



HUMAN AND DIVINE IN CHINESE MYTH

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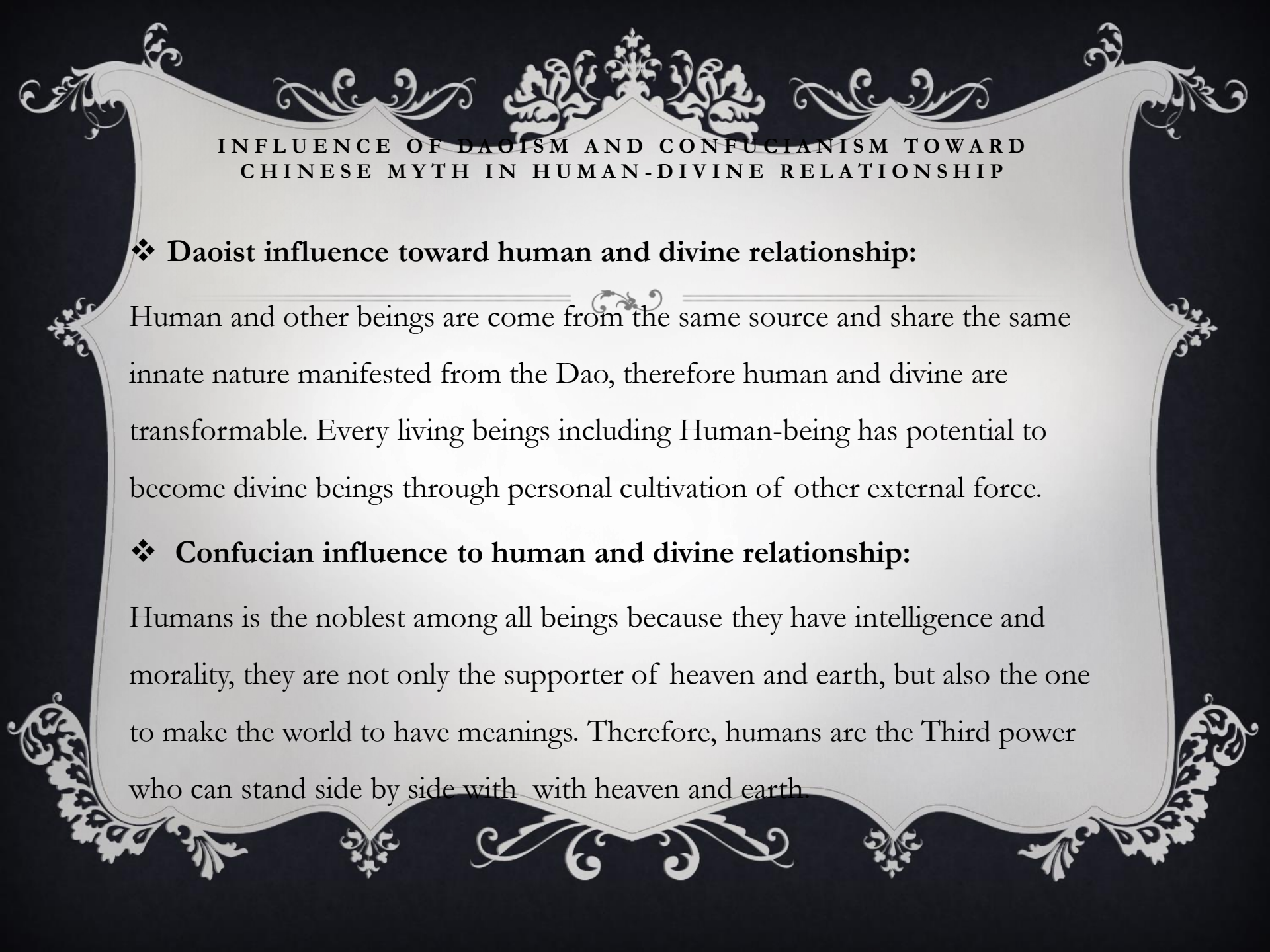
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CHINESE UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN AND DIVINE RELATIONSHIP

- ❖ China, as a land of mystery and enchantment, is filled with many images: natural and household gods and goddesses; mythical creatures; historical characters; immortals; dragons and spirits of the mountains, rivers, flowers and animals; Gods and ghosts from underground.
- ❖ All those images, from the ones had already existed since far ancient to the ones had been created in different historical times, are all the result of the interwoven of different religions and philosophies with Chinese myths.
- ❖ Regarding the relationship between humans and divine the most influential traditions that have left their impacts are Daoism and Confucianism.

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INFLUENCE OF DAOISM AND CONFUCIANISM TOWARD CHINESE MYTH IN HUMAN-DIVINE RELATIONSHIP

❖ **Daoist influence toward human and divine relationship:**

Human and other beings are come from the same source and share the same innate nature manifested from the Dao, therefore human and divine are transformable. Every living beings including Human-being has potential to become divine beings through personal cultivation of other external force.

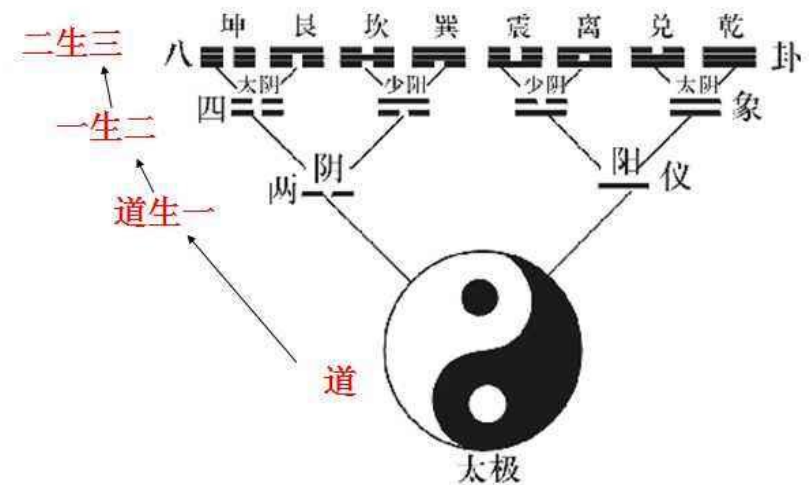
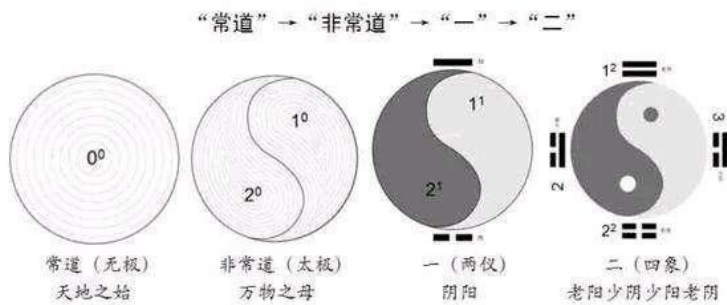
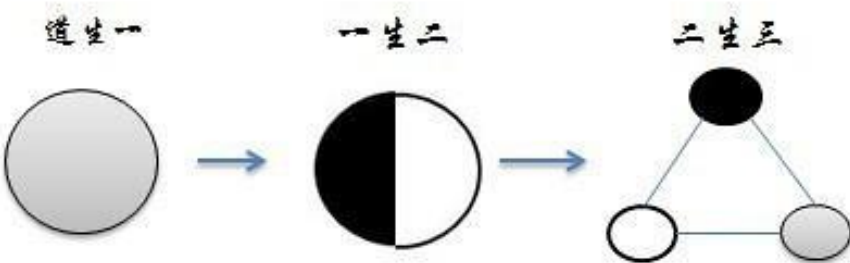
❖ **Confucian influence to human and divine relationship:**

Humans is the noblest among all beings because they have intelligence and morality, they are not only the supporter of heaven and earth, but also the one to make the world to have meanings. Therefore, humans are the Third power who can stand side by side with with heaven and earth.

DAOIST UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND LIFE

❖ Dao gave birth to the One (Qi 炁/wuji/ formless energy), One to the Two (Yin and Yang/ Heaven and Earth Taiji), Two to the Three (Heaven, Earth and Qi/humans), Three to the Myriad Things.

❖ **Kun** 坤: earth/mother; **Gen** 艮: mountain/younger son; **Kan** 坎: water/middle son; **Xun** 巽: wind/elder daughter; **Zhen** 震: thunder/elder son; **Li** 离: fire/middle daughter; **Dui** 兑: lake/younger daughter; **Qian** 乾: heaven/father



CONFUCIAN UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

❖ Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism: Zhang Zai 张载 (1022-1077)'s Qi Origin theory:

❖ “Ultimate Void cannot exist without qi; qi must coalesce to form the myriad things; the myriad things must disperse to return to the Ultimate Void” (Kasoff 1984: 7).

❖ Qi is the source for diversity and transformation in the universe: “Although the myriad things are many, in fact, they are the same thing. There is nothing but yin and yang. Hence it is known that the changes of heaven and earth are these two starting-points and nothing more” (ibid.: 10)

HUMANS HAVE POTENTIAL TO BECOME DIVINE

- ❖ **Daoism:** Humans and other beings in the world all come from the Dao, the reason why human life is treasure is because that: human not only have both form and spirit but also the manifestation of the balance of Yin and Yang:
- ❖ **God:** Pure Yang; **Ghost:** Pure Yin; **Lower life:** Yin is more than Yang;
- ❖ **Human life:** Yin Yang is balanced; **Immortality** cultivation: transform Yin to Yang
- ❖ **Confucianism:** although humans and myriad things are come from the same source, the Way of Heaven and Earth are the guidance of the Way of Humans. However, human is the third power who can support Heaven and Earth in their operation and therefore make the universe have purpose and meaning because their intelligence and morality.

CONFUCIAN INFLUENCE ON CHINESE MYTH

❖ Divided ancient myth figures into two groups: good ones and bad ones based on their moral performances:

❖ **Good ones become the ancestors of the people or sage kings:**

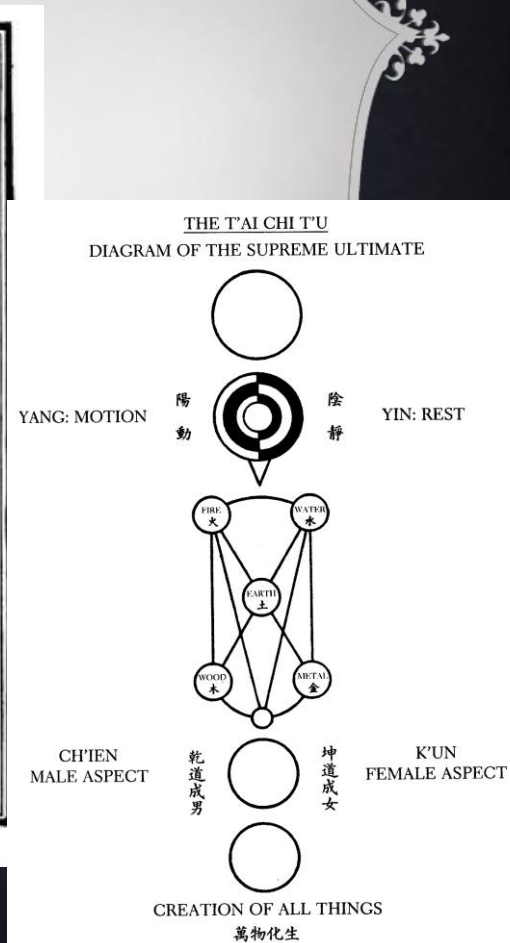
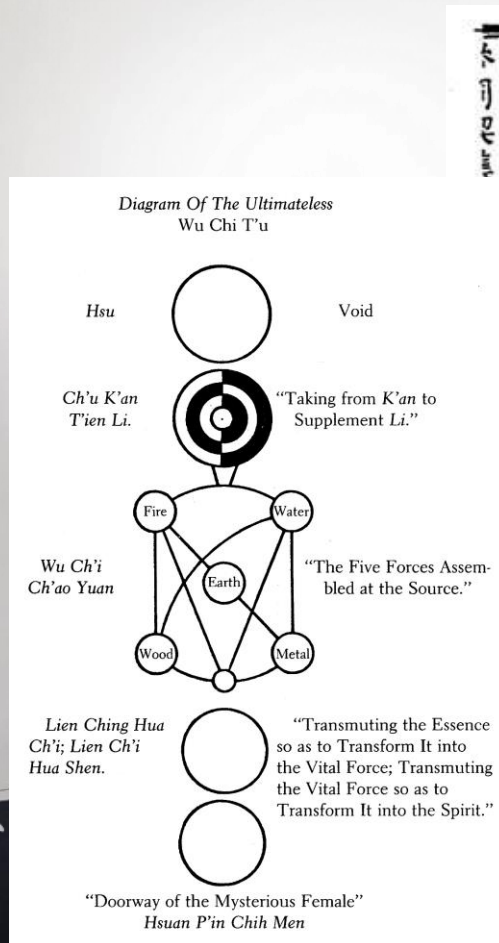
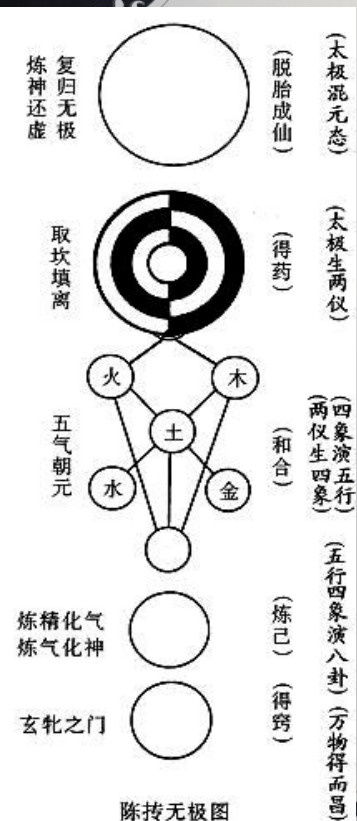
Nuwa 女娲, Fuxi 伏羲, Huangdi 黄帝, divine farmer 神农

❖ **Bad ones become evil or immoral person:**

❖ Xingtian 刑天, Chilong 蚩龙,

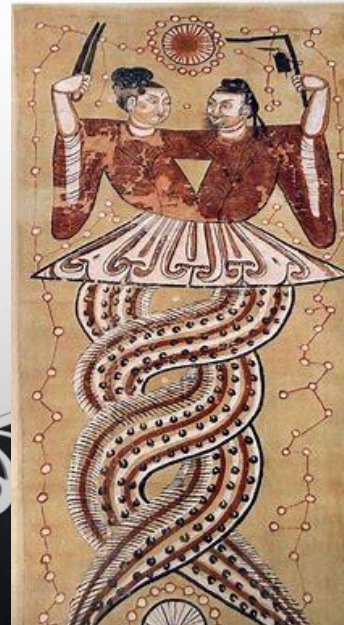
DAOIST WUJI DIAGRAM(陈抟CHEN TUAN) AND
CONFUCIAN TAIJI DIAGRAM(ZHOU DUNYI周敦颐)

FOLLOWING THE ORDER WILL PRODUCE LIFE,
REVERSE THE ORDER WILL CULTIVATE INTO IMMORTAL



MYTH FIGURES TRANSFORMED INTO HISTORICAL FIGURES

- ❖ Nuwa 女娲 and Fuxi 伏羲 were myth figures in origin who were transformed into sage kings by Confucian tradition.
- ❖ They were separated myth figures in the beginning: Nuwa was the creator of patron of humankind, while Fuxi was the farthest ancestor of Chinese civilization.
- ❖ However, under the influence of Confucianism, Nuwa and Fuxi became brother-sister and a married couple.



FUXI 伏羲 (NO.1 OF THE 3 AUGUSTS)

- ❖ Names of Fuxi: 伏羲, 宓戏 Mixi、庖牺 Paoxi、皇羲 huangxi、太昊 Taihao、伏牺 Fuxi、青帝 Qingdi
- ❖ Texts recorded Fuxi: *Silk Scripts of Chu* 楚帛书, *The Commentary of Zuo* 《左传》、Guanzi 《管子》、Zhouyi 《周易》、Zhuangzi 《庄子》、Guoyu 《国语》 and *Recording of the History* 《史记·太史公自序》：余闻之先人曰：‘伏羲至纯厚，作《易》八卦。’
- ❖ I heard from the forefathers that ‘Fuxi was extremely pure and honesty and he created the trigrams of the Book of Changes.

FUXI

- ❖ The most ancient myths involve the 10 legendary kings or gods who guided people through their prehistoric beginnings (around 3000 to 2197 BC). They were demigods (half god and half human), who lived among the people and taught them the rules of civilization.
- ❖ Fushi was the first ruler of this magical period.
- ❖ Many scholars believe that his story is based on an actual monarch who lived sometime between 2953 and 2736 BC.
- ❖ In all the many variations of these mythological stories, Fushi has been depicted as a beloved figure who taught survival skills to the early humans. He taught people how to use fire, how to cook, how to write, and many other skills like hunting, fishing, and fortune-telling.
- ❖ Some myths depict Fushi as having the body of a human while others depict him as having the head of a human and the body of a snake.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF FUZI

- ❖ **Created Dragon Totem for Chinese nation:**
- ❖ Fuxi using the body of snake, the head of crocodile, the staghorn, the eyes of tiger, the scale of Red Carp, the legs of goanna, the claws of eagle, the tail of white shark, and the beard of finback created dragon as the sign of Chinese nation



CONTRIBUTIONS OF FUXI

- ❖ He looked up the sky above and earth on the ground created the 8 trigrams to summarize the Change of myriad things in the universe.
- ❖ He imitated the spider's netting created fishnet and hunting net.
- ❖ He also created marriage system and surname for China

先天后天转换图



LEGENDARY FIGURES TRANSFORMED INTO HISTORICAL FIGURES

❖ 三皇(The Three August Ones, original name list):

❖ Nuwa 女娲, Huangdi 黄帝(Yellow Emperor) and Shennong 神农(Divine Farmer)/Yandi 炎帝(Red Emperor)

❖ 三皇(The Three August Ones, later developed list):

❖ Fuxi 伏羲, Huangdi 黄帝, Shennong 神农/Yandi 炎帝

❖ 《水经注》

❖ 《山海经·西山经》

❖ 《国语·晋语四》

❖ 《左传》

❖ 《史记·五帝本纪》

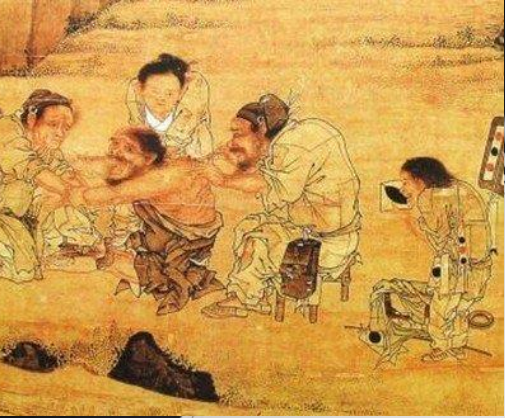
❖ 《帝王世纪》

❖ 7、《逸周书·尝麦解》

❖ 8、《韩诗外传·卷八·第八章》

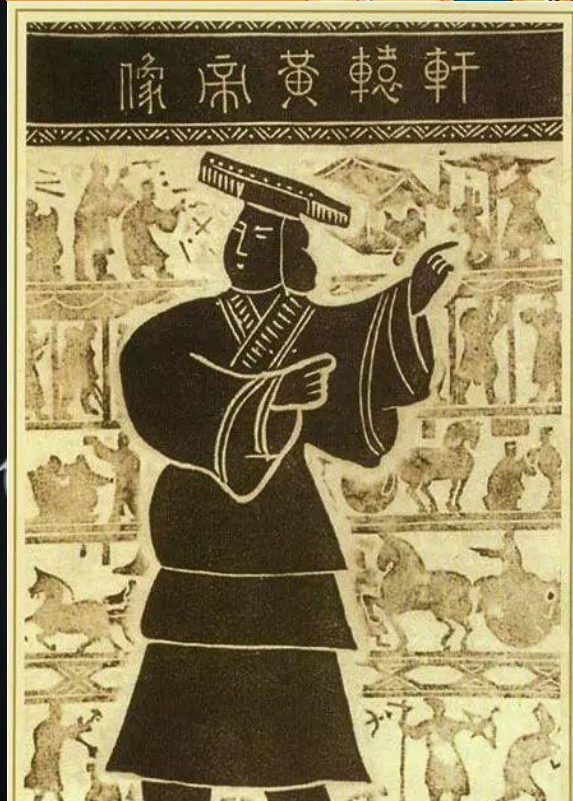
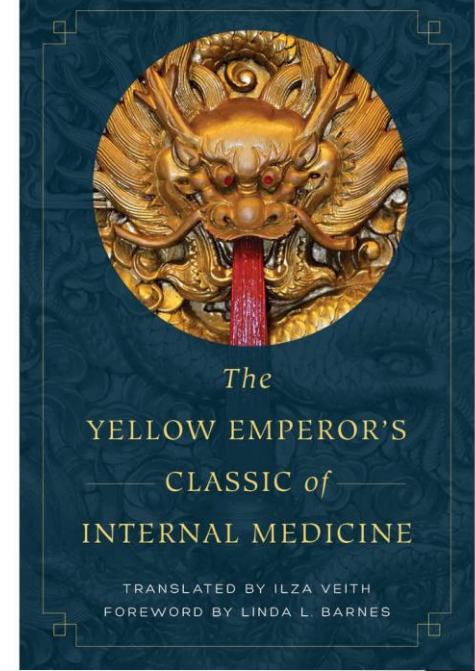
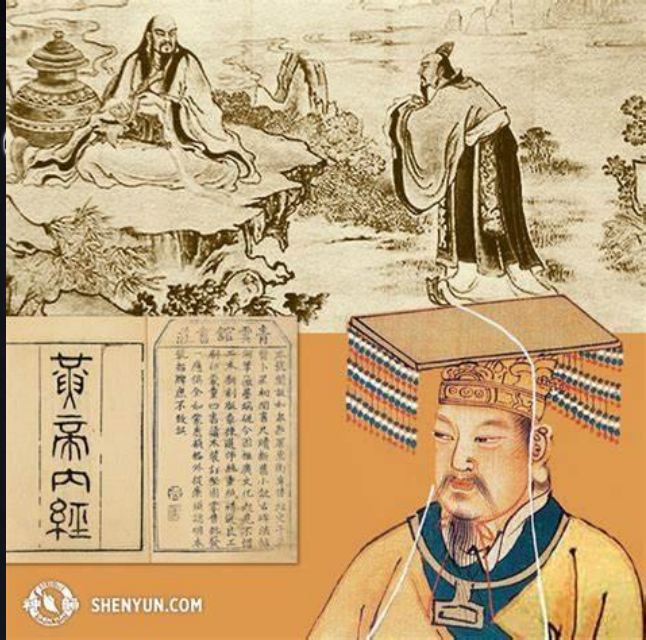
LEGENDARY FIGURES TRANSFORMED INTO HISTORICAL FIGURES

- ❖ Chinese call themselves as 炎黄子孙 (the offspring/descendants of the Yan and Huang)
- ❖ 黄帝 **Hungdi (Yellow Emperor)** : inventor of Chinese wholistic way of Medicine and Farming tools, to be entitled as co-ancestor of Chinese civilization together with 炎帝 the Red Emperor.
- ❖ Contribution toward Chinese Civilization: 黄帝内经 *Yellow Emperor's Inner Cannon*, which has become the source of Chinese Medicine including principles, medical methodology, techniques of acupuncture; Daoist Health care and wellbeing in both individual life and none-action government (the skills of huang-lao), Daoist immortality cultivation or inner alchemy cultivation.
- ❖ 炎帝 (**Red Emperor**)/ 神农 (**Divine Farmer**): Inventor of Chinese Herb Medicine, tea, and farming technologies and to be entitled as the co-ancestor of Chinese civilization with the Yellow Emperor.
- ❖ Contribution to Chinese Civilization: 神农本草经 *Shengnong's Classic of Materia Medica*.
He tasted hundreds of grasses and encountered 72 poisonous herbs and detoxicated by Tea.



YELLOW EMPEROR AND ACUPUNCTURE

- ❖ Different materials such as stone knives and bamboo or bone needles used as instruments of healing have all been excavated in China.
- ❖ Acupuncture was revolutionized during the period of Huang Di, the Yellow Emperor (2697–2597 BC).
- ❖ There is archaeological evidence that acupuncture was practiced in ancient China from the Paleolithic period.
- ❖ The earliest book of Chinese medicine is the Nei Jing and was written around 305 BC–204 BC. It consists of a dialogue between Huang Di 黄帝 and his physicist Qi Bo 岐伯 about the whole spectrum of the Chinese medical arts



SHENNONG AND TEA PRODUCTION (2737 BC)

Chinese is famous for its tea production for more than 2 thousands years since the operation of the silk road.

It said that Tea was discovered in ancient China by Shennong in 神农 in 2737 BC for medical purpose. Before Han dynasty, tea in China was used as a medicine.

In Tang dynasty (618–907 AD), Tea started to be used as a drink on social occasions. *The Tea Classic* was published in this period.

Tea was prepared differently in ancient China than it is today. Tea leaves were processed and compressed into cake form. The dried teacake known as brick tea was ground in a stone mortar. The powder from the teacake was then boiled in a kettle, or hot water was added to it.

There are various type of tea in modern China, Green Tea; Dark Tea, Red Tea, and yellow tea and White Tea and so on. However they can be divided into two groups, one is processed and the other is none-processed directly dry and shaped through green leaves.

SHENNNONG AND CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE



TEXTS RELATED TO SHENNNONG AND HERBAL MEDICINE

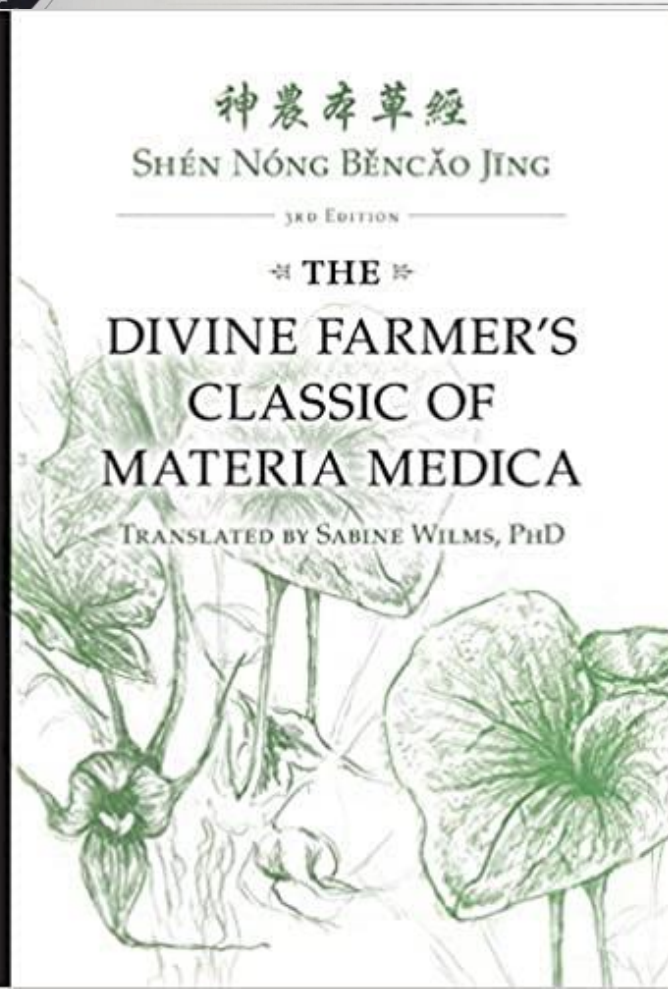
Sima Qian (145-90 BCE)'s *Recording of History* 《史记》 mentioned that Shennong tasted hundreds of herbal vegetations: “神农氏以赭鞭鞭草木，始尝百草。”

Liu An (179-122 BCE)'s *Huainan Honglie / Huainazi* 《淮南子》: claims that Shennong not only tasted the taste of vegetations but also that of waters and springs “神农尝百草之滋味，水泉之甘苦。”

❖ Ganbao (?-336) of Jin (266-420)'s *Searching Gods* 《搜神记》 further pointed out that Shennong identified the attribution of each plants and vegetation through tasted them: either even or poison in their attribution, or belong to either cold or warm attribution and so on: “神农以赭鞭鞭百草，尽知其平、毒、寒、温之性，臭味所主……”

Two books in Song Dynasty 宋代(960-1279), Zheng Qiao's *通志* 《通志》 and Luo Mi's *路史* 《路史》 all claimed that Shennong encountered 70 times of toxic situation inn one day and identified 360/365 herbal plants, and become the source of Book 《神农本草》

Shennong: Tea, Seed Drill, Chinese Herbal Medicine



五帝 THE FIVE EMPERORS

- ❖ 青帝（太昊taihao）Emperor of the east, refer to Green Dragon
- ❖ 赤帝/炎帝（神农shennong）, Emperor of the South were good at using fire and herbs
- ❖ 黄帝（轩辕xuanyuan） **Yellow Emperor**, Emperor of the Middle Land who is central among the Five Emperors.
- ❖ 白帝（少昊shaohao， 玄嚣） White Emperor, Elders Son of Yellow Emperor, his mother is 嫫祖(Leizu) the inventor of mulberry planting, sericulture, silk reeling and weaving.
- ❖ 黑帝（颛顼zhu anxu， 乾荒） Black Emperor, grand son of the Yellow Emperor and Niece of the White Emperor, who created the 九州 Nine Provinces, which is still standing as the replaceable name of China. He was also the one who cut off the communication and interaction between Gods and humans.

SILK AND GODDESS OF SILK

- ❖ The invention of silk dates back to the fourth millennium BC during the Neolithic period.
- ❖ Apart from clothing, silk was widely used in a variety of sectors including writing, fishing, and for musical instruments. Silk was dominantly used by emperors and high-class society but later it spread to the rest of the population.
- ❖ During the Han dynasty (202 BC–220 AD), silk became more than just a commodity. It was used as a reward for a worthy Chinese citizen or government official.
- ❖ Silk became an important part of the Chinese economy.
- ❖ Japan and the Middle East started cultivating silk around 300 AD and the Crusades brought the concept of silk production to Western Europe. However, China still dominates the luxury silk market today.

LEGENDARY FIGURES TURNED INTO HISTORICAL FIGURES 2

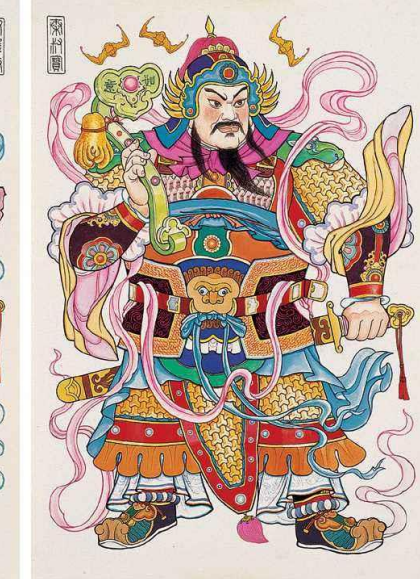
- ❖ Cangjie 仓颉, the eventer of Chinese characters, and was the minister of the Yellow Emperor, who became a person with 4 eyes.
- ❖ The earlies person who mentioned Cangjie as the one who invented Chinese character is Xunzi of the warring state period (453-221 BCE).
- ❖ In Lushi chunqiu 《吕氏春秋》 (Lu' s History of Spring and Autumn Period of time) and Hanfeizi 《韩非子》, Cangjie' s invention from creating characters expanded to calligraphy, “故好书者众矣, 而仓颉独传者, 一也”。
- ❖ After Han Dynasty (202-184), in 《淮南子》 and 《论衡》, Cangjie had been from a person who created Chinese characters transformed into a person who with 4 eyes. Completed the divinization of Cangjie. Later on, Cangjie became the minister of the Yellow Emperor, completed his transformation from a myth figure into a historical figure.



HISTORICAL FIGURES TURNED INTO MYTHICAL FIGURES

- ❖ 关帝Lord Guan/关公: Guan 关羽 (Guan Yunchang关云长) was One of the famous Senior Generals of Shu State of the Three Kingdom Period time, because of his loyalty, brave, and justice, he was divinized as the Martial God of Wealth after Song dynasty.
- ❖ 妈祖Mazu/天后娘娘Heavenly Queen as the Sea Goddess who is the protector of people who are working or travelling in the sea.





钟馗 zhongkui, who was a scholar became a guardian who protect people from the disturbance of ghosts.

❖ 门神 door God: Two Senior Generals of Taizong of Tang Dynasty (). Taizong always had nightmare dreams after he killed his brothers, his two senior generals Qin Qiong and Weichi Jingde stood outside of his door when he sleeping and saved Taizong from nightmare forever, and later on, they become the door Gods of normal people.