; it is because the heart/mind is *xu* that it can store the multitude of *li*, and in that sense there is *shi* within *xu* (Zhu 1986: 88, 232, 2514). Since *li* is already in the heart/mind, *xu* is not a matter of receptivity to *li* that one learns but a matter of the capacity to store the multitude of *li*. Second, he also

uses *xu* in the sense of being unfilled, specifically, being free from what is *si* 私 and what is *wei* 偽 (Zhu 1986: 1575). Drawing on the idea of the “air in the early morning” in *Mengzi*, he thinks that this is the state of the heart/mind in the early morning when one just awakens from restful sleep, although that state can soon be lost after one starts interacting with things (*Mengzi* 6A.8; Zhu 1986: 349, 1393, 2875). And third, for the heart/mind to be *xu* is also for it to be properly responsive. By being *xu* in the sense of being free from *si*, one is able to observe and follow *li* (Zhu 1986: 145, 155). This is the original state of the heart/mind prior to the influence of *si* (*ibid.*: 94).

As for *jing* 靜, it is often contrasted with *dong* 動, a contrast between not moving and moving, or between inactivity and activity (*Lunyu* 6.23). It is sometimes used to describe the inactive state of human beings before they start interacting with things (*Liji* 1965: 11.8b; *Huainanzi* 1965: 1.4a). However, *jing* also characterizes the state of water when it is still and free from disturbance (*Guanzi* 1965: 16.2b; *Daxue*: main text). When water is still, sediments will settle and the water is clear; when it is disturbed water loses this clarity (*Lüshi chunqiu* 1965: 1.6b). When water is clear, it acts like a mirror and can accurately reflect what is brought in front of it (*Zhuangzi* 1965: 2.17a, 10.18b-19a). Used in this context, *jing* is a desirable state of existence, in contrast to a state in which one is subject to disturbances that distort one’s response to things. In this sense, *jing* is contrasted with *dong* in the sense of disturbance but not with *dong* in the sense of activity, since one can be active (*dong*) while one’s heart/mind is still (*jing*) in the sense of being free from disturbances (compare *Mengzi* 2A.2 with *Xunzi* 1965: 15.4b). Indeed, being *jing* in this sense is a preparation for *dong* (activity), just as *xu* in the sense of receptivity and responsiveness is a preparation for *shi* (*Zhuangzi* 1965: 5.12a; *Hanfeizi* 1965: 1.10a).

Returning to ZHU Xi, he sometimes uses *jing* in contrast to *dong* to refer to one’s

state prior to interacting with things. *Xing* (nature) is *jing*, and *qing* (emotions)—the activation of *xing*—are *dong*. He takes this contrast to be the point of the observation in the “Yue Ji” chapter of *Liji* about how *xing* refers to stillness (*jing*) at birth, and how the desire (*yu*) of *xing* refers to activation upon contact with things (Zhu 1965: 8a-8b). At the same time, he often uses the contrast between *jing* and *dong* to refer to the contrast between the unperturbed state of the heart/mind and a state of the heart/mind that is unsettled. In this sense, if the heart/mind is not *jing*, it would be fluctuating between different directions and would not be at ease (Zhu 1986: 278). *Jing* refers to a state when the heart/mind is not so torn and is not vulnerable to uncertainty, and one can achieve this state by holding on to *li* (Zhu 1986: 275; Zhu 1983-1986h: 1b; Zhu 1983-1986e: 1.9a-10a).

Cheng, *xu*, and *jing*, as different ways of characterizing the ethical ideal, are intimately related. Whereas *cheng* emphasizes the complete ethical orientation of the heart/mind, *xu* and *jing* emphasize the absence of any elements of the heart/mind that can detract from this ethical orientation. *Xu* and *jing* differ from one another in that *xu* emphasizes the absence of these elements whereas *jing* emphasizes the absence of their disturbing effects. These notions are also related to *ren* (humanity), a relation that can be brought out through the notion of *si*. As we have seen, ZHU Xi uses *ren* to emphasize the connectedness between all things, and *si* has to do with desires and thoughts that come from the self and that separate oneself from other things. He compares *ren* to the brightness of a mirror, *si* to dust, and *gong* to the absence of dust; it is *si* that prevents the brightness of the mirror from shining forth, and so it is the removal of *si* that enables the manifestation of *ren* (Zhu 1986: 267, 781, 2454). Thus, whereas *xu* emphasizes the absence of *si*, and *jing* the absence of the disturbing effects of *si*, *ren* emphasizes the connectedness between things that is manifested when *si* is absent. *Cheng*, on the other hand, describes the complete ethical orientation of the

heart/mind when one attains such a state.

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