

1 "Age of Ethos": Exploring Rhetorical Practices in Early Chinese 2 Society

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7 Abstract

8 The essay explores the notion of collective ethos by looking closely at some of the key aspects
9 of rhetorical and discourse practices in early Chinese society, such as ethos-as-spirit, the
10 oneness of ethos/logos, and wei-yi (??; authority and deportment) among others, with a
11 conclusion about the ethocentric nature of the traditional Chinese discourse system, rhetoric
12 and philosophy included. To put things in perspective, it also discusses Western theories on
13 ethos, including those by noted postmodernist theorists such as Bourdieu and Foucault.
14 However, it does not argue that the Chinese tradition is the right path to rhetoric in general
15 and ethos in particular but, rather, points out that rhetoric varies across cultures for an array
16 of reasons, hence the necessity of approaching and understanding ethos differently from the
17 model formulated by Aristotle.

19 ***Index terms***— rhetoric, ethos, truth, power, logocentrism, ethocentrism, and Confucius.

20 Introduction his essay will be exploring the centrality of ethos to rhetorical and discourse practices in early
21 Chinese society, but I would like to start with Western rhetoric to put the subject in perspective. Western
22 rhetoric, especially of the Aristotelian strain, is predominately logos-based, or logocentric, for the reason that
23 logic forms "the basis of rhetoric" (Kaplan 1966, p. 11). This logocentric turn can be traced back to Plato's
24 idealism that assumes absolute truth can somehow be ascertained by humans. Plato asserts in the Gorgias that
25 truth, like "the great power of geometrical equality among both gods and men" (Plato 1990, p. 100), is accessible
26 to humans if a rigorous reasoning, modeled after his dialectic, is conducted. Plato is known for his hostility
27 toward rhetoric, which he dismisses as "cooking" or, worse, "flattery" (Plato 1990, Gorgias); in his view, rhetoric
28 stays outside of the province of knowledge, as "it has no account to give of T the real nature of things it applies"
29 (Plato 1990, Gorgias, p. 72).

30 Nevertheless, Plato does not appear to succeed in getting rid of rhetoric, for knowledge or truth has to rely on
31 the means of rhetoric for its own delineation (Bizzell and Herzberg 1990, p. 56), as evidenced, ironically, by the
32 Phaedrus, where Plato-brilliantly delivers a rhetorical rendition of "love" through the character of Socrates (Plato
33 1990, Phaedrus). Apparently aware of his own dilemma, Plato somehow offers a "corrective" to his hostile view
34 of rhetoric, for in the Phaedrus he accepts rhetoric as "an art which leads the soul by means of words, not only
35 in law courts and the various public assemblages, but in private companies as well" (Phaedrus, p. 132). Plato's
36 statement can be seen as an acknowledgement of rhetoric's persuasive power over audience, but, unfortunately,
37 his view of rhetoric as a whole pales by comparison with his elevation of philosophy (dialectic). For Plato, reason,
38 as exercised in dialectic or, to be exact, in the form of syllogistic thinking, is "the only faculty that affords an
39 avenue to the Good" (Johnson 1984, p. 100).

40 Unlike his mentor Plato, Aristotle appears relatively practical in his assessment of rhetoric, which he views
41 as "the counterpart of dialectic" (Aristotle 1990, p. 151), thus in theory reversing the pejorative role Plato has
42 assigned to rhetoric. Apart from logos, or logical appeal, Aristotle adds ethos (appeal of one's personal character
43 or ethical appeal) and pathos (emotional appeal) to the modes of rhetorical persuasion, leaving much more room
44 for rhetorical maneuvering. Thus, in practice, Aristotle sets himself in marked contrast to Plato, who attempts

1 DEFINITION OF ETHOS

45 to cleanse rhetoric of emotive or irrational elements and pushes for a more analytical, or rational, approach to
46 rhetoric. For Plato, persuasion effected irrationally would amount to injecting "belief without knowledge" (Plato
47 1990, *Gorgias*, p. 66), a practice he ascribes to the sophistry of his time.

48 Of the three modes of persuasion (i.e., *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*), *ethos*, projected through a rhetor's character,
49 "may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses," states Aristotle (1990, *Rhetoric*,
50 p. 154). However, his statement about *ethos* should not be misconceived to downplay the role of *logos* in
51 rhetoric; rather, it is simply a reflection of the author's pragmatic attitude and approach to rhetoric. In very
52 pragmatic terms, Aristotle defines rhetoric as "the Abstract-The essay explores the notion of collective *ethos* by
53 looking closely at some of the key aspects of rhetorical and discourse practices in early Chinese society, such
54 as *ethos-as-spirit*, the oneness of *ethos/logos*, and *wei-yi* (??; authority and deportment) among others, with a
55 conclusion about the ethocentric nature of the traditional Chinese discourse system, rhetoric and philosophy
56 included. To put things in perspective, it also discusses Western theories on *ethos*, including those by noted
57 postmodernist theorists such as Bourdieu and Foucault. However, it does not argue that the Chinese tradition
58 is the right path to rhetoric in general and *ethos* in particular but, rather, points out that rhetoric varies across
59 cultures for an array of reasons, hence the necessity of approaching and understanding *ethos* differently from the
60 model formulated by Aristotle. 1966, p. 12). So what appears to be the most effective mode of persuasion in
61 Aristotelian rhetoric could well fall flat in another, therefore the need to see "the history of rhetoric as culturally
62 situated and embedded (Lipson and Binkley 2004, p. 3). It is worthy of note that, in the last few decades,
63 scholarship has devoted a considerable amount of attention and energy to understanding non-Western forms
64 of rhetoric, including the alternative modes of persuasion. The studies coming out of such devotion appear to
65 support Kaplan's view about rhetoric being culture-based. One may assert, with a degree of confidence, that
66 Aristotelian rhetoric is anything but universal, despite the fact that it has been applicable, and useful, in many
67 Western historical-cultural settings.

68 This essay is meant as an attempt to add to the understanding of non-Western rhetorics by exploring, in
69 particular, the ethocentrism of early Chinese rhetoric and discourse, as opposed to the logocentrism of Western
70 rhetoric and discourse. 3 II.

1 Definition of Ethos

71 By ethocentrism I mean that early Chinese rhetoric is essentially *ethos*-driven in the sense that *ethos*, rather
72 than *logos* as in Aristotelian rhetoric, constitutes the substance of rhetorical persuasion, or meaning of discourse.
73 What is more, Chinese *ethos* works quite differently from its Western counterpart despite the fact that they are
74 both aimed at inspiring trust: The former is indeed an invocation of a rhetor's cultural heritage, while the latter
75 is essentially a function of a rhetor's character-based selfrepresentation. A Chinese *ethos* can be understood as
76 "a 'collective *ethos*,' in the sense that it has little to do with the individual qualities of a rhetor but much to do
77 with a collective consciousness that defines, and is also defined by, Chinese culture in ancient times" (Wei 2021,
78 p. 4). It is this "collective" nature that makes early Chinese rhetoric necessarily ethocentric.

79 Before going further into Chinese *ethos*, it may be helpful to take a closer look at how *ethos* has been defined
80 in the Western tradition.

81 As a mode of persuasion, *ethos* has been traditionally, and also conveniently, described as the ethical appeal (to
82 the rhetor's character), but there is actually more than that, if we look closely at what Aristotle actually writes
83 of *ethos*: "Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us
84 think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever
85 the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided" (1990, *Rhetoric*,
86 p. 153; emphasis added). The usefulness of *ethos*, we can see, is its potential to create trust or credibility on the
87 rhetor's behalf, so that the audience can "fully" and "readily" believe him. Thus, the ethical appeal, if any, may
88 not be all that is meant by Aristotle, whose pragmatism would rather prefer the functional than the ethical. As
89 long as persuasion is accomplished, it matters little whether the rhetor who deploys an ethotic appeal is truly
90 ethical or not. The end is to render the audience susceptible to what he wants it to hear or react to, regardless
91 of means.

92 Another (slightly less) popular definition of *ethos*, the appeal to trust, is probably more in line with Aristotle's
93 initial thoughts, as he describes *ethos* as made of "three things": namely, "good sense, good moral character,
94 and goodwill" (1990, *Rhetoric*, p. 161). A rhetor "who is thought to have all three of these good qualities
95 will inspire trust in his audience," asserts Aristotle (1990, *Rhetoric*, p. 161; emphasis added). Notice that, of
96 the "three things" mentioned, only the quality of "good moral character" may be related to the ethical appeal.
97 The particular wording of the statement, "who is thought to have all three of these good qualities," also reveals
98 Aristotle's pragmatism: that is, a rhetor does not have to possess these qualities in actuality, but as long as he
99 appears to the audience as such, trust will be inspired. In short, it is doubtful that the ethical appeal is all that
100 is intended by Aristotle for his scheme of *ethos* whose function it is to "inspire confidence in the orator's own
101 character" (1990, *Rhetoric*, p. 161).

102 Ethical appeal aside, one might be wondering whether Aristotle's tripartite taxonomy of *ethos* is not conclusive
103 enough, for there is a myriad of "things" that can be used, or exploited, to make one appear credible or trustworthy
104 to an audience, in addition to the aforementioned "three goods" (i.e., good sense, good moral character, and
105 goodwill). For instance, in traditional Chinese culture, age could add to one's credibility (because of a popular
106

107 belief that people become "wiser" when growing older), but it fits barely with any of Aristotle's "three goods."
108 4 According to Baumlin and Meyer, "numerous terms" may convey meaning in the direction of ethos, such as
109 "authority," "charisma," "sincerity," "expertise," "reliability," "image," "authenticity," "reputation," "cultural
110 identity," "persona," "self-fashioning voice," and "personal style" (2018, p. 4), just to name a few. The list can
111 go on and on, but what is significant is that those "numerous terms" also indicate a wide range of resources a
112 rhetor can possibly appropriate when rhetorically projecting his ethos. In other words, gaining an audience's
113 trust does not have to be confined within the "three goods" as imposed by Aristotle.

114 To sum it up, the term "ethical appeal" may not depict the true meaning of Aristotelian ethos, which is to
115 serve, after all, as a "trust" strategy for the purpose of persuading an audience; on the other hand, inspiring trust
116 ought not to be limited to the exercising of good sense, good moral character, or goodwill only. Loosely speaking,
117 anything made use of by a rhetor can be an ethotic ploy if it is designed to make him look credible or trustworthy.
118 I am bringing up the issue of definition here because I feel the ethical appeal alone does not adequately describe
119 the ethos in early Chinese rhetoric, which is more of an appeal to authority culturally established and sanctioned,
120 often in the form of "historical appeal," to quote Cua (2000, p. 39). Further, this appeal to authority goes beyond
121 Aristotle's tripartite ethos, as it has little to do with a rhetor's personal qualities, be it in good sense, good moral
122 character, or goodwill. Apparently, the Chinese ethos shifts from the personal to the cultural. For that reason,
123 we might have to address another issue in connection with the topic of the essay: the location of ethos.

124 2 III.

125 3 Location of Ethos

126 Aristotle places ethos, squarely, in the character of a rhetor, to be objectified through "the personal goodness
127 revealed by the speaker" (Rhetoric, 1990, pp. 153-54). Thus, in Aristotelian rhetoric, the rhetor per se stands
128 as a "signifier" of ethos (Baumlin 1994, p. xvi). This type of ethos can be categorized as "individualistic" in
129 the sense that it "comes from within, being grounded in a rhetor's self or selfhood" (Wei 2021, p. 5). However,
130 functioning as an artistic or discursive formation (in Aristotle's words: "achieved by what the speaker says"), the
131 Aristotelian model does not take into account a rhetor's "prior ethos," which is "the image his audience has of
132 him before he takes the floor" (Amossy 2001, p. 1). Prior ethos stems from "the previous reputation and social
133 status of the speaker" (Amossy 2001, p. 2 fn. 3), among others. Its existence suggests that certain ethotic traits
134 of the rhetor are actually independent of an artistic or rhetorical construction. So, as Baumlin and Meyer rightly
135 point out, "Aristotle's textually-constructed ethos is an anomaly, repeated nowhere else in theory or praxis"
136 (2018, p. 10). One reason for that anomaly is: it does not factor in the role of prior ethos that may impact how
137 a rhetor is received by his audience, as just mentioned. But there is another reason, a more important one: that
138 is, it does not account for cultural practices and social institutions that can both constrain and contribute to
139 the making of one's ethos. For this latter reason, I will turn to Pierre Bourdieu, whose theory stands in direct
140 opposition to the idea of a discursively-fashioned ethos.

141 Based on Bourdieu's theory, ethos does not reside within a discourse but rather comes from outside as "the
142 exterior authority" (Amossy 2001, p. 3) that originates in the system of social institutions where one finds himself
143 or herself. Whether that authority will be conferred depends upon one's institutional position or, simply, where
144 he or she is from socially. As Amossy explains, following Bourdieu, "a discourse cannot be authoritative unless
145 it is pronounced by the person legitimated to pronounce it in a legitimate situation, hence before legitimate
146 receivers" (2001, p. 3). If a priest is able to take the floor to preach sermons, an epidemiologist to predict
147 virus-infection trends, or a sociology professor to speculate about causes of certain social ills, it is all because of
148 the exterior authority granted upon him or her by the system of social institutions, just like "the skeptron that,
149 in Homer, is passed to the orator who is about to speak" (Bourdieu 1991, Language, p. 109). Ethos in this sense
150 is a "precondition" or a "given" (Baumlin and Meyer 2018, p. 8) rather than a language creation all in the hands
151 of a rhetor.

152 The Homeric skeptron embodies an institutional legitimacy, by which one is enabled "to claim the cultural
153 authority, expertise, trust, and means to speak and to be heard" (Baumlin 2020, p. 1). In modern-day society,
154 the symbolic skeptron has been transformed into sets of social rituals as grand as a presidential inauguration,
155 where the executive power of a nation is formally conferred upon an individual, or as simple as a "microphone"
156 (Bourdieu 1991, p. 193), which serves the function of granting or denying an individual "means to speak and to be
157 heard." 5 Bourdieu's discourse theory (as well as other postmodernist ones) points out a viable alternative to the
158 Aristotelian conception of ethos-one that is not necessarily bound up with the character or "personal goodness"
159 of an individual. That is, ethos is now understood to be "anchored in institutional frameworks and social rituals"
160 (Amossy 2001, p. 2). Interestingly, this alternative view does not appear a far cry from the "primal" semantics of
161 ethos, which has to do with humans' "dwelling place," according to Heidegger In early Chinese society, divination
162 would have been something equivalent to the skeptron. It was a routine religious practice for the court of rulers,
163 but it can also be categorized as "the political ritual" in Bourdieuan terms (1991, Language, p. 193), for its
164 role in mystifying the authority (wei; ?) and power of the Chinese kingship, which I will explore in more detail
165 later in the essay. (Baumlin and Meyer 2018, p. 12). In a way, to speak is to reveal where one is from socially
166 and culturally or to "declare one's 'dwelling place'" (Baumlin and Meyer 2018, p. 14). Thus, ethos can also be
167 regarded as a metaphor for identity, conceptually close to Kenneth Burke's identification theory about rhetoric.

168 What becomes comprehensible now is a claim made earlier about a culturally-based, collective ethos in early
169 Chinese rhetoric, which is not baseless in theory even by some Western accounts. The historical appeal, one of
170 the most prominent suasive tactics deployed by ancient Chinese rhetoricians, would add to this comprehension.
171 The tactic is founded on a cultural conviction that the remote past represented a golden age, when the state was
172 run by the legendary sagekings, therefore the past better than the present. Confucius, 6 IV.

173 4 Agency and Self

174 for example, was a master of using history "as an archetypical topos" in his moral teachings, which may be
175 formulated as: "The past informs and guides the present" (Liu and You 2009, p. 158). One of the reasons is
176 clearly ethotic: by invoking the "wisdom" of those sage-kings, the Great Master would lend himself the skeptron
177 of authority or ethos, therefore making his moral and political statements more credible to his audiences. But
178 the ethos evoked on the basis of the historical appeal can be described as "collective," as it "has little to do with
179 the personal character of a rhetor, upon which an Aristotelian ethos is sustained; rather, it is a cultural construct
180 woven out of the collective consciousness of early Chinese society, a consciousness that holds fast to an inveterate
181 belief in history" (Wei 2021, p. 5).

182 I would hesitate to characterize a "Bourdieuian" type of ethos in the same way as Chinese ethos, despite its
183 conception of cultural or structural authority (to be conferred upon a speaker). This is because the former
184 presupposes the participation of an individual, or an "agent," 7 for its manifestation-at least the spokesperson
185 must be there to take hold of the skeptron. In other words, individual agency is an "active" in materializing
186 ethos in Bourdieuian terms. 8 6 Confucius (551 -479 B.C.), an early Chinese thinker, founder of Confucianism. 7
187 Bourdieu frequently employs the term "agent(s)" or "social agent(s)" in his works. To overcome the "structure vs
188 agency" opposition, he proposes a dialectic (or perhaps a paradox) through "habitus," a notion that "expresses
189 first the result of an organizing action, with a meaning close to that of words such as structure" but "also
190 designates a way of being, a habitual state (especially of the body) and, in particular, a predisposition, tendency,
191 propensity or inclination (Bourdieu 1977, Outline, p. 214, n. 1; emphases original), the latter suggestive of
192 agency.

193 But agency, 8 Bourdieu appears to affirm such agency by stating that "there is no social agent who does not
194 aspire, as far as his circumstances permit, to have the power to name and to create the world through naming"
195 (1991, Language, p. 105; emphasis added) and by naming social one of the "ethotic building blocks" (Baumlin
196 and Meyer 2018, p. 16), has been perceived, and conceptualized, in Western ideologies to be something grounded
197 in the human self or selfhood, an individuated entity that subsists distinctly with an "organized, 'characteristic'
198 inner structure" (Alcorn 1994, p. 6). 9 Thus, "Bourdieuian" ethos, 10 One reason may have to do with the fact
199 that rhetoric is widely seen as an individual enterprise in the west, with an avowed ownership. Functioning
200 as selfrepresentation on the part of the owner (rhetor, speaker, writer, etc.), ethos serves as the marker of the
201 individual. But there is another reason, probably with more ideological import. That is, in Western society,
202 the self has been culturally and philosophically treated as "a moral, metaphysical, and, ultimately, theological
203 category" (Baumlin 1994, p. xviii), the theoretical basis of an "autonomous, self-present, sovereign individual"
204 assumed to be "the originator of meaning and action" (Dissanayake, 1996, p. xi). One may sense a dualism of
205 it would seem, has returned full circle to the starting point of Aristotelian ethos (and Western ethos in general):
206 the individual self. Its variance from the latter may be summarized this way: the ethotic power of the former
207 comes from outside in, whereas the latter from inside out. But the self remains the converging point. For this
208 reason, "Bourdieuian" ethos varies from its Chinese counterpart.

209 The self is at the core of Western ethos. While there are competing theories about ethos, they can all be boiled
210 down to the affirmation of Western ideologies about the self or selfhood, whether it (the self) is as object or as
211 subject, ontological or epistemological, existential or linguistic, an embodied entity or simply a voiced "I," and
212 so on: "it seems that any adequate 'map' or model of ethos will include a version of self and of its relation to
213 culture and language" (Baumlin and Meyer 2018, p. 4; emphasis original). The statement by Baumlin and Meyer
214 echoes an assertion made by Alcorn more than two decades earlier: "A theory of ethos needs to be grounded in
215 a relatively clear, but also a relatively complex, understanding of the self" (1994, p. 4). But we may have to ask:
216 Why are Western theories on ethos so possessed by the notion of self? agents as "carriers of distinctive signs,"
217 who are "capable of perceiving as significant distinctions the 'spontaneous' differences that their categories of
218 perception lead them to consider as pertinent" (p. 121; p. 237). 9 What is self is still very much subject to
219 debate. According to George Mead, the Western conception of self falls into two categories: one assumes a social
220 process as "logically prior to the individuals and their experiencing": the other assumes individuals and individual
221 experiencing as "logically prior to the social process" (1962, pp. 222-23). Regardless, the term "individuation"
222 or "individuated" seems to hold the key to the notion of self. 10 To the author's knowledge, Bourdieu does not
223 consciously theorize about ethos even though he uses the term in his writings. However, some contemporary
224 scholars, like Ruth Amossy, have formulated a type of ethos based on his theory, hence the term "Bourdieuian"
225 ethos.

226 the self in relation to ethos: on the one hand, the former relies on the latter to assert itself (in the form of
227 selfrepresentation); on the other, the former also works as a source of agency, or "enabling premises" (Baumlin
228 and Meyer 2018, p. 5), to objectify or activate the latter: for example, to embody ethos through the personhood
229 of a rhetor, as in the Aristotelian model, or to get hold of the skeptron of ethos through an authorized agent, as

230 in the "Bourdieuian" model. It looks as if any theory of ethos would evaporate without some sort of self being at
231 its basis.

232 But is it possible to formulate a theory of ethos without an ideology of self or selfhood attached to it? Put
233 another way, is it possible to conceive of an ethos that is self-less, character-less, or agent-less since it is all about
234 inspiring trust or building up authority? The answer may be yes if we take a look at rhetorical and discourse
235 practices in early Chinese society.

236 V.

237 5 Ethos of Early Chinese Rhetoric

238 In classical Chinese (as well as in modern), there is no equivalent to the Western term "ethos," just as there is
239 no exact match with the word "rhetoric." However, this does not mean that the ancient Chinese did not engage
240 in persuasive or argumentative practices for their social needs or did not know how to apply ethos in those
241 practices. Rather, it just points to the fact that rhetoric in general or ethos in particular was perceived and
242 practiced differently within a different sociocultural context, with a different meaning ascribed to it, and in a
243 different language. For instance, Laozi's 11 To return to Chinese ethos, Mencius' Dao De Jing states, "Good men
244 do not argue" (see the epigraph), apparently contradicting the Roman rhetorician Quintilian's motto of "good
245 man speaking well," but does this mean that Laozi is anti-rhetoric? Maybe not, for what is really meant by Laozi
246 is that rhetorical practices should be aspiring to the Dao (Way), the highest moral order for humans, and that
247 in doing so harmony would be achieved and frivolous arguments against one another shunned. The Dao De Jing
248 may give us an idea of how the ancient Chinese practiced rhetoric differently from their Athenian counterparts,
249 who would favor an "argue-to-win" approach (Wei 2021, p. 3). As a masterpiece of rhetoric, the Dao De Jing
250 also suggests that the effort appears unnecessary to prove whether Chinese rhetoric or ethos exists: It is just
251 different.

252 and cheng-yān are expressive of a speaker's "innate moral quality," central to the Mencian idealism about
253 "human benevolence" (1998, p. 175). For that reason, they function like an ethical appeal, but they are also
254 markedly different from the Aristotelian ethos, in that the latter is a mode of persuasion, artistically concocted
255 and subject to manipulation. Regardless, cheng and chengyan bear similarity to the Aristotelian ethos for having
256 "the effect of inspiring 'trust' in Confucian rhetoric" (Wei 2017, p. 25), The persuasive power of a sincere speech,
257 cheng-yān, can best be described in Mencius' own words: "It never happens that genuine sincerity cannot move
258 others; on the other hand, nobody would be moved if sincerity was not in place." 13 Cheng or cheng-yān might
259 have been a conscious attempt by Mencius to counter the sophist rhetoric of his time (Lu 1998, p. 175), but
260 it clearly registers the imprint of a Confucian doctrine on rhetoric: xiu ci li qi cheng (????; to cultivate words
261 to build trust 14). Trust or sincerity is a defining attribute of "good rhetoric" by Confucian standards. As
262 Roetz points out, "Cheng or similar terms play an important role in the Confucian concept of rhetoric," which
263 presupposes such qualities, he quotes Xunzi, 15 as "selfesteem and eagerness? uprightness and sincerity (cheng)"
264 (1993, p. 92). On the other hand, sincerity is also a key component of the Confucian value system: "the aim
265 of the noble man is to be cheng" (Goldin 1999, p. 104). Thus, Mencius' cheng and cheng-yān are "both the
266 means to an end and the end itself of communication" (Lu 1998, p. 175); however, Aristotle's ethos, one may
267 recall, is a means only-just for the purpose of persuasion. Ideally, Mencius' cheng also carries "a transformative
268 power," as it has the potential to be "the basis for the political order" (Shun 1997, p. 163): without cheng, trust
269 would be gone; society would not be run or governed (?; zhi) properly as a result. 16 13 Author's translation,
270 based on the original Chinese version in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited
271 by Han Lu, et al. (1995). See "Li Lou (a)," Mencius (p. 261): ?????????????????????? 14 Author's translation,
272 based on the original Chinese version in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited
273 by Han Lu, et al. (1995). See "Wen-Yan Zhuan," Zhou Yi (p. 439). 15 Xunzi (about 313-238 B.C), an early
274 Chinese thinker, widely considered the third most important figure in the founding of Confucianism. 16 Mencius
275 also states, "cheng is the dao (way) of heaven; to long for cheng is the dao (way) of humans" (??? ?é ???
276 ??? ?é ???), suggesting that there is a natural tendency towards cheng among humans. This is seemingly an
277 indirect criticism of the rulers of his time, who failed to govern with cheng, even though it should have been the
278 natural way of doing so. See "Li Lou (a)," Mencius (p. 261) in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with*
279 *Annotations*, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995).

280 At this point, one might get a bigger picture of cheng or cheng-yān. It works like a "dual operative": 1) to
281 aim to build up trust and 2) to serve to turn that trust into social order. Thus, it combines the rhetorically
282 persuasive and the socially transformative into one organic ethos.

283 It is worthy of note that in the Confucian doctrine of xiu ci li qi xin, the emphasis is placed on the language
284 itself (as in "cultivating words to build trust") rather than on the personal character of a rhetor, the latter being
285 the case with an Aristotelian ethos. Thus, the speech (cheng-yān) would become the signifier of an ethos in
286 place of the very person who speaks it. This "accords with a cultural tradition that downplays the role of an
287 individual for the purpose of preserving social harmony" (Wei 2021, p. 3), but more importantly, it also reflects an
288 epistemological insight among ancient Chinese thinkers about the prescriptive, performative, and transformative
289 functions of language in shaping and conditioning human thought and conduct. While there are diverging views
290 over some specific language issues, it is the general consensus among the Western sinologists that "the main
291 function of language according to classical Chinese epistemology consists in erecting, initiating, motivating, and

insinuating actions and action oriented attitudes, not in describing a transcendent world independent of actions and consciousness, or in transmitting representations and opinions about this world in itself" (Lenk 1993, p. 6). For Confucius, language was a social practice that institutionally constitutes (part of) *li* (?): the "action-oriented" rituals or rites. 17 This may explain why the Great Master was so obsessed about the "rectification of names" (??; zheng-ming), 18 Admittedly, the Confucian ideal of "selfcultivation" would presuppose the involvement of moral agency, but it does not come close to what is commonly understood as agency in Western conceptions. We may because correctness in names (language) can structurally lead to correctness in human behavior, therefore "essential to the order and harmony of society" (Willman 2016).

We may have two implications to draw from the Confucian ethos. One is that "language, as a social practice, mediates one's conduct" (Wei 2017, p. 26). The emphasis on "sincere speech," not on "sincere personality," can thus be seen as a recognition of language's structuring power over human attitudes and actions (Hansen 1983; Graham 1989). The other, also related to the first, is that the emphasis on language affirms that human agency, if any, would play a lesser role in the Confucian model of ethos, contrasting the Western model "premised on the moral and, ultimately, theological inseparability of the speaker-agent from the speech-act" (Baumlin 1994, p. xiii). see the disparity by examining two conflicting views on moral agency between Mencius and Xunzi. For Mencius, human nature is innately benevolent, aligned with the ultimate good (??; zhi-shan) of the Dao (Way), but in early Chinese thought, the Dao (Way) also represents the cosmic order of the universe on which "ten thousand things" are based. In Mencius' own words, doing good things, for humans, is as natural as "water flowing downward" (????). 19 Thus, cultivating one's self morally becomes a mission of letting the Dao reveal itself or digging out the good within. To the contrary, Xunzi views human nature as inherently evil, taking a position directly against Mencius. According to Xunzi, humans are born with "a desire for gain" (??; hao-li), "envy and hate" (??; jie), and "lust for sensual pleasures" (???; haoshengse). If unchecked, these vices would evolve into problems of "strife and contention" (??; zheng-dou), "cruelty and villainy" (??; can-zei), and "perversion and debauchery" (??; yin-luan), all of which would further lead to "rule violation" (??; fan-fen) and "moral disorder" (??; luan-li), with a society under the threat of "violence" (?; bao). 20 That Mencius and Xunzi have reached the same conclusion about moral agency should come as no surprise, considering the prevalence of *wu-wei* (nonstriving or non-action) in early Chinese philosophy. In today's language, the doctrine of *wu-wei* can simply mean "Don't assert yourself." However, Seok is of the view that an "active form of moral agency" can still be observed in Confucian discourse, but it is not based on "self-enclosed independency" but rather on "relational and interactive interdependency of communal agency" (2017). If Seok's view holds true, then agency as such may best be characterized as "collective agency." This is conceivable if we look at the traditional mainstream Chinese conceptions of self, where the self is "seen as holistic rather than individualistic" and "constructed But Xunzi also believes that humans can rectify their "evil" nature by adhering to the rituals established by the ancient sage-kings for the purpose of maintaining moral order and social harmony. These rituals are "encapsulations" of "the fundamental patterns of the universe," known as "Heaven's Way" (Goldin 2018). Thus, for Xunzi, moral self-cultivation comes from without, through an inculcation of rituals, instead of from within, as proposed by Mencius. Nonetheless, though their points of departure are diametrically different, Mencius and Xunzi actually come to the same conclusion about self-cultivation: that is, to follow the Dao (Way).

through part/whole and social relationships rather than through the uniqueness of inner choice" (Hay 1998, p. 60). But no matter what, it appears that one thing is certain: "human agency, in the form of asserting an autonomous individual self, is out of the picture in the Confucian tradition, which values and puts to use the performative function of language while at the same time advocating self-cultivation, self-restraint, and selfeffacement as virtues that a *jun-zhi* (i.e., a nobleman or gentleman in the spiritual sense) must possess" (Wei 2021, p. 3).

I would not say that individualism or individuality has no place in early Chinese rhetoric, but rather that "self-cultivation in terms of accepted social ends," other than "man's fulfillment as an individual," is valued in the Confucian system of discourse (de Bary, et al. 1960, p. 114). To a Confucian, like Xunzi, the moral principle of *shun li-yi* (???; abiding by established social rituals and behavior codes) sets up a standard for "judging good or bad rhetoric" (Chen and Wang 1998, p. 44). Accordingly, within the Confucian (and Daoist as well) framework of rhetoric, a collective ethos would make far more sense than an individualistic one, the latter predicated largely, if not exclusively, on a metaphysical foundation of selfhood and agency.

6 VI. "Writing the Masters"

It is well established, and documented, that "collective workmanship" (Wei 2015) was behind the production of almost all of the pre-Qin 21 texts in ancient China. 22 Classical texts, like the *Dao De Jing*, *Zhuangzi* and *Four Books* and *Five Classics*, 23 were collectively written, often over a span of centuries, by-mostly-the anonymous disciples, and disciples of disciples, 24 of Laozi, *Zhuangzi*, ??? 21 Refers to the period up to the first imperial dynasty of China, the Qin dynasty (221-206 B.C.). 22 Suppose a text can be attributed to one single author; however, to quote W.Y. Li, the "inevitable changes and emendations introduced" in the process of transmission still "warrant the notion of collective authorship" (Li 2017, p. 363). 23 The *Four Books*: The *Great Learning*, *Zhongyong* (also *Doctrine of the Mean*), *Analects*, and *Mencius*; the *Five Classics*: the *Book of Changes*, *Book of Poetry*, *Book of Rites*, *Book of Documents* (also *Book of History*), and *Zuozhuan* (also *Zuo Commentary*).

353 24 It is very likely that those other than the "disciples" also contributed to the making of Chinese classics. 25
354 Zhuangzi (about 369 -286 B.C.), an early Chinese thinker in the Daoist tradition.

355 Confucius and other masters, who were, nonetheless, credited with authorship, though in many cases, the
356 historical masters may not have contributed a single word to a work under their name. According to A. Graham,
357 the Zhuangzi is actually "a collection of writings of the fourth, third, and second centuries B.C., in which only
358 the Inner chapters can be confidently attributed to Chuang-tzu [Zhuangzi] himself" (1990, Chinese Philosophy,
359 p. 283). In some cases, a text could have taken much longer time to finish, such as The Yellow Emperor's Classic
360 of Internal Medicine (IM). 26 Interestingly, the skeptron conferred nominally by virtue of a historical master
361 provides a rhetorical leeway for the disciples to create their own texts (or agenda, using today's political jargon)
362 with degrees of deviation or variance from the predecessors, depending on the then sociopolitical climate and
363 scholarly trends yet all in the name of that master. This norm of "editorial creativity" has long been observed in
364 scholarship. Dubs, for instance, has this to say about Confucius: "Then each Confucian philosopher, and some
365 Daoists too, read into Confucius' teaching the beliefs that this philosopher wanted to be accepted, because by
366 putting them into the mouth of the great authority, these teachings also became authoritative (1951, p. 30). He
367 adds, "Many sayings were put into his mouth which he never could have uttered" (Dubs 1951. P. 30). Dubs'
368 remark explains, in a rather simple way, how a historical master can be (ab)used as a source of authority (or
369 ethos) by his disciples to create texts of their own version, a prevailing rhetorical practice responsible for the
370 abundance of inconsistencies or oddities in many of This classic, notes Ding, was put to composition somewhere
371 in the Warring States period (475-221 B.C.), but its "first appearance" was dated in the West Han dynasty (206
372 B.C.-25 A.D.) (2014, p. 46). Though it was "finally published in 726 AD," its present-day version still came to a
373 much later date, somewhere "between 1068 and 1078 AD" (Ding 2014, p. 46). As the title implies, the IM has
374 been popularly attributed to the legendary ancestor of the Chinese, the Yellow Emperor, who obviously had no
375 involvement whatsoever with the book. Yet, "his name renders the book authoritative," says Ding (2014, p. 46).

376 The physical disconnect in Chinese classics between authorship and text would pose a challenge to the
377 Aristotelian model of ethos, which is "projected through the "identification of a speaker with/in his or her
378 speech" (Baumlin 1994, p. xi). Clearly, such identification does not apply in the case of collective workmanship,
379 where individual authorship is at best putative. But texts created this way (out of collective workmanship)
380 would still carry ethotic weight due to their authorial association with historical masters, whose monikers would
381 hold the skeptron of authority, like that of the Yellow Emperor mentioned above. Needless to say, the collective
382 workmanship of pre-Qin texts is not a "habitus" for housing the attributes of ethos that are distinctively Western,
383 such as individual agency, self or selfhood, and, above all, the character of a rhetor to personalize ethos.

384 the Chinese classics. In what follows, I will further explore the issue of editorial creativity using the example
385 of the Analects by Confucius, which is actually "a compilation of independently assembled chapters," notes
386 Harbsmeier (2019, p. 188).

387 Though widely viewed as the most authoritative of the Confucian canon, the Analects is a collection of texts
388 filled with oddities, as if two Confucius's or two voices, such as "didactic" versus "non-didactic" (Harbsmeier
389 2019, p. 217), were competing with each other. One such oddity is Confucius' remark that "fathers cover up
390 for their sons, and sons cover up for their fathers [after misdeeds committed]" (Ivanhoe and van Norden 2001, p.
391 36). On the surface, the statement can be regarded as a Confucius' view about "family values," but deep down it
392 is odd for several reasons. 27 Most notably, it is at odds with Confucius' grand vision of restoring the Zhou 28 li
393 (??) as a measure of maintaining social order. Obviously, the Confucius figure in the Analects has placed family
394 interests 29 To some students, especially Western, "[c]ontradictions abound" in the Analects (Hunter and Kern
395 2018, p. 1), but this is quite understandable given the "heterogeneous origins" of the book (Weingarten 2014, p.
396 225). On the negative side, it affirms Dubs' concern that "the real teaching of Confucius became distorted anew
397 each time a new Confucian philosophy appeared" (1951, p. 30). However, on the positive side, and in a broad
398 way, it exemplifies the "highly composite and intertextual character" (Weingarten 2014, p. 253) of early Chinese
399 texts in general, thanks to the norm of editorial creativity under discussion. Against this above one's obligations
400 to society, which, however, would go directly against the grain of his li restoration. Still, the question is: Did
401 the historical Confucius really say that? Oliver Weingarten did a detailed study of textual parallels between the
402 above mentioned "family-value" statement by Confucius and passages found in other early Chinese classics. He
403 reached the following conclusions: 1) the Analects' version "is probably derived from earlier incarnations of a
404 similar narrative plot"; and 2) "it stands in no direct relationship with the historical Confucius" (2014, p. 249).
405 I would go too far if I dwell upon the oddities of the Analects, like the one just cited, but the likelihood simply
406 cannot be ignored that somebody else had put his own idea into the mouth of the Great Master. In other words,
407 editorial creativity played a "dirty" role. The real-life Confucius was not a success story, to say the least. Career
408 wise, he can be characterized as a "failure" despite his ambitions. In Harbsmeier's words, "he never got a proper
409 job in his lifetime" (2019, p. 222). In his later years, he was forced into exile, spending about fourteen years
410 traveling around and trying to get accepted by the rulers of the feudal states but to no avail. He preached his
411 political vision of governance (li) and moral philosophy of humanly love (?; ren) but only to realize that they had
412 fallen on deaf ears. In the end, he gave up: "My way has come to its end." 30 To this day, how the Great Master
413 got educated in the first place still remains a "mystery," due to a lack of evidence, documented or otherwise,
414 to prove his educational upbringing. The Confucius figure says of himself in the Analects: "At fifteen, I set my
415 heart on learning. At thirty, I was firmly established. At forty, I had no more doubts. At fifty, I knew the will of

416 Heaven. At sixty, I was ready to listen to it. At seventy, I could follow my heart's desire without transgressing
 417 what was right" (de Bary, et al. 1990, p. 22), but this self-advertising statement can best be understood as a
 418 summary of Confucius' intellectual growth, but with little intimated of It would be appropriate to say that the
 419 real-life Confucius was a man dogged by "suffering" and "frustration" yet obsessed with a "desire for recognition"
 420 (Kern 2018, p. 292; p. 297). Confucius finally got "redeemed," though only after death, in writings attributed to
 421 him by generations of his disciples, through which he was also transformed, from a frustrated old man to a great
 422 "sage" recognized by the imperial court of the West Han dynasty (202 B.C.-8 A.D.), hundreds of years later.
 423 Therewith, a sagely ethos was conferred upon Confucius, together with the Analects canonized and Confucianism
 424 institutionalized. 30 "??é????," translated from Shiji (Records of the Grand Historian) by Sima Qian: Kongzi
 425 Shijia 17.

426 his personal education. (Is it enough to set one's heart on learning?) On the other hand, Confucius' famous self-
 427 description as a teacher, "I transmit but don't create" (????) 31 The widely observed intellectual inconsistency of
 428 the Analects, which prompts Gentz to declare it a work of "tesserae" (2018), may indirectly point to a less-than-
 429 glorious education in the upbringing of the historical Confucius. may be viewed as a tacit selfconfession or
 430 acknowledgement that he did not have much to claim for himself: All he could do was to pass on knowledge from
 431 a third party. It appears that Hunter has made a valid point about those famous "Confucius sayings," which
 432 he takes as "venues for the reperformance of inherited wisdom" (2012, p. 8). That said, we may never get to
 433 the bottom due to the lack of surviving evidence. Yet, as the saying goes, absence of evidence is not necessarily
 434 evidence of absence. It could be reasonably assumed that Confucius' disciples, and the like, would have been
 435 happy to keep evidence that proves the "glory" of their master's education. Otherwise, they might have "deleted"
 436 it to maintain a clean record for their master. As Ching points out, "Confucius became too important for later
 437 generations to tolerate any information in his biography that might be regarded as disrespectful" (1997, p. 69).
 438 In ethotic discourse, this can be translated as "suppressing any information that would have discredited the
 439 master or undercut his ethos." At least, a possibility. 32 31 Translated from the original Chinese version in The
 440 Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995). See "Shu Er," Lun
 441 Yu (p. 84). 32 According to Kern, it's possible that "ancient readers were less troubled than we are today by the
 442 textual and logical inconsistencies" (2018, p. 286), a factor that could have possibly contributed to the book's
 443 inconsistency.

444 For instance, Harbsmeier notices that the presence of the "non-didactic" talks has been a "salient feature"
 445 of "a nineteen-page didactic handbook for imperial use" (2019, p. 217; emphases added), a feature indicative
 446 of two Confucius figures in the book: one is "sagely"; the other more of a "common" type, which is probably
 447 closer to the real-life Confucius. And many small details of the book would support this suggestion. It would
 448 be digressive to go over the inconsistencies of the Analects, but a (hypo)thesis may be proposed: that is, the
 449 historical Confucius was an ordinary human figure, and scholar (or maybe an "inch" higher than the ordinary),
 450 but somehow he got "exalted" through the efforts made by generations of his disciples in a protracted "writing-
 451 the-master" process that spanned hundreds of years. I would add that the overall sociopolitical climate of the
 452 time also played a role in Confucius' ascendance, especially in the West Han whose imperial rulers felt the
 453 utilitarian need to adopt Confucianism as a state ideology. Naturally, along with the writing-the-master process,
 454 Confucius' status was elevated, his image polished, and his ethos "boosted." backdrop, we can see once again,
 455 attributes usually associated with Western ethos become pointless, such as individual agency, selfhood, and the
 456 character and personhood of a rhetor. But we may realize something else is also happening: that is, when
 457 creating, altering, and adding texts under a certain master's name, the disciples, and disciples of the disciples,
 458 wittingly or unwittingly, rhetorically construct a master, befitting the philosophy they want him to represent,
 459 a unique situation that Lewis pointedly characterizes as "writing the masters" (1999, p. 53). Consequently, a
 460 new, and different, ethos associated with that master is also created. So, "writing the masters" may well be
 461 interpreted as "writing up the ethos for masters." The example of Confucius and his Analects may help explain
 462 how the masters can get "transformed over time" (Lewis 1999, p. 54), with their ethos "elevated" by dint of
 463 collective workmanship, very often exercised in the manner of editorial creativity. A careful reader can tell
 464 that the authors/editors of the Analects were at pains to cast a sagely ethos for Confucius. At one point, the
 465 Great Master is compared to a "heavenly bell" to awaken the earthly 33 ; at another, he is likened to "the sun
 466 and the moon" standing untarnished against his revilers. 34 Sometimes, he is directly referred to as a "sage."
 467 Nonetheless, a slip of the pen can be detected when the reader comes across the Great Master's "flippant remark"
 468 and "intellectual defeats and insouciances" (Harbsmeier 2019, p. 217; p. 222), or something that appears to belie
 469 the sagely ethos the disciples had intentionally created for the master. The slip of the pen certainly "does not fit
 470 into [the] didactic mould" of the Analects (Harbsmeier 2019, p. 222), but it can be the editorial sleight of hand
 471 in disguise to give the book a "realistic" touch, as Harbsmeier (2019, p. 218) seems to imply. However, in all
 472 likelihood, it can also be an exposure of the inherent inconsistency of the Analects due to the fact that it had
 473 gone through so many hands in the process of compilation, coupled with material appropriated from disparate
 474 sources. 35 It may be assumed, based on what has been discussed in this section, that the ethos of early Chinese
 475 rhetoric is constructed interactively, though not in the way, as described by Baumlin and Meyer, between "the
 476 speaker and audience" (2018, p. 10), but between the master as author-figure and the anonymous disciples who
 477 actually do the writing, as seen in the case of Confucius and the Analects. The name of the master grants

ethotic authority to the disciples, who then cast back that authority by writing and rewriting (or constructing and reconstructing) the master, and back and forth repeatedly. Or, it comes the other way around:

The disciples construct an ethos first for the master, 'To me, the less-than-consummate projection of Confucius' "sagehood" is just proof to affirm its rhetorical, man-made nature. More importantly, we may conclude, through the example of Confucius, that Chinese ethos is also a rhetorical or textual construct, like the Western counterpart. The difference is, the former is collectively projected, thanks to an authorial/editorial process called "collective workmanship," while the latter is individually achieved or activated. 33 "???????", paraphrased from the original Chinese version in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995). See "Ba Yi," Lun Yu (p. 61). 34 "??, ???, ?????," paraphrased from the original Chinese version in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995). See "Zi Zhang," Lun Yu (p. 165). 35 For example, the Confucius figure praises Shun (?; a sagely king) for governing by non-doing (wu-wei), which reflects a doctrine of Daoism, a competing school of thought. See "Wei Ling Gong," Lun Yu (p. 139). According to de Bary, et al., "many of the most important elements of Taoist teaching were absorbed into Confucianism" (1960, p. 49).

whose author-figure in turn passes the skeptron back to them, and back and forth repeatedly. The latter scenario would seem more plausible in regard to the historical Confucius, given his relatively common social status, combined with a lackluster career record. 36 VII.

7 Ethos as Spirit

One may get into a chicken-egg trap if to investigate whether it is the name of the master granting ethotic authority first or the disciples who create ethos first for the master. The most important is that ethos is constructed interactively in the practice of "writing the masters" where the two sides (author figure and disciples who wrote for such a figure) feed and contribute to one another. Without a doubt, the "masterly" ethos thus created reflects the "shared attitudes and convictions" the followers of a master held, to quote Weingarten (2014, p. 249), but institutional involvement cannot be overemphasized in the making of such ethos, as seen in the example of Confucius. Suffice to say, without the promotion of the West Han rulers, Confucius would never have become a "sage."

One cannot help noticing that the "masterly ethos," as mentioned in the previous section, is not located anywhere in the physical world: it is built on a historical master only eponymously, much less as an individual. Sometimes, even the author figure of a text is questionable, for example, Laozi (the Old Master), the reputed author of the *Dao De Jing* and founder of Daoism. There is a strong likelihood that Laozi, as a historical figure, did not exist in the first place (e.g., Creel 1953; Watson 1968). Thus, the ethos built up in his name is like a "spirit," completely disembodied, yet it still carries ethotic weight for the classic. I would call ethos as such "ethos-as-spirit" to distinguish from the pre-Socratic/Heideggerian notion of "ethos-as-haunt," the latter regarded by some postmodernist theorists as an "alternative to the Aristotelian ethos-as-character" (Meyer 2019, p. 1). However, the two also bear some similarities. Ethos-as-haunt relates to a physical space, which can be a "dwelling place" from which one is to declare his or her identity, as mentioned earlier, or simply a "public place" which people frequent for the purpose of "gathering together" and "sharing experiences and ideas," whence a culturally shared ethos is to be built (Halloran 1982, p. 60). Thus, ethos-as-haunt can also be interpreted as "ethos as location" (Reynolds 1993), including, by extension, a cultural location. What appears significant about the idea of "ethos-as-haunt" is that it "has opened new spaces for 36 The historical Confucius may not have been a great educator, as widely claimed. There is a documented anecdote about Shao-Zheng Mao (???), who attracted far more students than Confucius, to the point of making the latter's "classroom" empty. Shao-Zheng Mao was later executed for his "thought" crimes by Confucius, seven days after the latter took the office of justice ministry (??) in Lu. The anecdote, among others, is suggestive that the historical Confucius did not enjoy a "lofty" ethos in real life. contemporary theory-spaces where collectivities and group identities are fashioned and gather together" (Baumlin and Meyer 2018, p. 12), a point that helps account, at least in part, for "ethos-as-spirit," as posited just above.

In the case of ethos-as-spirit, the physical space (of ethos-as-haunt) is now replaced by a textual space, the latter obviously disconnected from "dwelling" or "haunting" in a conventional sense. However, the disciples of a master are still able to declare themselves as Daoist, Confucian, etc., for ethos-as-spirit can function like some sort of "dwelling place," albeit disembodied, to provide a group identity for those who write for, and under, the same author figure (say, Confucius or Laozi). At the same time, this author figure is also a unifying signifier of a collectively developed system of thought, like Confucianism or Daoism, as well as a cultural community, of which the disciples are members. The system (Confucianism, Daoism, etc.) serves as a "location" or "public place" for the disciples, who haunt it by contributing ideas to it, through a shared experience in writing, editing, or producing. In doing so, they simulate the action of gathering together at a "location" or "place," albeit textually. In a way, the idea of ethos-as-spirit bears semblance to that of ethos-as-haunt. However, there is also a difference between them.

Ethos-as-haunt is more like a "sociological" species of ethos (Wei 2021, p. 1), by which one claims his or her identity in Burkean terms 37 or asserts his or her "positionality" in society (Baumlin and Meyer 2018). The sociological ethos may exert persuasion, but that is its secondary function at best and comes only in association with a group or community where one belongs. For example, "the professional ethos" can make one appear

540 authoritative in certain areas, but only so because of one's membership of a professional community (Halloran
 541 1982, p. 62). Without that membership, one loses his or her authority. In this sense, ethos-as-haunt is just
 542 another term for a Bourdieuan type of ethos. Ethos-as-spirit can also function like a sociological ethos, in that
 543 it provides one with a group identity and therefore his or her social positionality, but it operates more like a
 544 "rhetorical" ethos with persuasion being its major function, therefore also different from ethos-as-haunt. But,
 545 first, let us take a look at an excerpt from the Xunzi and see how ethos-asspirit is made use of rhetorically:

546 Now, shall we follow the Way of the earlier kings, as the fundamental principles for benevolence and
 547 righteousness, thereby to help people live socially in groups, to help them sustain themselves, to help them
 548 get clothed and dressed up, and to help them feel safe and secure? Or shall we take the paths of Jie 38 and Zhi
 549 39 Everyone wants to be so noble as to be the Son of Heaven and so rich as to own all under Heaven. All people
 550 are driven by the same desire. Although all want to follow their desire, the system of society is not set up that
 551 way to allow them to do so; plus, there is not enough wealth in the world to satisfy them. That is why the earlier
 552 kings established ritual and moral order, assigning people into socially stratified roles, so that they know there is
 553 a difference between the noble and humble, the old and young, the wise and ignorant, and the able and unable.
 554 That way, all will be able to do their best, with benefits and rewards meted out in accordance.

555 ? These two roads are vastly different, far more than the difference between a meal of meat and refined grains
 556 and one filled with dregs and chaff. But, then, why do people prefer the latter to the former? This is because
 557 they are shallow and ignorant! ... 40 Those earlier kings or xian-wang, as opposed to the later kings or hou-wang
 558 (??), refer to the legendary sage-kings of the Golden Age in a very remote past, as mentioned earlier in the
 559 essay. While legendary, the In the first passage, Xunzi, the author of the Xunzi, directs an implicit criticism
 560 against the rulers of his time for bad governing (i.e., for "taking the paths of Jie and Zhi"); the second passage is
 561 apparently a censure against those who do not know their social boundaries, therefore breaching the system of
 562 rituals. However, judging from the context (lines omitted), the blame is squarely on the absence of "a benevolent
 563 king on the throne" (????). In both situations, the "earlier kings" (??; xian-wang) are invoked for an obvious
 564 reason: The current rulers, who are "shallow and ignorant," have deviated from the Way of the past. Xunzi's
 565 message is clear: follow the Way of earlier kings, and all under Heaven will turn out fine. But then a question
 566 may strike the reader: why does Xunzi frequently invoke the kings of the distant past? One answer I can think
 567 of is: Xunzi is strategically appealing to something that may exist in the name only, namely, ethos as spirit. 38
 568 Jie, the last king of the Xia Dynasty, established around 2100 B.C. and conquered by the Shang around 1600
 569 B.C. Jie serves as a typical example of despotism, but his existence is not positively supported by historical
 570 evidence. 39 Zhi, also called Robber Zhi, a legendary rebel leader of Confucius' time, with 9,000 bandits under
 571 his command. 40 Author's translation, based on the original Chinese text, Chapter 4 of the Xunzi: Honors and
 572 Disgrace (????????). See chineseclassic.com (????).

573 ?????????????????????? ?????????????????????? ?????????????????????? ?????????????????????? 37 Halloran
 574 summarizes Burkean rhetoric this way: "The key term for a modern rhetoric is not persuasion but identification"
 575 (1975, p. 626). sage-kings, like Yao, Shun, and Yu, were culturally established in Chinese society and regarded
 576 as sources of intellectual and moral inspirations. For that reason, they became the skeptron to be wielded by
 577 the early thinkers of various schools of philosophy and ideology. This may explain why the historical appeal,
 578 instead of personal appeal, has prevailed in Chinese rhetoric. The sage-kings were god-like figures, characterized
 579 by supreme virtue and wisdom. They set up rituals, modeled after the principles of the Dao (Way), thus able to
 580 "turn a chaotic, conflict-ridden people into a moral society that manifests the Dao" (Kline 2000, p. 155). With
 581 "a divine afflatus" (Schwartz 1985, p. 26), the sage "heard the voice or words of the spirit, or the deity, and
 582 then transmitted it to others with his own mouth" (Ching 1983, p. 14). Thus, the earlier quoted statement by
 583 Confucius, "I transmit but don't create," may also be taken as a hint at his sagehood: The Great Master does
 584 not create knowledge; rather, it just passes through his mouth as if directly from the divine.

585 Creel observes, citing critical Chinese scholars, that the sage-kings are in fact "not mentioned in any document
 586 that was written at a time earlier than that of Confucius" with the exception of Yu, who appears in early works
 587 only as a "culture hero," but not as a sageking (1953, p. 49). Creel further notices that Yu is found "mentioned
 588 as an early emperor" in the Confucian Analects, along with Yao and Shun, the other two sagekings/emperors,
 589 who "are assigned to an earlier date than is Yü [Yu]," a fact that is consistent with a working "principle" in
 590 Chinese mythology: that is, "The later an emperor appears in the literature, the earlier, as a rule, is the date
 591 assigned to him." This is because "only the earlier periods [that] remained vacant" were available to "new figures"
 592 (1953, pp. 49-50; emphases original). Though Creel does not speculate further, the implication is already clear:
 593 The so-called sage-kings could have been made up by the Confucians and the like, or they are mythical figures
 594 or culture heroes at best.

595 Ching echoes Creel, but with a more pronounced "belief" that the sage-kings "never existed" (1997, p. xii).
 596 Ching claims that they were an invention of "later times, possibly of Confucius and Mencius" who "created this
 597 myth, for the sake of having real rulers emulate such mythical figures as Yao and Shun and Yü who were made
 598 into paragons of human virtues" (1997, p. xii). At least, the Confucians played a lead role in promoting "the sages
 599 as moral exemplars and 'philosopher-kings'" (Ching 1983, p. 14), as is evidenced by the effusive exaltations of
 600 the sage-kings in the Four Books of the Confucian canon. And they did this for a political reason: to mold society
 601 into a world based on their values and beliefs. Now we may see why on so many occasions, the earlier (sage)
 602 kings are called on by Xunzi to remedy social ills or point to the right way of moral conduct. The "extensive use"

603 of xianwang in Xunzi's argument (Cua 2000, p. 41) can be roughly formulated like this: The earlier kings were
604 such, such a way, so we should also be such, such a way; otherwise, bad things will ensue. It appears that the
605 sage-king invocation is a convenient, but powerful, tactic for Xunzi to employ. Without it, his argument would
606 lose its thrust.

607 The early Confucians, and other pre-Qin thinkers, may have fabricated the sage-king myth for the sake of
608 promoting their moral or political agendas, but in doing so, they also created an "ethos-as-spirit" to make their
609 claims more authoritative-so named, because ethos as such is a completely disembodied rhetorical entity or, at
610 best, based on a distant, mystical past. Nevertheless, those early thinkers were still able to "wield" it with
611 impunity, as if endowed with an invincible "spirit." In the case of Xunzi, we may see that the invocation of
612 "earlier kings" would make it hard for his opponents to launch a rebuttal against him because of an inveterate
613 cultural belief in history in Chinese society. Apparently, the Confucians and many others have made full use of
614 this cultural belief in promoting their ideologies and agendas Then, Confucius' claim that "I transmit but don't
615 create" can also be read as a rhetorical tactic. By aligning his own teachings with those of "the greatest men
616 in the past" (Dubs 1951, p. 33), Confucius created an ethos-as-spirit, thereby to attract more students and/or
617 to advocate his political agenda. This should be understandable given the historical context. As Dubs explains,
618 "in his [Confucius'] time, no other except an appeal to the authority of the great past could have produced
619 immediate results" (1951, p. 33). After his death, later generations of disciples and followers-it would seem-
620 inherited the same tactic by creating an "ethos-as-spirit" out of their master's name despite the fact that the
621 historical Confucius was a career failure. For example, in the Zhong Yong (??; Doctrine of the Mean) Confucius
622 is described to "have taken upon himself the task of Yao and Shun and modeled his life after King Wen and King
623 Wu, 41 observant of the laws of Heaven and seasons above and receptive to the conditions of water and earth
624 below" (?????, ????, ????, ????). 42 While Dubs' complaint rings true about others imputing their beliefs to
625 the Great Master, a scenario of epigonism would seem inevitable after the historical Needless to say, the Great
626 Master is presented as an uncrowned sage-king (??; su-wang). The "promotion" story of Confucius can go on
627 and on, but we are assured of one thing: Confucius is never what he was. His sagehood is evolved out of an
628 ethos-as-spirit.

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630 Confucius was transformed into a figure standing for an "authoritative remembered tradition" (Krijgsman
631 2014, p. 105) or, as I would call it, an ethos-as-spirit. Thoughts of later epigones or even "heresies" would
632 have to make their way into the "Sayings of Confucius" in order to be voiced and heard. Understandably, the
633 intrusion could have been accomplished by "usurping" Confucius' ethos, just as the Great Master had done so
634 with the "sage-kings" of the mystical past. It may be concluded that "editorial creativity," typical of collective
635 workmanship in early Chinese rhetorical practices, has its dual ramification: on the one hand it helps create a
636 sagely figure; on the other it turns that figure into "a freefloating signifier, opening endless possibilities for people
637 to recreate Confucianism" (Cai 2016, p. 82).

638 Thus, the statement, "I transmit but don't create," may turn out to be a literal depiction of Confucius as
639 a mere author figure of the Analects. Regardless, it remains unlikely that we can veritably resolve the issue of
640 "authenticity versus epigonism" as raised by Harbsmeier (2019, p. 214). This would be true with the Analects
641 and other Confucian classics, but also with the whole body of classical Chinese texts. On the other hand, the task
642 of verification would seem unnecessary. For those sayings attributed to Confucius, and Mozi 43 Confucianism in
643 Chinese is ru (?) or the ru school of thought (??; ????), a tradition that actually dates back to the early Zhou
644 times, hundreds of years before Confucius was born, according to a study by Cai (2016) and many others. A
645 conclusion is thus more than obvious: "Confucius did not create Confucianism" (Cai 2016, p. 62). But then
646 who created the ru or Confucianism? The question may have to be answered a little differently: the ru is just a
647 cultural heritage that originated in early Chinese society. It is anyone's guess how Confucius was designated to
648 be the ru's founder and Laozi as well, says Krijgsman, "were rather a commonly available resource in the cultural
649 memory of the period"; assigning authorship to them "shows an attempt to appropriate this cultural heritage to
650 the agenda of a specific group" (2014, p. 111). He adds, "Rewriting, interpreting and editing these sayings into
651 a collection assigned to a[n] author figure thus reflects not what 'the master said,' but rather what the group
652 thought what the master would, could, or even should have said when dealing with a particular issue?" (2014, p.
653 111). If Krijgsman's view is valid, then verifying authorial authenticity is anything but meaningful in exploring
654 a collective system of thought called Confucianism, of which the historical Confucius has long been reputed to
655 be the founder.

656 44 43 An early Chinese thinker (about 480-390 B.C.), founder of Mohism, a school of thought more pragmatic
657 and rational in comparison with Confucianism. 44 Cai believes that Confucius' disciples made the difference.

658 or, in Krijgsman's words, to "appropriate this cultural heritage." But one thing would seem certain: If not
659 Confucius, then Lifucius, Wangfucius, or whoever-fucius would be there to take his place. A figure head has to
660 be set up to mark a system of thought, or a cultural heritage, hence the ethos-as-spirit. This may explain why
661 the "sage-king" myth of the Golden Age was invented in ancient China and how the historical Confucius got
662 transformed from a "career failure" all the way up to "the sage of sages" in modern China. 45 VIII.

788 prefer to leave the premises implicit out of the concern that "a tight logical argument is not effective in rhetoric"
 789 (1980, p. 71), apparently contrasting the Chinese preference for an implicit conclusion. 54 This is common in
 790 Western culture, too. As Lloyd points out, "We do not even very often communicate by means of complete
 791 propositions. Much is left implicit in the statements we make, including in the links between them" (2004, p.
 792 41). be considered possibly logical? Further debates and investigations are certainly warranted, but it may be
 793 helpful to be aware that there should be more than one way to define logical reasoning, just as defining truth
 794 should not be limited to "the invocation of a single universal principle" (Lloyd 2004, p. 62). Further, the ancient
 795 Greek and Chinese each developed their preferred methods of reasoning that best fit into their own situations:
 796 social, cultural, intellectual, rhetorical, etc. Thus, for example, the preference to include or leave out a conclusion
 797 in a logical proposition (as in the "white swan" example) may be taken as an indication of a preferred mode
 798 of reasoning, rather than a sign of logical superiority or inferiority. Lloyd suggests a "common logic" (2004,
 799 pp. 39-51) across cultures, and Paul even argues "in favor of the universality of logic and rationality" based
 800 on his elaborate analysis of later Mohist logic (1993, pp. 119-35). I will not go that far, as I do believe that
 801 logic is culture-based, like rhetoric. Suppose there is such a thing as "common" or "universal," but what really
 802 matters is how it is applied within a cultural context and the culture-specific ramifications that come out of
 803 the application. On the other hand, the likelihood cannot be ignored that different cultures, different systems
 804 of thought and reasoning share certain features in common, just as Jesus Christ and Confucius may have had
 805 similar things to say. 55 Given the theme of this essay, the current section may have run into an excursus;
 806 however, I think it is necessary for two reasons. First, a definitive point shall be made that logical reasoning and
 807 its rhetorical signifier *logos* are not as uncommon in classical Chinese discourse as acknowledged, despite the fact
 808 that ethotic rhetoric has taken "center stage" (Wei 2021). King Wu's "motivational speech," cited earlier, is a
 809 good example of *logos* being adeptly employed for its "rational" appeal to a receptive audience. The fact that
 810 logical reasoning and *logos* are conceived, named, or applied differently does not necessarily indicate the presence
 811 of a "weak" or "strong" reasoning; rather, it reflects what has been culturally preferred or prioritized. Second,
 812 and probably more relevant, in early Chinese discourse, *logos* rarely goes it alone but rather blends with *ethos*,
 813 just as philosophy blends with rhetoric (Wei 2021). In other words, we cannot adequately discuss Chinese *ethos*
 814 without addressing *logos* at the same time, or vice versa. There is also a practical reason for this *logos/ethos*
 815 blend. To the Chinese, a pure application of *logos*, as in a logical demonstration, may well turn into a linguistic
 816 drab, so they prefer to mix rational argument with rhetorical elegance. The latter This probably explains why
 817 "enthymeme" and "historical example" can be found in King Wu's speech, even though it is very doubtful that
 818 he applied them consciously as a logical deployment, like the ancient Greek.

819 appears "paramount" (Schaberg 2001, p.30) for its role in exerting an ethotic effect.

820 In Greek rhetoric, *logos* and *ethos* are treated as separate discourse entities with distinctly different roles
 821 assigned to them, but in Chinese rhetoric the opposite is true. Theoretically, this "Chinese-ness" is not
 822 incomprehensible if one is familiar with the dualistic conception of Heaven in Chinese metaphysics, 56 It is
 823 beyond the scope of this essay to theorize the *logos/ethos* oneness, but we may think of it as a function of the
 824 Chinese yin/yang logic, where A is A but can also be B, as opposed to the Western logic, where A is A and B is
 825 B. A. Graham explicates this yin/yang "scheme" in terms of "complementary polarities" (1992, p. 64). But what
 826 I understand is, clearly, the holism of a Chinese dialectic at work, in which two seemingly antithetical concepts,
 827 the "conscious will" and the where Heaven is believed to represent a cosmic order, viewed as the ultimate truth
 828 of the universe, or the Dao, but is also credited for prescribing a moral order for the mundane world, aligned
 829 with that cosmic order, therefore representative of the ultimate good. In the latter conception, Heaven holds
 830 a supernatural power capable of rewarding the good and punishing the bad. As such, Heaven is also a source
 831 of ultimate authority for the ancient Chinese. Apparently, the Chinese dualism has created a "double-edged"
 832 Heaven: on the one hand, it is *logos*, or the source of *logos*, for leading the way to the ultimate truth; on the
 833 other, it is also *ethos*, or the source of *ethos*, for representing the ultimate good or authority. Thus one may see
 834 why *logos* and *ethos* are one in Chinese rhetoric (and philosophy), because both can be traced, ultimately, to
 835 the "oneness" of Heaven. We can use King Wu's "motivational speech" once again to illustrate how the oneness
 836 of *logos* and *ethos* applies in early Chinese rhetoric. In that speech, Heaven is the premise of an argument that
 837 predicts, inferentially, the demise of King Wu's archenemy, King Zhou. Yet, this same premise is also the source
 838 of divine authority King Wu is invoking to punish the latter and, more importantly, to legitimate his political
 839 position as a would-be ruler. That Heaven stands for both truth and authority proves to be a rhetorical advantage
 840 for the speaker, as he is able to wield the skeptron conferred by Heaven and at the same time convince his audience
 841 that there is a "logical" reason for his authority. 56 Strictly speaking, Heaven is an attendant notion of the Dao
 842 (translated as the "underlying principle of an ordered universe" or "order of the universe"), the ultimate, and
 843 transcendent, truth in Chinese philosophy. Confucius' statement may illustrate the Dao's significance in Chinese
 844 thought: "I would die with no regrets in the evening, if I learned of the Dao in the morning" (??é? , ???). The
 845 concept of the Dao was possibly a later development in Chinese thought to distinguish from Heaven as a divine
 846 power or spirit. The latter originated from high antiquity. However, Heaven has been used interchangeably with
 847 the Dao and in many ways as a replacement of the latter. "impersonal order" (Schwartz 1989, p. 51), or the
 848 "ontological creativity" and the "primary cosmology" (Neville 1991, p. 72), or, in simple terms, the divine and
 849 the cosmic, can be reconciled into one: that is, the oneness of Heaven. The *logos/ethos* oneness shall be perceived
 850 this way, too. 57 IX.

914 or rules of conduct, the gist of which is expressed in a famous motto by Confucius: "jun-jun, chen-chen, fu-fu,
915 zi-zi" (??, ??, ??, ??; the ruler must act like a ruler; the subject like a subject; the father like a father; and the
916 son like a son). The motto, observes Harbsmeier, "is about all well-defined roles in society," and it underlies the
917 Confucian norm of "[g]ood governance? to be constituted by everyone properly acting out the roles they have"
918 (2015, p. 522). But it may also be interpreted as a more pronounced rendition of yi due to its emphasis on the
919 appropriateness of social manners. An excerpt from the Analects demonstrates how the Great Master acts out
920 his yi:

921 At court, when speaking with officers of lower rank, he [Confucius] was pleasant and affable; when speaking
922 with officers of upper rank, he was formal and proper. When his ruler was present, he combined an attitude of
923 reverential respect with graceful ease (Ivanhoe and van Norden 2001, p. 27).

924 It may sound a bit belittling to describe the Great Master as a "chameleon" in his mannerism, but it is
925 significant to see how Confucius adjusts his yi called for on each social occasion when he interacts with others.
926 That is, he consciously makes a "rhetorical move" by behaving in a manner befitting an interactive situation in
927 which he finds himself. This explains why, as recorded in the Analects, Confucius frequently changes his yi, for
928 example, from a "respectful countenance" when seeing "someone wearing a ritual cap" to a "solemn expression"
929 when attending "a sumptuous banquet" (Ivanhoe and van Norden 2001, pp. 28-29). Apparently, yi is more than
930 "acting out" one's "culturally Han Lu, et al. (1995). See "Duke of Xiang: Year Thirty-First," the Zuozhuan (pp.
931 2,266-67).

932 pre-ordained" social role (Harbsmeier 2015, p. 522). Rather, it fits well into the "definition of the situation," as
933 proposed by Goffman (1959, p. 4), which sees one's social behavior or "performance" as a function of interactions
934 with others. Instead of being "coherent" and "stable," a person's yi has to be "chameleon-like," in correspondence
935 to the fluidity of the definition of the situation, as exemplified by the Confucius figure of the Analects. The earlier
936 cited Confucius motto does not necessarily suggest that one has a fixed social role: in front of one's children, one
937 is a father, but with somebody else, one has a different role to act out; accordingly, one has to display or present
938 a different yi.

939 Goffman would use the term "impression management" (1959, p. 208) to describe how one presents one's yi
940 in relation to other interacting partners, but another term "ethos projection" may be equally descriptive, as the
941 latter also addresses the question of how to present one's self socially. Nonetheless, we may be able to discern a
942 poststructuralist undertone of Chinese ethos, in the sense that it is projected on the occasion of social interactions
943 where one is involved, rather than on the basis of his or her character or a personhood within, presupposed in
944 the traditional Western model. "Ethos is created when writers locate themselves" (Reynolds 1993, p. 336), but
945 the question of where and how to locate may tell the difference. In Chinese tradition, ethos, as in the case of yi,
946 is fluidly projected, depending on where one finds oneself socially. In the Aristotelian tradition, however, ethos
947 becomes a verbal recreation of one's self; therefore, one must stand on his or her own, as an individual. These
948 two versions of ethos serve different purposes as well: the Chinese is to restore li, the rules of conduct, for the
949 purpose of maintaining social order, while the Aristotelian is to build up one's credibility or trustworthiness for
950 a personal achievement.

951 The other part of wei-yi, namely, wei, is more directly associated with power, especially the political power of a
952 ruler. The Chinese character wei (?) has many connotations, like authority, dignity, majesty, charisma, solemnity,
953 and stateliness, to name a few, but we may thus develop a pretty good idea about wei in terms of its ethotic
954 function. Politically, wei and yi complement one another, similar to the "stick and carrot" pair, with the "stick"
955 to secure submission or obedience and the "carrot" to induce admiration and support. A statement by Confucius
956 says a lot about the political potential of yi: "If a ruler can administer his state with decorum and courtesy-then
957 what difficulty will he have?" (de Bary, et al. 1960, p. 29). Clearly, the "carrot" is preferred in the Confucian
958 conception of good governance, but if we read the statement deconstructively, it can be seen as an implicit jab
959 at the current rulers for their failure to observe yi. This may explain, at least partly, why Confucius takes as his
960 primary mission the restoration of li, the rules of conduct. As discussed earlier, the sage-king myth was likely
961 an invention by Confucius and his followers in an attempt to create "model" rulers for others to imitate. And
962 Beigong Wenzhi's dialogue may reflect this effort through its emphasis on yi, which, we may recall, is depicted as
963 a virtuous quality to be imitated by people. 63 In all respects, wei or authority, constitutes the core of political
964 ethos in early Chinese society for its obvious function in signifying power. Yao, the first of three legendary
965 sage-kings of remote antiquity "historically" recorded in the Shangshu (Book of Documents), 64 may be seen
966 as an embodiment of such ethos. He is portrayed as a sovereign with immense authority in the first chapter of
967 the book, "Yao Dian" (the Canon of Yao), where "he emerges as a true authoritarian: by the sheer force of his
968 personality, he overrules his advisers makes his own decisions" (Kern 2017, p. 35). The opening of the chapter
969 strikes the reader as highly ethotic, with epithets betokening Yao's imperial wei or authority: "Once upon a time,
970 when Yao was the Emperor, he administered his rule with superior wisdom and mastery, his brilliance shining
971 over all under Heaven" (æ????, ????, ????). 65 In spite of this, above his kingly authority (??; jun-wei), there is
972 something called tian-wei (??/??; Heaven's authority), a higher authority to which Yao has to defer, as seen when
973 Yao issues his first command, ordering his subjects in charge of astrology to "follow the way of vast Heaven in
974 reverence and calculate and chart (the movements of) the sun, the moon, and the stars so as to properly figure out
975 seasons for people to observe (????, ?????, ????). 66 63 To save space, most of the original dialogue is omitted
976 in this essay, including the "model" of King Wen, a sage king, in his wei-yi. The Zuozhuan, where the dialogue

977 is recorded, is one of the classics in the Confucian canon. 64 The other two sage-kings are Shun (?) and Yu (?).
978 Though the Shangshu as a whole can be treated as a collection of "historical" documents retrospectively written,
979 the narrative of Emperor Yao in "Yao Dian" (??) is more of a mythology about a culture hero deified. "Yao
980 Dian" was most likely a product originated in the Western Zhou period (1046-771 B.C). 65 Author's translation,
981 based on the original Chinese version in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited
982 by Han Lu, et al. (1995). See "Yu-Xia Shu: Yao Dian," the *Shangshu* (p. 1339). 66 Author's translation, based
983 on the original Chinese version in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited by Han
984 Lu, et al. (1995). See "Yu-Xia Shu: Yao Dian," the *Shangshu* (p. 1339).

985 Yao's action may be understood as a conscious effort to "align human activity with the mechanics of the
986 cosmic clockwork" (Kern 2017, p. 36), but it is also reflective, in a broad sense, of a collective human desire in
987 early Chinese society of seeking "a higher consciousness of oneness with the universe" (Ching 1997, p. xiii). Yao
988 is revered as a "sage-king" by later generations partly because he fits into this "higher consciousness." Still, it is
989 his *wei* that makes it all possible for him to follow Heaven's Way by fashioning the human order after the cosmic,
990 therefore maintaining harmony of the society.

991 That Yao is deferential to Heaven yields a clue to the sociopolitical hierarchy of antiquity, especially of the
992 Zhou times, where Heaven, not the king, is at the top: "Heaven can bring its will to bear on men only through
993 the pyramidal political order in which every level conforms to those above and those on top conform to Heaven"
994 (Schwartz 1985, p. 163). 67 Against the backdrop of a cultural belief among the ancient Chinese that "Heaven
995 is the source of ultimate authority" (????), 68 Yao's deference to Heaven is all "within expectations." A king's
996 duty, states the *Shangshu*, is to "fulfill Heaven's will and display its *wei* in veneration" (????). 69 Readers will
997 likely notice the central role Heaven plays in the Chinese kingship, as it stands as a dual source of authority and
998 legitimation for the king. Without Heaven, without kingship, so to speak. And yet, the function of "Heaven"
999 is essentially rhetorical. For either as a metaphysical entity to be signified or as a linguistic symbol to signify
1000 the metaphysical, Heaven is "programmed" to serve a political purpose: that is, to project the authority, or *wei*,
1001 and therefore the power of kingship. For obvious reasons, the silent Heaven can never objectify anything for the
1002 king; nonetheless, it can be appropriated-rhetorically-into a process of signification, or manipulation, to evince
1003 the expected divine "endorsement" for his office. A simple example of such ethotic signification would be the
1004 king's selfproclaimed position as the "son of Heaven" (??; *tian-zi*), who serves as a "mediator between Heaven
1005 and Earth" (Ching 1997, p. iii), but with a special "claim to Similar statements abound in the *Shangshu*, but
1006 they all point to one theme: the authority of a king is derived from Heaven. What is more, that authority is not
1007 absolute but contingent on how the king performs his Heaven-bestowed duty (??; *tian-ming*). The earlier cited
1008 speech by King Wu appears to exploit this notion of contingency: King Zhou of the Shang is pronounced to have
1009 lost his authority to rule because he has misperformed the mandate of Heaven. Thus, an all-out battle against
1010 him is grounded in a political legitimacy. 67 Schwartz is actually explicating Mozi's political thought, but I think
1011 the statement is also a precise description of the Zhou's political system. Also, "Yao Dian" and the *Shangshu* as
1012 a whole were produced in the Western Zhou. It can be inferred that they are reflective of thoughts and beliefs
1013 of that period rather than those of remote antiquity from which Yao's legend is said to have originated. 68
1014 Author's translation, based on the original Chinese version in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with*
1015 *Annotations*, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995). See "Zhou Shu: Duo Shi," the *Shangshu* (p. 1495). 69 Same as
1016 above. (Schwartz 1985, p. 30). Hence the rhetorical advantage: the king can lay claim to virtually anything, but
1017 all under the auspices of Heaven.

1018 In reality, the practice of ethotic signification for the royal house can be more complex, enshrined in myths
1019 and mixed with "the state religion" (Schwartz 1985, p. 39). For instance, in the *Shijing* (Book of Poetry), there
1020 is a poem in the Chapter of *Da Ya* (??) describing how *Ti* or the Lord on High (Heaven) gave birth to *Hou Ji*
1021 (??), the ancestor of the founders of the Zhou dynasty, through a female named *Jiang Yuan* (??), 70 along with
1022 several pieces dedicated to the "glory" of King Wen, who was "granted the Mandate by the Lord on High" (????).
1023 71 Those poems (of *Da Ya*) were meant for the upper society of the Zhou (Han et al. 1995, p. 606), so we can
1024 reasonably infer that they were indicative of some state propaganda at work to manufacture a political ethos
1025 for the kingship. According to history books, the religious ceremonies and military activities were paramount
1026 in the state affairs of the Zhou (????, ?????). 72 There are indications that Chinese kings of the early ages were
1027 "shamanic figures"

1028 The emphasis on the military appears self-explanatory, but the equally important weight of religious ceremonies
1029 exposes an institutionalized effort at manifesting the divine aura for the power, and legitimacy, of kingship, as
1030 evidenced by the heavy involvement of the Zhou bureaucracy in religious affairs. In the Zhou's bureaucratic
1031 system, most of the six ministry offices (??; *liu-qing*) were directly in charge of religious activities, such as
1032 divination and sacrificial ceremonies, or had some responsibility for glorifying the royal family, like the office
1033 of Grand Genealogist (??; *tai-zong*), which oversaw the records of royal lineage (Guo 1976, pp. 265-66). All
1034 this is apparently in support of a claim made earlier: Ethos is "anchored in institutional frameworks and social
1035 rituals" (Amossy 2001, p. 2). 73 70 See "Sheng Ming" of *Da Ya*, *Shijing* (p. 763) in *The Complete Four Books*
1036 *and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995). 71 See "King Wen" of *Da Ya*, *Shijing*
1037 (p. 752) in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995). 72
1038 See "Duke of Cheng: Year Thirteen," *Zuozhuan* (p. 2,013) in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with*
1039 *Annotations*, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995). 73 For example, King Wen is credited for having contributed

1040 to the creation of the Yijing (Book of Changes), originally a divination handbook. This may reveal, indirectly,
 1041 his background as a shaman, a claim also made by Ching (1999, p. 17). (Ching 1997, p. xiii) or played the
 1042 role of "the 'high priest' of the worship of Ti [Heaven]" (Schwartz 1985, pp. 35-36), suggesting that they had
 1043 control over "messages" from the divine spirits or Heaven (Guo 1976, p. 213). The reference to "sacrificial
 1044 ceremonies" and "divination" in that "motivational speech" by King Wu may give us a clue to the practice of
 1045 shamanism, which the king appears to have taken full advantage of, as can be seen in his claim, "the dream I
 1046 dreamed accords with the signs revealed through divination." The result was, of course, rhetorically in his favor:
 1047 "predicting an inevitable victory over the Shang." The rhetorical nature of divination has been affirmed by many
 1048 studies. For instance, a recent study by Martin Kern on early Chinese divination describes in detail "how the
 1049 actual practice of divination was transformed? into the idealizing account of divination," with the former "not
 1050 accurately" reported in the latter (2018, p. 255; emphases original). The representation of divination, notes
 1051 Kern, was "strictly controlled" to "support claims of political legitimation," yet with an intimation of Heaven's
 1052 will, hence "fundamentally rhetorical in nature" (2018, p. 255; p. 258). More importantly, it "propagated the
 1053 king's capacity of communicating with the spirit world" (Kern 2018, p. 258), which, we may infer, set the stage
 1054 for transforming the king into "the paradigmatic individual, reflecting in himself so much of that which is greater
 1055 than himself" (Ching 1997, p. 66).

1056 Early divination, and sacrificial ceremonies as well, may in the first place be understood as a way of knowing
 1057 the world and/or coming to terms with nature and reality on the part of the ancient Chinese, but it is also
 1058 appropriated and fashioned into the ritual signification of political ethos for the royal house or, in Schwartz's
 1059 words, the presentation of "credible evidence of its dynastic charisma" (1985, p. 43). As a speech act or discourse
 1060 formation, early Chinese divination may recall the "rituals of social magic," a term used by Bourdieu when
 1061 he explicates how authority is conferred through the system of institutions (1991, Language, p. 111; emphasis
 1062 original). In Bourdieuan terms, divination would be characterized as a function of "social rituals," also known
 1063 as "rites of consecration, or rites of legitimation, or, quite simply, rites of institution" (Bourdieu 1991, Language,
 1064 pp. 117-18; emphasis original). Put differently, it is an institutionalized ritual or speech act. But, according
 1065 to Bourdieu, the authority or "magic" of such rituals actually "resides in the institutional conditions of their
 1066 production and reception"; in other words, the "act of institution" itself is "magic" (1991, Language, p. 111; p.
 1067 119).

1068 However, if Foucault's view holds true that discourses are "practices that systematically form the object of
 1069 which they speak" (1972, p. 49), we may be able to realize that divination itself, like those sacrificial ceremonies
 1070 and other rituals, also constitutes, or forms, the "magic," in the sense that being a ritualized discourse, it signifies,
 1071 or speaks of, the power of Chinese kings by way of the "suggestion of charisma and of divine favour" (Ching
 1072 1997, p. xii), the latter closely associated with that power. The "magic" here, it would seem, is to present the
 1073 power by actually

11 ()

1074 The story of early Chinese kingship may prove this-in its ritual action of establishing an ethos or charisma so as
 1075 to project a reality of legitimacy for its rule. Once again, the point is, the "magic" mentioned by Bourdieu may
 1076 also reside in discourse itself, or at least in the interplay between discourse and the system of institutions, from
 1077 which "discourse derives its legitimate source and point of application" (Foucault 1972, p. 51). Nevertheless, if we
 1078 follow Foucault's theory, the malleability of reality is to be imputed to the "disparity of the types of enunciation"
 1079 or "enunciative modalities" (Foucault 1972, p. 54) of discourse practices. (Un)fortunately, these practices "form
 1080 the object," or reality, by virtue of enunciation (in Foucault's words, "of which they speak"). However, if we
 1081 replace "enunciation" with "signification," we can clearly see that Foucault is of a Derridean view that the signifier
 1082 can become the signified or intertwine with the latter. I am not about to explore here Foucault's or Bourdieu's
 1083 discourse/language theory, but it is important to point out what is relevant to the essay: that is, their theories,
 1084 though quite "postmodern," are not "alien" at all to the ancient Chinese, noted for their "poststructuralist"
 1085 insights about language. For instance, Confucius' "rectification of names" is based on a conviction that names
 1086 (signifier) can impact the moral reality of human society; Laozi's statement, "The name is the mother of ten
 1087 thousand things" (??????; see the epigraph), can be interpreted as a blunt declaration that the signifier (name)
 1088 is the signified (ten thousand things).

1090 Thus, there seems to be a "theoretical" basis for the Chinese obsession with ethos in antiquity just as there
 1091 is one for the Greek obsession with logos. Apparently, both the ancient Chinese and Greeks were aware of the
 1092 role a signifier can play in inducing or bringing about a "reality," though they clearly had different priorities.
 1093 The difference, however, may best "be appreciated in light of a cultural tradition that carries its own historical
 1094 complexities and philosophical intricacies" (Wei 2021, p. 1). As mentioned right at the beginning of this section,
 1095 the Greeks were more epistemologically concerned about the legitimacy of their "counter-intuitive claims" (Lloyd
 1096 2004, pp. 61-62). This may explain why they were obsessed about logos, a signifier that can be conveniently
 1097 employed to represent "truth." The Chinese, on the other hand, especially those in power, were more concerned
 1098 about the legitimacy of their political claims or positions, but the concern is less epistemological than pragmatic.
 1099 That is why they were so bent on ethos, the signifier of authority and power. To the Chinese, Heaven as the
 1100 ultimate source of truth/authority was a given, a cultural reality that would make claims of legitimacy relatively
 1101 easier, if one was able to establish some sort of (loose) connections with Heaven or the Will of Heaven. 75 Thus,

1102 a rigorous process of logical reasoning would prove unnecessary in seeking epistemological certainty. result, a
1103 reader may feel "bombarded" with so much of, by, and about Heaven in classical Chinese rhetoric, most, if not
1104 all, having to do with ethotic maneuvering to legitimate a political claim or to support a philosophical argument.
1105 It appears that the claim by Confucius that he is "known-by Heaven" (de Bary, et al. 1990, p. 22) is just one of
1106 such ethotic plays.

1107 The "bombardment" of Heaven in early Chinese rhetoric "may point to the triumph of a language symbol and
1108 reality created within such a symbol" (Wei 2021, p. 18). As discussed earlier in the section, what indeed makes
1109 the silent Heaven central to the office of Chinese kingship is its symbolic power of projecting a wei or authority
1110 (i.e., ethos) for the one sitting on the throne. Thus the "centrality of Heaven" (Schwartz 1985, p. 39) is in essence
1111 the centrality of ethos (the signifier) in that it is the wei or authority that truly matters to the kingship system.
1112 (Heaven would lose the "centrality" if something else were in its place to signify the kingly authority.) The heavy
1113 involvement of dynastic bureaucracy in religious and shamanic activities may serve to attest to the centrality of
1114 ethos to the early Chinese political system, as it clearly indicates a deliberate, institutionalized effort to manifest
1115 a "charisma" on behalf of the king. (Does the king really care about a "message" from Heaven?) Because
1116 ethos the signifier is fundamentally a discourse entity (or a "name" in early Chinese thought), its centrality,
1117 whether rhetorically or politically, can be attributed, ultimately, to the "totality" of discourse itself. In Western
1118 culture, the system of discourse signification centers around logos, hence the logocentric turn of its rhetoric and
1119 philosophy, but in Chinese culture, that system is leaning toward ethos, hence ethocentrism or the centrality of
1120 ethos in its rhetoric and philosophy and discourse practices in general.

1121 At this point it would seem appropriate to describe the early stages of Chinese civilization as an "age of ethos"
1122 because of the prevalence and dominance of ethos in the discourse system. Though ethos carries a variety of
1123 nuances in Chinese rhetoric, in its associations with cheng (trust), cheng-yan (sincere speech), yi (deportment),
1124 and many others, its defining attribute clearly has to do with the signification of power. Interestingly, the exact
1125 Chinese word for "authority," one of the numerous Western terms pointing to the semantics of ethos (Baumlin
1126 and Meyer 2018, p. 4), is quan-wei (??), which is made up of two separate characters corresponding to "power"
1127 (?; quan) and "authority" (?; wei). The etymology can be traced at least to the Warring States period (475-221
1128 B.C.) in Chinese history, 77 77 For example, ?? occurs in Lü-shi Chun-qi (????), a classic under the authorship
1129 of Lü Bu-Wei (???)

1130 suggesting an awareness among the ancient Chinese of the inseparability of power and ethos (or wei). The
1131 combination of quan and wei may also serve as proof, to some degree, that in early Chinese thought, power (the
1132 institutionalizing) and ethos (the institutionalized) are perceived in a "mutuallydefining relationship" (Wei 2021,
1133 p. 14). But, as pointed out earlier, the institutionalized can also become institutionalizing. If power relies on
1134 ethos to be signified or to become a perceived reality, it is exactly because the former is already implied in the
1135 latter (i.e., in the institutionalized). 78 X.

1136 12 Conclusion

1137 So, in the end, we may say, it is ethos that makes the call, for its "magic" of sustaining the power of early Chinese
1138 kingship. But no matter what, if truth is "inseparable" from logos as its signifier in the tradition of logocentrism,
1139 as Derrida would have argued (1976, p. 10), then power is "inseparable," too, from ethos in the tradition of what
1140 may be called "ethocentrism."

1141 This essay is my latest attempt to explore collective ethos, a notion I first raised over 20 years ago at an
1142 academic conference. Collective ethos can be summarily defined as a culturally based ethos, contrary to the
1143 one in the Aristotelian model, the latter being individually based. A culture-based, collective ethos is perhaps
1144 better conceptualized when we look at how the creation of ethos had been incorporated into the political system
1145 of early Chinese society, where rulers practiced shamanism or other religious activities "to signify, and mystify,
1146 their power and authority with the suggestion of divine and heavenly charisma" (Wei 2021, p. 19). But the
1147 reason that Heaven was so central to the projection of ethos on their behalf is because it was deeply rooted in a
1148 cultural psyche, where the human desire for a transcendental oneness with the universe had long been harbored.
1149 Thus, the significance of Heaven in its role of signifying the ultimate ethos in Chinese society can be understood
1150 as a function of a cultural tradition after all. At least, one may see, ethos as such comes from without (from
1151 Heaven), rather than from within, being grounded in the personhood of an individual.

1152 Before ending this essay, I would like to state that I had no intention to exhaust all the explanations about
1153 collective ethos in early Chinese rhetorical practices. In fact, the more I tried to explore, the more I realized there
1154 is even more to be explored. For example, the ideal of "rectification of names," briefly mentioned in the essay,
1155 has been a very important feature of the Confucian discourse system. The famous statement by Confucius that
1156 "If names are not rectified then language will not be in accord; if language is not in accord then things cannot be
1157 accomplished . . ." is widely regarded as an acknowledgment that language plays a significant role in shaping how
1158 one can reach his or her moral accomplishments. More importantly, it implies a denial of agency, deemed to be
1159 crucial to the formulations of Western ethos, in that language is recognized for its potential in regulating human
1160 behavior. We are who we are not because of some kind of essence within, as Plato might have claimed, but
1161 because of the epistemic function of language in formulating moral and metaphysical categories and in creating
1162 social reality based on those categories. Confucius' rectification of names poses an interesting comparison with

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1163 Foucault's discourse theory, which also rejects human agency, together with such notions as self, ego, subject,
1164 and individual.

1165 Another subject worthy of further research and discussion would be the "patterned rhetoric" in early Chinese
1166 classics (Schaberg 2001). A norm of "collective workmanship," patterned rhetoric exhibits rules of writing that
1167 can be attributed to the "mechanism" of collective ethos, such as what is acceptable or not acceptable. However,
1168 in my view, this norm is not uniquely Chinese. One can find numerous examples in professional or other writings
1169 in Western society that would fall into the category of patterned rhetoric, such as memo, letter, proposal, report,
1170 to name a few. And those who submit articles for publication in a scholarly journal cannot afford to ignore
1171 rules or conventions governing academic writing. For example, it is common to see a research paper written in
1172 a "patterned" way: starting with an introduction of a topic, then a review of existing literature, followed by a
1173 new something that would contribute to the on-going conversation, then a research design and/or methodology,
1174 followed by research findings, then followed by a discussion drawing on the findings, and finally followed by a
1175 conclusion in which some sort of "confession" is the norm-how imperfect the findings are, how inconclusive the
1176 conclusion is, how much remains to be done, etc., etc. All these would remind me of the eight-legged essay
1177 popular in old China! But what interests me most is the question whether the patterned rhetoric mentioned here
1178 would also translate into a consciousness of collective ethos among the mainstream Western rhetoricians. With
1179 the movement of postmodernism, which has seriously challenged the philosophical basis of self, ego, agency, etc.,
1180 and with the widespread use of the Internet and social media, which has already put to question the traditional
1181 notion of authorship, it seems possible that more and more people will come to the realization that rhetoric as
1182 social praxis is inherently a collective discourse action, hence the need to re-conceptualize ethos as a function of
1183 the "definition of the situation" (Goffman 1959) or group identity that is socially, culturally, and collectively built.
1184 The emerging emphasis in Western scholarship on ethos as one's "positionality" in the human world (Baumlin
1185 and Meyer 2018) or on ethos as "haunt" (Meyer 2019) may suggest a shift already happening in the conception

1186 of ethos in Western rhetorical theories. But perhaps a more prudent conclusion should be: There is still much
1187 more to be explored. ^{1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11}

¹"Good sense" is replaced by "practical wisdom" (phronesis) in a different translation of the Rhetoric. Thus, the quality of age may seem a fit with phronesis, but Aristotle's phronesis is in essence an artistic construction by the rhetor, therefore different from age-related wisdom in Chinese culture. The latter is a given, not a construct.

²A megaphone is replacing a microphone these days, as seen, for example, in a CNN political analysis about Rep. Liz Cheney after she was ousted from a House Republican leadership post: "in trying to curtail Cheney's ascent as a leader within the party, they handed her a bigger megaphone. She's not just a House GOP someone, she's now a national leader-with national exposure. And so Cheney is now a national story" (Borger 2021; emphasis added).

³Li is a complicated concept in the Confucian system. In a broad sense, it concerns how one fits him-/herself into an ordered (or ritualized) society.¹⁸ According to Chenyang Li, Confucius "took as his mission" the restoration of li. "For him, the starting point was the rectification of names" (1999, p. 64).

⁴See "Gaozi (a)," Mencius (p. 307) in *The Complete Four Books and Five Classics with Annotations*, edited by Han Lu, et al. (1995).²⁰ Paraphrased and translated from the original Chinese text, Chapter 23 of the *Xunzi*: Human Nature Is Evil (????????????). See chineseclassic.com (????).

⁵IM can be read as classical Chinese philosophy applied to internal medicine. Chinese philosophy also saw its application in many other fields, like military, martial arts, fine arts, architecture, civil engineering, etc. So in many ways, Chinese philosophy can be understood as practical philosophy, to be distinguished from (purely) theoretical philosophy, as seen in the West.

⁶The article, "Delinquent Fathers and Philology Lun Yun 13.18 and Related Texts," by Oliver Weingarten (2014) gives a detailed account on this.²⁸ The Zhou dynasty (1046-221 B.C.). The rituals and institutions of the early Zhou became the model for li to Confucians.²⁹ Many scholars focus on "filial piety" when interpreting the statement, which may not tell the whole story. For filial piety can only apply to a son covering up for his father, but not the other way around. Plus, the uprightness (?; zhi) mentioned by the Confucius figure should be taken as a virtue meant for both father and son.

⁷See the news article by Dai Yan on China Daily: "Confucius, the Sage of Sages" (2009).⁴⁶ Baumlín and Meyer are yearning for an "Age of Ethos," instead of "the Enlightenment 'Age of Reason'-the epoch of logocentrism." The former aims to "make our discourse caring, accommodating, epideictic, iatrogenic, inventive, and personal" (2018, p. 21). However, the "age of ethos" in Chinese version is not the same as the authors' futuristic vision of discourse practice.

⁸For example, "Don't do things to others that you don't want others to do to you" is found in both the Bible and Analects.

⁹This would also suggest, in simple terms, that reality is subject to rhetorical manipulation, as seen in a previously cited study by Kern on early Chinese divination, which, the author contends, is "fundamentally rhetorical" (2018, p. 258).

¹⁰Conceptually, Heaven is associated with "tons" of things in Chinese discourse and culture (Wei 2021), which is obviously a rhetorical advantage to those who can (mis)use the term to make a claim just about anything.⁷⁶ Because of the "difficulty of securing self-evident axioms," using deductive reasoning to signify truth may turn out to be "wishful thinking" for the Greeks, according to Lloyd (2004, p. 57). As a

¹¹This may be conceptualized with the example of Heaven, which can be regarded as an institutionalized source of ethos. Because it implies a divine power, it partakes in the process of signifying the institutional power of kingship. Thus, the institutionalized becomes institutionalizing. On the other hand, Chinese kings would have never made a fuss about Heaven if it does not imply power.

- 1188 Year 2021 A "Age of Ethos": Exploring Rhetorical Practices in Early Chinese Society presenting its signifier,
 1189 ethos ("charisma" or "divine favour"), or, in Bourdieu's own words, "to act on reality by acting on its
 1190 representation" (1991, *Language*, p. 119). This may explain why the "dynastic charisma," as Schwartz would
 1191 call it, has to be "institutionalised and routinised" in the kingship system of the early ages (Ching 1997, p.
 1192 xii), obviously for its crucial role in "sustaining" the power of the king (Wei 2021, p. 13). But this may also
 1193 explain why divination, sacrificial ceremonies and other rituals are institutionalized at the government level (as
 1194 if run by a propaganda ministry), because of a political need to control the mechanism of ethotic signification or
 1195 representation. Speaking of early Chinese divination, Kern is of the view that the oracle bone inscriptions "were,
 1196 in fact, speech acts to perform and constitute royal sovereignty" (2018, p. 258; emphases added). Based on his
 1197 view, the act of ritual, as in divination, is also the "magic."
- 1198 While divination and other social rituals are institutionalized for their role of signifying the authority or
 1199 power of kingship, they are also part of the state-run apparatus to institutionalize the office of kingship (with
 1200 its authority and power) exactly for that same role. Thus, the "magic" of those rituals appears to work both
 1201 ways, meaning that the institutionalized and the institutionalizing are mutually implying one another-yet all
 1202 within the "totality" of discourse (Foucault 1972, p. 55). The same is true with ethos. It is institutionalized
 1203 because of its function of sustaining the power of kingship, but in fulfilling this function, it also "partakes in
 1204 the process of institutionalizing kingship and its power" (Wei 2021, p. 13). Or we may rephrase it in a simple
 1205 way: the institutionalized (ethos) becomes institutionalizing; the institutionalizing (the office of kingship) gets
 1206 institutionalized. Furthermore, the signifier (ethos) and the signified (power) are also mutually defining, with
 1207 one implied in the other, hence "the 'ethocentric' system of signification in the early ages of Chinese civilization"
 1208 (Wei 2021, p. 14). But let me explain this further starting with Bourdieu.
- 1209 The proposition by Bourdieu of "act[ing] on reality by acting on its representation" can be taken as a recognition
 1210 that reality is not of "stable essences," to borrow a term from Lloyd (2004, p. 116), but rather of something
 1211 malleable, at the "whim" of its signification, or representation. 74
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