SINO-PLATONIC PAPERS

Number 380 February, 2026

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The Origin of Early Daoist Thought?

by
Shaun Ramsden

Victor H. Mair, Editor
Sino-Platonic Papers
Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6305 USA
vmair@sas.upenn.edu
www.sino-platonic.org

SINO-PLATONIC PAPERS

FOUNDED 1986

ISSN
2157-9679 (print) 2157-9687 (online)

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Zhou Dynasty Indo-European Nomadic Culture: The Origin of Early Daoist Thought?

Shaun Ramsden

Perth, Western Australia

Abstract:

This paper aims to firstly present evidence suggesting that the culture of the Zhou dynasty was rooted in nomadic Indo-European norms. Secondly, it analyses the hypothesis that early Daoist thought was primarily based on Zhou dynasty Indo-European nomadic cultural beliefs and principles. Throughout this manuscript, ancient Chinese textual references related to the Zhou dynasty are translated to provide confirmation of Sky-God worship, an Indo-European mage, and the use of binary and tripartite systems.

This paper also analyses classical Chinese texts from the period of the breakdown of society and political regimes at the end of the Zhou dynasty, during the Warring States. Analysis suggests that an abundance of new promotional material emerged during this period. This material not only portrays how rulers should govern a state or country but also how an individual should act within society. Confucianism and Daoism appear to have emerged as two of the most popular schools of thought during this time. Both have shared ideas, such as wúwéi - non-action (無為), but also have significant differences, especially in regard to what a shèngrén - sage (聖人) resembles.

As the earliest promotional material of what would become Daoism is probably the《道德經》*Dàodéjīng* (*The Way and Virtue Classic*), it is this text that likely represents an early piece of transitional material between the old Zhou dynasty culture and the new and emerging one of this breakdown period. The meaning of the character for tiān - sky (天) is especially relevant. This paper provides strong evidence to suggest the Zhou worshipped a Sky-God and that the remnants of revering a Sky-God can be found in the *Dàodéjīng.*

To further demonstrate that early Daoist thought is especially based on nomadic Indo-European principles, analysis of other early Daoist texts is also examined, such as a chapter in the《黃帝內經》*Huángdì Nèijīng* (*The Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic*), which appears to advocate the benefits of a lifestyle with nomadic cultural origins. This paper concludes it is likely that the Zhou dynasty's Indo-European nomadic cultural traits are the basis for early Daoist thought.

Keywords: Indo-Europeans, Daoism, Zhou dynasty, nomads, *Dàodéjīng*

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of recorded Chinese history, the native inhabitants of the Yellow River Valley have engaged in frequent contact and interactions with nomadic tribes, particularly those originating from the north and west. Both Zhou (2006) and Ramsden (2021) describe how a nomadic tribe of western origin likely came in contact with the people of the Yellow River Valley. Ramsden (2021) provides evidence for a hypothesis in which the rulers of the Zhou (周) dynasty were Indo-European in origin.

Historically, the original steppe nomads were proto-Indo-European and lived in what is now eastern Ukraine, southern Russia (northern Caucasus) and western Kazakhstan (Anthony 2007, 84). Later, they spread to many different parts of Eurasia, bringing their culture of sky worship, horses and chariots. Other non-Indo-European nomads followed, of the same culture as these Indo-Europeans, such as the Turkish and Mongolian tribes. The climate where these early nomads lived was harsh and survival difficult. They were constantly on the move to find food, water sources and pasture for their livestock.

Winters were long and challenging, communal living in the ger/yurt was the norm, most items were in common ownership, and personal privacy within the family was nearly non-existent. As the lands of one tribe were enormous and shared by others, ownership of land, at least in earlier times, was probably a foreign idea. Instead, wealth was measured primarily in the number of stock animals one had. Life was one of freedom and simplicity, where deals were made by one's word and honour. There was no writing, so recitation and a great memory were highly prized skills. This freedom of life was in stark contrast to the large urban centres of China, where people's freedom was minimal, and many were forced into slavery and labour in service of the government. China's foremost ancient historian Sīmǎ Qiān (司馬遷) even appeared to show some envy for the freedoms of these nomads, as noted by Ford (2010, 20), who conveyed such a description based on Sīmǎ Qiān's observations of the nomadic Xiōngnú (匈奴).[1]

1 According to Harl (2023, 16), Xiōngnú was pronounced Hunna in ancient Chinese.

As trade routes such as the Silk Road were created, nomads could procure different food items and luxury goods via trading or raiding. Due to the harshness of life and the instinctive drive for survival, these nomads had already, at least to some degree, honed their raiding skills against each other. While some nomads traded their livestock for food items, such as grain and luxury goods made in urban centres, others raided and/or provided their services to protect against raiding parties.[2]

When reading early Chinese texts attributed to what is now called Daoism, we find a consistent theme of living with the seasons, staying away from luxury goods, living outside or on the fringes of society, and not fatiguing oneself mentally or physically. These types of ideas hint at a lifestyle akin to that of a nomad. This paper proposes that early Daoist texts such as the《道德經》*Dàodéjīng* (*The Way and Virtue Classic*) and《黃帝內經》*Huángdì Nèijīng*[3] (*The Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic*) may actually be philosophies rooted in early Indo-European nomadic culture and ways of living. This paper also suggests that texts such as the *Dàodéjīng* emerged as new promotional material after the breakdown of the Zhou dynasty during a time of major change and upheaval. In this case, not only does the *Dàodéjīng* contain material and ideas from the early Zhou dynasty but also new concepts and philosophies, where it changes older norms for newer ones. One example is the way in which the shèngrén - sage (聖人) no longer represents a capable ruler of ancient times but instead is someone whom even commoners can model themselves on. This type of change is highly significant as suddenly enlightenment (not in a Buddhist sense) is accessible to anyone in society.

To analyse these hypotheses, this paper specifically examines the idea of the sky (天) in the *Dàodéjīng* (and other ancient texts), early health cultivation techniques as conveyed within the *Huángdì Nèijīng,* and the idea of the shèngrén as found in classical Chinese writings. Currently, there are no papers to the author's knowledge proposing Indo-European nomadic culture as the foundation for the *Dàodéjīng* and other early Daoist texts. Therefore, this paper has relied heavily on classical Chinese textual sources.

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2 For a particularly well-described summary of the early nomadic lifestyle, see Harl (2023, 48–56).

3 This paper is not suggesting that the medical system is nomadic in origin but rather that the health cultivation ideals and ways of living conveyed follow a Daoist theme, and thereby derived from earlier nomadic roots.

TRANSLATION METHODOLOGY

In this paper, there are a large number of translations, all done by the author. The goal of these from a translation point of view is to make them as direct as possible, without adding any interpretation. This can sometimes mean an overly simple sentence structure, purposely done, as this is the way ancient Chinese was commonly written. In this way, the reader can read the text in English as close to the original as possible. To do this without English add-ons is difficult as it would be hard to comprehend. Therefore, square brackets [] are used to insert grammar words and occasionally, some descriptive ones to bring meaningful sense to the sentence. Parentheses () are sometimes used to add information to help understand the preceding word.

Translating ancient classical Chinese texts into English is notoriously difficult, and as a translator, I sometimes look back at a translation and think it could have been better, or even sometimes notice it was not quite correct. To build upon previous translations, if there are any, is commonly thought to be the most effective way to do a translation. Translations should be getting easier with the technology and knowledge that has come with globalisation. It must have been difficult to translate a text from Chinese to English in the 1800s from scratch. By using square brackets and parentheses, and leaving the words without these to represent a direct translation of a Chinese character to an English word, future generations of scholars can clearly see how the translation was accomplished, and thereby easily make it better or correct any mistakes.

This paper uses only Hànyǔ Pīnyīn (漢語拼音) and not the outdated Wade-Giles system. All Hànyǔ Pīnyīn words have their tones (except dynasty names), marking them as foreign. Therefore, they are not in italics. Each time new words are used in Hànyǔ Pīnyīn, if there is an appropriate translation, the English word/s will follow with the Chinese characters in parentheses behind them. As a general rule, after this, only the Hànyǔ Pīnyīn will be used. Guillemets《》are used to set off Chinese texts, as this is standard practice in China. But if a cited text is written in Hànyǔ Pīnyīn or any other language, it is italicised. Within this paper, the names of Chinese texts are generally not translated into English (or put into Hànyǔ Pīnyīn unless they are famous texts). As there is commonly no standard for Chinese text names in English (except for the well-known ones), any translation may only lead to confusion, therefore, this paper generally only uses Hànyǔ Pīnyīn and/or Chinese characters.

NOMADS OF ANCIENT "CHINA"

A thorough and comprehensive exploration of this topic goes beyond the scope of this paper, however, an introductory discussion is essential for understanding the nomadic landscape of ancient China and demonstrating the importance of various nomadic groups in shaping Chinese history. Notably, while many of these nomadic peoples later established their own nations and distinct identities, it was the ancient Chinese who documented their origins and histories. As a result, it is Chinese texts that offer a fascinating and detailed historical account for those seeking to trace the early roots of the various Turkic, Mongol, Tungusic, and some nomadic Indo-European tribes.

The exploration of this topic, especially in the context of "nomadic China", uncovers several key areas that deserve closer scrutiny: What were the names of these nomadic tribes? What were their ethnic roots? Did they govern any Chinese dynasties? What were their physical traits, and what distinguished their culture? Each of these questions is intricate and demands separate investigation. Nonetheless, in an effort to provide a foundation for further exploration on this expansive subject, the following summary offers a textual overview.

In Chinese history, four primary nomadic groupings emerged across different regions: the northwestern, northern, northeastern, and western territories. A notable caveat to these four categories is that nomadic tribes were often known for intermingling, resulting in genetic diversity that sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish them from one another. This phenomenon is especially apparent in modern-day Turkey, where Turkic people exhibit a wide range of hair colours—including red, blond, brown, and black—along with various eye colours and both East Asian and Western European physical features. Aside from the Tungus nomads, it can sometimes be difficult to clearly separate and distinguish the other nomadic groups. Cultural divisions are also not easily identifiable, as there were many similarities across them. However, differences were often more apparent in terms of conflict, with these groups frequently being adversaries, and also through their distinct languages. The four main groupings that appear to have had the greatest influence on China are as follows:

Group 1: As noted by Ramsden (2021), the Indo-European grouping likely includes: Huángdì - the Yellow Emperor (黃帝), the Qiāng (羌), the Jī (姬) family, the royal lineage of the Zhou dynasty and the Yuèzhī (月氏) (and associated names), all of whom may trace their origins back to the Xīróng or

Western Róng (西戎), indicating a western heritage. This topic is further explored in the next section of the paper.

Group 2: The Mongolic group of the Dōnghú - Eastern Hú (東胡), Xiānbēi (鮮卑), Wūhuán (烏桓), Qìdān - Khitan (契丹), Kùmòxī (庫莫奚), Róurán or Ruǎnruǎn (柔然 or 蠕蠕) (and other associated names), Mùróng (慕容) and Tuōbá (拓跋).

> 《後漢書.列傳.烏桓鮮卑列傳》鮮卑者，亦東胡之支也，別依鮮卑山，故因號焉。其言語習俗與烏桓同。
>
> Xiānbēi [is] also [a] division [of] the Dōnghú [and] separately relies on Xiānbēi Mountain; because [of this, they] thereby [get their] name. Their language [and] customs [are the] same as [the] Wūhuán.
>
> 《通典.邊防十二.烏桓》烏桓者，本東胡也。漢初，匈奴冒頓滅其國，餘類保烏桓山，因以為號。
>
> Wūhuán [were] originally Dōnghú. [At the] beginning [of the] Han [dynasty,] Xiōngnú Màodùn extinguished (destroyed) their state. [The] remaining [of their] kind [took] refuge [in the] Wūhuán Mountains. [It is] because [of this, they got] their name.
>
> 《魏書.列傳第八十八.高句麗百濟勿吉失韋豆莫婁地豆於庫莫奚契丹烏洛侯》契丹國，在庫莫奚東，異種同類。
>
> [The] Khitan state, lies [to the] east [of] Kùmòxī, [the Khitans are a] different branch [to the Kùmòxī but the] same kind.

《新唐書.列傳第一百四十四,北狄契丹》契丹本東胡種。

[The] Khitan's origin [was a] Dōnghú branch.

《魏書.卷一百三》蠕蠕東胡之苗裔也。

Rúrú [are] descendants [of] the Dōnghú.

《三國志.魏書三十.鮮卑傳》檀石槐拒不肯受，寇鈔滋甚。乃分其地為中東西三部。從右北平以東至遼，東接夫餘、濊貊為東部，二十餘邑，其大人曰彌加，闕機，素利，槐頭。從右北平以西至上谷為中部，十餘邑，其大人曰柯最，闕居，慕容等，為大帥。

Tánshíhuái ... divided the territory into central, east [and] west; three parts. ... From Yòuběipíng to [the] west [and] to Shànggǔ [was] the central part, [consisting of] more [than] ten towns. Its leaders [were] called Kēzuì, Quèjū, Mùróng etc. [and were] the great commanders.

《通典.邊防十二.拓跋氏》拓跋氏亦東胡之後，別部鮮卑也。

[The] Tuōbá clan [is] also descended [from] the Dōnghú, [a] separate division [of the] Xiānbēi.

《魏書.列傳第九十一 蠕蠕 匈奴宇文莫槐 徒何段就六眷 高車》匈奴宇文莫槐，出於遼東塞外，其先南單于遠屬也，世為東部大人。其語與鮮卑頗異。人皆剪發而留其頂上，以為首飾，長過數寸則截短之。婦女披長襦及足，而無裳焉。秋收鳥頭為毒藥，以射禽獸。

> Xiōngnú Yǔwén Mòhuái arose from [the regions] beyond Liáodōng, his ancestors [were] distant [relatives that] belonged [to the] southern Chányú, (a title for a Xiōngnú leader) [and for] generations served [as] leaders [of the] eastern section. [His] language and [that of the] Xiānbēi [were] considerably different. [The] people [of his confederation] all cut [their] hair and left [a piece on] the top [of the] crown [as] a decoration. [When the hair was] longer [than a] few inches, then [it would be] cut short. [The] women [wore a] long draping [type of] jacket [to their] feet but [did] not [wear] skirts. [When] autumn came, [they] collected niǎotóu,[4] a poisonous medicine, and [used it to] shoot birds [and] animals.

Group 3: The proto-Turkic group of the Chúnwéi (淳維), Xūnyù (獯鬻), Guǐfāng (鬼方), Xiǎnyǔn (猃狁), Xiōngnú, Āshǐnà (阿史那), Yǔwén (宇文)[5] and Tūjué (突厥). Their homelands were likely or at least at some stages in the northwest, with potential ancient links to the region of the Altai mountains.

> 《史記索隱.卷二十五》韋昭漢曰匈奴葷粥其別名則淳維是其始祖蓋與獯粥是一也。

> Wéi Zhāo [of the] Han [dynasty] said: [The] Xiōngnú [and] Hūnzhōu; the other name [for them was] Chúnwéi, [which] is their starting (original) ancestor [and] essentially [the] same [as the] Xūnzhōu.

> 《晉書.列傳第六十七 四夷.北狄.匈奴》匈奴之類，總謂之北狄 ... 夏曰薰鬻，殷曰鬼方，周曰獫狁，漢曰匈奴。

4 Whether there is a mistake in the original source, i.e., the character, or just a different name, the author is convinced that niǎotóu (鳥頭), nearly certainly refers to wūtóu (烏頭), a well-known and highly toxic Chinese herbal medicine, that when prepared correctly, is used to treat cold-type arthritic pain and numbness.

5 Discovering if the Yǔwén were originally a Xiōngnú or Dōnghú branch is challenging, and requires further investigation.

> The various kinds [of] Xiōngnú [are] collectively called the Běidí … [In the] Xia [dynasty they were] called [the] Xūnyù, [in the] Yin [dynasty they were] called [the] Guǐfāng, [in the] Zhou [dynasty they were] called [the] Xiǎnyǔn [and in the] Han [dynasty they were] called [the] Xiōngnú.

> 《康熙字典.犬部.十四》《廣韻》夏曰獯鬻，周曰獫狁，漢曰匈奴。

> Xia [dynasty] called Xūnyù, Zhou [dynasty] called Xiǎnyǔn [and] Han [dynasty] called Xiōngnú.

> 《史記.列傳.匈奴列傳》自淳維以至頭曼千有餘歲，時大時小，別散分離，尚矣[6]，其世傳不可得而次云。

> From Chúnwéi to Tóumàn (first leader of the Xiōngnú); over one thousand years have [passed], sometimes big, sometimes small (their power fluctuated), [it is] hard [to] distinguish [their] dispersions [and] divisions. Their generations [and] successions, [I] cannot get or order.

On a visit to Azerbaijan, the author noted that references to Oghuz Khan appeared commonly in museums. It was said that there are clear linkages between Oghuz Khan and Mào(or Mò, 墨)dùn Chányú (冒頓單于), the son of the founder of the Xiōngnú empire, also known as Mete Han, because, they apparently share a similar biography. Unfortunately, the author has been unable to confirm this claim textually. If Ohguz Khan is indeed another name for Màodùn Chányú, it establishes a strong connection between the Xiōngnú and their ancestors as the foundation of what would later become the

6 Shàng yǐ (尚矣) is difficult to translate in this context, and could mean “boundary”, as in the boundary of the author’s knowledge but most likely means, “the time period is too distant” or “the era is too far back”. It could also mean “it is still the case” or "it remains so”. The author has omitted a translation for this due to a lack of certainty.

Turkic tribes. There is also textual evidence to suggest the Xiōngnú were proto-Turkic, as seen below, especially regarding the Āshǐnà being mentioned as related to the Xiōngnú.

> In the era of the Turkic Khaganate (Empire), founded by the Bumyn Khagan in 552, the Oghuz were one of the numerous tribes in its composition. (Mensitova et al. 2022, 104)

> The rulers of the Turkic Khaganate in the sixth century highly valued their origin from the sacred Āshǐnà tribe. (Mensitova et al. 2022, 114)

> 《新唐書.列傳第一百四十上.突厥上》突厥阿史那氏，蓋古匈奴北部也。

> Tūjué [and] Āshǐnà clans probably [come from the] northern section [of the] ancient Xiōngnú.

This type of evidence starts to point towards the Xiōngnú, in particular, and their ancestors as proto-Turkic. Ramsden (2021, 15) suggests that the Xiōngnú, Āshǐnà, Tiělè (鐵勒), Gāochē (高車), Huíhé (回紇), Wūsūn (烏孫) and Tūjué are likely the same people.

> 《舊唐書.卷一百九十九下 鐵勒契丹奚室韋靺鞨渤海靺鞨霫烏羅渾》鐵勒，本匈奴別種。

> Tiělè's origin [is from the] Xiōngnú [as they were just] another branch [of them].

《通典.邊防十三.突厥上》突厥之先，平涼今平涼郡雜胡也，蓋匈奴之別種，姓阿史那氏。

Before the Tūjué (or the ancestors of the Tūjué), [the area of] Píngliáng near Píngliáng jùn [was inhabited by a] mix [of] hú (foreigners). [They were] probably [a] separate branch [of] the Xiōngnú; [a] clan [with the] surname Āshǐnà.

《北史.卷九十九列传第八十七.突厥.铁勒》突厥者，其先居西海之右，独为部落，盖匈奴之别种也。

[The] Tūjué's ancestors (originally) lived [to] the right [of the] Western Sea, [as a] single (or independent) tribe. [They were] probably [a] different subgroup [of the] Xiōngnú.

《通典.邊防十三.高車》高車，蓋古赤狄之餘種也，初號為狄歷，北方以為勅勒，諸夏以為高車，丁零。其語略與匈奴同而時有小異，或云其先匈奴之甥也。其種有狄氏，袁紇氏，斛律氏，解批氏，護骨氏，異奇斤氏。

[The] Gāochē [are] probably [the] remaining branch [of] the ancient Chìdí. [At] [the] start [they were] called the Dílì, [and in the] northern regions; [they were also known as] the Chìlēi. [The] various Chinese [groups referred to them] as Gāochē or Dīnglíng. Their language [is] about [the] same [as the] Xiōngnú, and [only] sometimes [has a] little differences. [It is] said [that] they [were] originally [the] nephews [of] the Xiōngnú. Their branches include [the] Dí clan, Yuánhé clan, Húlǜ clan, Jiěpī clan, Hùgǔ clan [and the] Yìqíjīn clan.

Origins of the Wūsūn appear more complex but could have been Indo-European.

《通典.邊防八.烏孫》本塞地也，大月氏西破走塞王，塞王南越懸度，大月氏居其地。後烏孫昆莫擊破大月氏，大月氏徙西，臣大夏，而烏孫昆莫居之。昆莫，昆彌，皆王號也。故烏孫國有塞種，大月氏種焉。

Originally, [the] land [was the] Sāi (Sak) [peoples]. [The] Dà Yuèzhī clan [was] [in the] west [where they] defeated [and] drove [the] Sāi King [out]. [The] Sāi King [went] southward, going beyond Xuándù, [and the] Dà Yuèzhī clan settled [in their] lands. Later, Wūsūn Kūnmò destroyed [the] Dà Yuèzhī clan, [forcing the] Dà Yuèzhī clan [to] migrate westward [and become] subordinates [of the] Dà Xià, whereby [the] Wūsūn Kūnmò [took their] land. Both Kūnmò [and] Kūnmí [were] names (or titles) [for] kings. Therefore, the Wūsūn state had [both the] Sāi branch [and] Dà Yuèzhī branch [of people].

《漢書.卷九十六下.西域傳第六十六下》烏孫於西域諸戎其形最異。今之胡人青眼，赤須，狀類彌猴者，本其種也。

[The] Wūsūn among all [the] Róng [of the] western regions [have] the strangest appearance. Nowadays, [the] hú (foreign) people [have] green eyes [and] red beards, [resembling the] appearance [of a] kind [of] macaque, [and are] originally [of this] branch (race).

As noted above, the Xiōngnú spoke a different language from the Xiānbēi, suggesting they were a different group. As the Dōnghú, Xiānbēi and Wūhuán are not proto-Turkic, Indo-European or Tungus, by order of deduction, the author is making a bold assumption that they may be proto-Mongolic. Genghis Khan and his followers could not have conquered vast regions of the Old World without previous generations of nomadic Mongol tribes honing their battle skills over many centuries. The Mongols must have emerged from an already well-established, prominent, and active warrior-like nomadic society.

Group 4: This group encompasses the diverse Tungus tribes of Northeastern China, including not

only the Jurchens (and Manchu) but also other tribes such as the Oroqen and Evenks. While these tribes fall outside the scope of this paper, they (especially the Jurchens) have undeniably played a significant role in Chinese history, having ruled during the Jin (金) and Qing (清) dynasties.

With four distinct groups of warrior-like nomads interacting within the heartland of China at various times, a key question arises: Did they invade and/or ultimately become emperors of China? In addressing this, Mair (2005, 56–62) outlines the dynasties that were likely ruled by foreign powers.[7] Having also researched this subject, the author would suggest that approximately sixty percent of all Chinese dynasties and historical periods were under foreign nomadic rule. Recent evidence has further illuminated this topic, suggesting that the Zhou dynasty was led by an Indo-European elite (Ramsden 2021), while the Sui (隋) and Tang (唐) dynasties were ruled by a Tuōbá aristocracy (see Chen, 2024). Considering the Japanese moulded much of what would become their culture on the Tang during the Heian Period, this is a remarkable fact.

> Turkic-speaking tribal groups of the Steppe recognised that the rulers of the Tang (and the preceding Sui) were cut from the same cloth as their Tuōbá predecessors. In other words, the political and ethnical continuity from the Northern dynasties to the Sui and then the Tang was common knowledge to contemporaries on both sides of the Gobi Desert. (Chen 2024, 19)

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7 Mair (2005) and Ramsden (2021) present differing views on the Shang's origin. Mair (2005, 56) posits that the Shang had steppe associations, while Ramsden (2021) argues that they were primarily Chinese. Mair (2005, 65) supports his steppe hypothesis by citing evidence such as the Shang's practice of frequently relocating their capital. One particularly intriguing passage found by the author is about the first Shang ruler, and is as follows:《金樓子.興王》成湯姓子，名履，字天乙。狼星之精感黑龍而生。高天廣角隆準，手有縱理，如印綬之文。豐下兌上，晳而有鬚，長九尺四寸八肘。Chéng Tang's family name [was] Zǐ, given name Lǚ, [and] courtesy name Tiān Yǐ. [He was] born [from] the essence [of the] Wolf Star, influenced [by the] Black Dragon. [He was] tall [to the] sky, [had a] broad forehead [and] prominent nose. [His] hands had vertical lines like [the] patterns [of a] seal. Below [was] abundant [and] above sharp, [he had a] light (or white) complexion [with a] beard [and his] length [was] nine chǐ, four cùn, [and] eight zhǒu. While this description may be an exciting discovery—the text was written about ~550 AD, approximately two thousand six hundred years after the time of Chéng Tang.

According to Chen (2024, 18n43), the neo-Confucianist Zhū Xī (朱熹) wrote:

> 唐源流出於夷狄。
>
> [The] Tang [dynasty's] origin [came] out [of the] yídí (northern foreigners).

This raises an important question: Did nomads physically differ from the Chinese? Mair (2005) explores this question in depth, analysing historical descriptions of traits such as skin and eye colour, distinctive eyebrows, prominent or high noses, and most notably, beards. Interestingly, the founding emperor of the Han dynasty, Gāozǔ of Han, was described as having features that could be considered Western.

> 《史記.本紀.高祖本紀》高祖為人，隆準而龍顏，美須髯，左股有七十二黑子。
>
> Gāozǔ [was] a man [with a] prominent nose and dragon's face, [he had a] beautiful beard (rán) [and his] left thigh had seventy-two black spots.

While this does not necessarily mean the emperor himself was nomadic, it suggests that his bloodline may have had Eurasian nomadic roots. The significance of a "beautiful" beard has been a defining feature of nomadic culture for at least two thousand five hundred years, if not longer.

> For many Central Asian peoples during the two millennia and more required all adult males to sport a face full of whiskers. This was both a sign of manliness and warriorlike qualities and a marker of ethnic identity. (Mair 2005, 74)

This passage is particularly fascinating as it emphasises the importance of beards in nomadic culture, a theme that can also be found, unsurprisingly, in early Daoist literature.

《莊子.雜篇.列御寇》窮有八極，達有三必，形有六府。美，髯，長，大，壯，麗，勇，敢，八者俱過人也，因以是窮。

Poverty has eight extremes, attainment has three musts (essentials) [and the] body has six houses (places). [Your] beauty, beard (rán), length (height), bigness (size), strength, elegance, bravery [and] daring; [when] all eight [of these traits] surpass [those of other] people, [they are the] cause of being poor.

《黃帝內經.靈樞經.陰陽二十五人.第六十四》黃帝曰夫子之言脈之上下，血氣之候似知形氣，奈何？岐伯曰足陽明之上血氣盛則髯美長，血少氣多則髯短，故氣少血多則髯少，血氣皆少則無髯。

Huángdì spoke: [The] master (or teacher) said, the up [and] down [of the] channels, [and] the observations [of] blood [and] qì [can help] know [the condition of the] body [and] qì, how [is this so]? Qíbó spoke: [If] the upper portion [of the] foot yángmíng's blood [and] qì [is] abundant, then [the] beard (rán) [is] beautiful [and] long. [If the] blood [is a] little [and] qì a lot, then [the] beard (rán) [is] short, therefore [a] little qì [and] a lot [of] blood, then [the] beard (rán) [is a] little, [when the] blood [and] qì [are] both little, then [there is] no beard (rán).

《黃帝內經.靈樞經.陰陽二十五人.第六十四》足少陽之上，氣血盛則通髯美長，血多氣少則通髯美短，血少氣多則少髯，血氣皆少則無鬚。

[If] the upper [portion of the] foot shǎoyáng's qì [and] blood [are] abundant, then [the] beard (rán) grows [and is] beautiful [and] long. [When the] blood [is] a lot [and] qì little, then [the] beard (rán) grows beautifully [but is] short. [When the] blood [is] little [and] qì a lot, then [the] beard (rán) [is a] little. [When the] blood [and] qì [are] both little, then [there is] no beard (xū).

> 《黃帝內經.靈樞經.五音五味.第六十五》通髯極鬚者，少陽多血，美鬚者，陽明多血 ...
>
> [When the] beard (rán)[8] grows [and the] beard (xū) [is] extreme [thick and abundant], [the] shǎoyáng [has] lots [of] blood, [when the] beard (xū) [is] beautiful, [the] yángmíng [has] lots [of] blood ...

More than a thousand years after the aforementioned texts, the nomadic Mongols continued to value beards. Yēlǜ Chǔcái (耶律楚材), a Khitan statesman and descendant of Yelü Abaoji (the founding emperor of the Liao Dynasty), was the first of Genghis Khan's retainers to formulate policy. A Confucian scholar well-versed in Buddhism, he was also a critic of Qiū Chùjī (丘處機). Among the Mongols, he was known as "Longbeard" (Urtu Saqal)".[9]

An introductory discussion on the nomads of "China" would be incomplete without mentioning the Chinese character hú (胡). Not only do certain Chinese characters reflect nomadic influences, but many words in the language also trace their origins to the fringes of Chinese civilisation. Interestingly, the correct pronunciation of hú in Mandarin requires constriction of the throat, producing a "hhh" sound. This phonetic feature is not only common in Mongolian but also appears in various languages worldwide. For instance, when the languages of the Caucasus and Iran are romanised, the letter combination "kh" is used to represent this same "hhh" sound. Looking at some of the Chinese characters that contain the character hú (胡), they are as follows: Hújiāo - pepper (胡椒); húguā - cucumber (胡

8 In some of the old medical and historical texts of China, it is sometimes common to separate two-character words such as cough (咳嗽) into two different but similar meanings. Rán (髯) and xū (鬚) also have different meanings. Rán (髯) refers to the part of the beard that grows from the sideburns (and maybe cheeks), and xū (鬚) is probably the beard in general. In the examples above, the author distinguishes between the different meanings of "beard" by including the Hànyǔ Pīnyīn for the two distinct characters. As with most of the examples above, including the one from Zhuāngzǐ (莊子), the question arises whether the separation was always clear or rán was just another word commonly used for beard. If the separation was clear, as it is in the examples from the *Huángdì Nèijīng*, then this must be taken into account.

9 While Yēlǜ Chǔcái's Mongol name of Longbeard is common knowledge, the author has been unable to find the original source of this information in Chinese.

瓜); hútáo - walnut (胡桃); èrhú - a two stringed instrument (二胡); Dōnghú - Eastern Hú (東胡); Wǔ Hú - Five Foreigners (五胡); húxū - beard (鬍鬚); húxuǎn - a type of Sogdian dance (胡旋); húqí - foreigners on horseback (胡騎); húshuō - talking nonsense (胡說); húlái - to cause trouble or mess thing ups (胡來) húsīluànxiǎng - a wild imagination (胡思亂想); húzuòfēiwéi - to commit outrages or act wildly (胡作非為).

One final point to consider is that Chinese, Mongols, and other East Asian peoples share similar physical features. Likewise, in Kazakhstan and Siberia—excluding ethnic Russians—the population also predominantly exhibits East Asian traits. This suggests that while intermixing undoubtedly occurred,[10] the majority of nomadic society interacting with "China" was likely genetically East Asian, with perhaps only the ruling classes differing significantly in genetics and/or looks. Even today, descendants of the Qing dynasty's ruling elite in China or Japan can often be distinguished from the Han Chinese. Therefore, the descriptions of a beautiful beard and eyebrows, a prominent nose, and coloured eyes may be referring to nomads of Eurasian origin or genetics. This is important not only for highlighting the significant role Indo-Europeans played in shaping nomadic culture and ancient Chinese history but also for understanding their broader impact on world history. As they migrated across the Old World, it appears they introduced their culture and traditions, while also assuming positions of power and authority as a minority.

ZHOU DYNASTY INDO-EUROPEAN NOMADS

Two of the very few texts to discuss in any detail the idea of Indo-European Zhou dynasty nomads are Zhou (2006) and Ramsden (2021). Zhou's (2006) hypothesis centres around answering the question as to why there is such a large time discrepancy between the onset of agriculture in ancient texts (around 2100 BCE) and archaeological evidence for agricultural development of millet in the Yellow River Valley

10 Ramsden (2021, 15) examines genetic evidence suggesting that the Xiōngnú were a mixture of European (11%) and Asian (89%) haplogroups.

in northern China (starting ~5000 BCE), and rice cultivation in the middle reaches of the Yangzi River (starting ~10000 BCE).

The conclusion from Zhou's (2006) research is that the people of the Zhou belonged to the Huángdì nation, who were not native to the area but instead nomadic. In this case, Zhou agriculture developed by learning it from the native peoples of the Yellow River Valley. The Zhou conquered the indigenous locals and recorded their own history, so it is their story that we read today and not that of the agricultural local Chinese.

Most of the evidence for this is discussed around the idea of the Hòu Jì - Lord of Millet (后稷). Beckwith (2009, 45–47) conveys a similar idea and centres his hypothesis on Hòu Jì as well, describing it as a "typical Central Eurasian foundation myth", and states that it was likely a smallish band of Indo-European warriors who entered the Yellow River Valley as mercenaries but later stayed in the region marrying local woman by which a creole language was created.

The key point is that only among the people of the Huángdì nation who are thought to originally be nomadic did the story of Hòu Jì arise, wherein Hòu Jì and his people learn to cultivate grains such as millet from the local people. Zhou (2006) further states that the Huángdì nation was proto-Indo-European, and thereby the myths and legends of the ancient Chinese may actually be about the rise of an Indo-European people and not of the local indigenous tribes.

The key details of Zhou's (2006) paper are as follows:

- A clear argument is made for the evidence of early agriculture on the Yellow (millet) and Yangzi (rice) rivers (Zhou 2006, 1–8).
- The second part of the paper describes textual evidence for the beginning of an agricultural civilisation as recorded by classical Chinese texts, including the calculation of historical time periods (Zhou 2006, 8–17).
- The third section of the paper outlines the disparity between archaeological discovery and historical texts. Zhou (2006, 18) explains that the reason for the time disparity of 3000 years is that the Zhou people specifically were not Chinese and not indigenous to the Yellow River Valley and that Zhou agriculture was developed by absorbing agricultural techniques from the natives. It is hypothesised that the Huángdì nation came from the west and conquered the peoples of the Yellow River Valley.

Ramsden (2021) conveys a similar hypothesis and discusses the idea that an Indo-European tribe entered into pre-Shang (商) China, conquering the local tribes and eventually the Shang kings to form the Zhou dynasty. As the Zhou dynasty had a culture of recording history and the development of more complex writing emerged during this time, it is their history, myths and legends, and not those of the local indigenous Chinese that we read today.

It is possible these Indo-European nomads were male and took local wives, whereby a creole language was developed through the mixing of Indo-European and Old Chinese. Evidence for Indo-Europeans in China has been previously confirmed with the finding of Caucasian "mummies" in Xīnjiāng (新疆), skulls of Europoid origin in Ānyáng (安陽), Indo-European loan words in Old Chinese, and a time discrepancy between the classical texts and the actual onset of agriculture. The key evidence provided by Ramsden (2021, 71–72) to support the nomadic Indo-European origin of the Zhou rulers is as follows:

- The Xīróng (西戎) consisted of several Indo-European tribes.
- Zhōu Wén Wáng (周文王), a man from Xīróng was the founder of the Zhou dynasty.
- The early Zhou and the Qiāng (羌) (likely an Indo-European tribe) intermarried for generations.
- Fúxī (伏羲), who may himself have been Indo-European, created the trigrams, a type of binary and tripartite system of divination, i.e., a classical Indo-European cultural system.
- Connections between Huángdì, Xīwángmǔ (西王母), jade, Yúzhī (禺氏), Yuèzhī (月氏), Qiāng, and the Xīróng, together with the special place they hold in ancient China's myths, demonstrate that these myths were possibly Indo-European in origin.
- The Zhou worshiped a Sky-God, which is a core Indo-European belief.
- A level of writing adequate for creating records was developed only in the late Shang and early Zhou, and that, combined with the Zhou's culture of an interest in recording history is the reason that we read the Zhou's history and not that of the indigenous Chinese.
- The Zhou eventually developed a type of caste or social class system, another Indo-European trait.
- Huángdì and the Zhou royal classes were connected through the name Jī (姬).
- Lǎozǐ (老子) spoke of the relationship between the Xīróng and horses.
- Another name for Huángdì used characters that suggest the use of a chariot.

FURTHER EVIDENCE THE EARLY ZHOU WERE INDO-EUROPEAN

HUÁNGDÌ NATION'S RELATION TO HORSES

In an interesting paragraph from the《列仙傳》*Lièxiān Chuán* (written in the Han dynasty), an expert horse doctor is described, and it is suggested that he lived during the time of Huángdì. This paragraph alone is not enough to confirm the Huángdì nation's connection to horsemanship, but in light of previous evidence from Ramsden (2021, 68), it further demonstrates the importance of both horses and chariots to the Huángdì nation. The second part of this paragraph is fanciful, dealing with the treatment of dragons, but this was likely to emphasise that the horse doctor was a master healer.

> 《列仙傳.馬師皇》馬師皇者，黃帝時馬醫也。知馬形生死之診，治之輒愈。後有龍下，向之垂耳張口，皇曰：此龍有病，知我能治。乃其下口中，以甘草湯飲之而愈。後數數有龍出其波，告而求治之。一旦，龍負皇而去。

> Mǎ Shī Huáng, [in the] times [of] Huángdì [was a] horse doctor. [He] knew [how to] diagnose the horse's form (body), [and if it would] live [or] die. [He could] treat [a horse for a] quick recovery. Later, down [came a] dragon [from the clouds who faced] towards [Mǎ Shī Huáng with] drooping ears [and an] open mouth. Huáng said, "this dragon has [an] illness, [only] I know [and am] able [to] treat". So then, [he] poured [in] the [dragon's] mouth [a herbal formula called the] Liquorice Decoction, [which the dragon] drank and [thereby] recovered. Later, [and on a] regular [basis, other] dragons [came] out [of] the waves (or waters)[11] [to] request and seek treatment. One [morning at] dusk [a] dragon carried Huáng away [on its back].

11 Early Chinese dragons are nearly always associated with water. The movements of ripples/waves in lakes were sometimes thought to come from dragons. It is occasionally mentioned colloquially that Chinese dragons can also fly but as they need water on their body for comfort, they must fly through the clouds.

Ramsden (2021, 68) explains that the Huángdì clan went by another name: Xuānyuán shì (軒轅氏). This name has two Chinese characters, both exhibiting the wheel radical on the left. The first character is a type of carriage, while the second means the shafts of a wheel. If the Huángdì clan or nation was Indo-European, this highly likely represents a horse-drawn chariot.

The ruling period of Huángdì clan predates the Shang dynasty by a significant margin, yet there is no evidence that the Shang employed chariots in battle (Mair 2003, 168). Even more intriguing is the fact that the Zhou, who succeeded the Shang, effectively utilised horse-drawn chariots in warfare, as evidenced by artifacts such as the Duo You Tripod (see Mair 2003, 165). Scholars generally agree that the chariot was introduced into China through a west-to-east transmission (with West Asia origins). The development of this technology would have required extensive infrastructure, including horse training, chariot construction, suitable clothes (such as trousers), and the training of charioteers. Mair (2003, 166) highlights that archaeozoological evidence of horses only becomes abundant following the Zhou's conquest of the Shang. He further observes that the Zhou are suspected of having non-Sinitic origins.

This brings about important questions concerning the origin of the horse in China, such as, which group brought them to the Yellow River Valley, and for what purpose were they used? In a seminal paper by Mair (2003), all these questions are answered. In this paper, Mair (2003) notes that the procurement of fine horses over the last two millennia for the Chinese has played a central role in nearly all political regimes, with bronze inscriptions from the early first millennium BCE already conveying this message. From as early as the beginning of the twelfth century BCE, it is possible to observe a keen interest from Shang dynasty rulers in relation to their northern neighbours (northern Shaanxi) and their rare horses. Mair (2003, 168–169) highlights evidence indicating that, in Shang society, horses were exclusively reserved for royalty and existed in extremely limited numbers. This implies that the horses of the Shang were not raised locally by them but were instead likely taken or captured from their greatest enemy, the Qiāng.

Ramsden (2021, 34–36), Beckwith (2009, 46), and Mair (2003, 169) all note that there is strong evidence to suggest that the Qiāng were Indo-European in origin. Loewe and Shaughnessy (1999, 908) further explain that the Qiāng were probably horse breeders, because various words describing them also include the Chinese characters for "horse". Ramsden (2021) discusses in depth the connection between the Qiāng, the Zhou royalty, and the fact that they intermarried for generations, while at the

same time conveying that the Huángdì nation and the Zhou royal classes were connected through the name or character Jī (姬). Mair (2003) examines archaeological evidence and proposes that northern and northwestern China had three waves of cultural influx linked to faunal domestication from western Eurasia:

1. Third millennium BCE: Cattle comes first and then goats and sheep
2. Second half of the second millennium BCE: Chariots and horses
3. Second half of first millennium BCE: Horse-riding warriors

From the Chinese point of view, they adopted horses from their enemies like the Qiāng (end of second millennium BCE), began to ride them from the late fourth century BCE, and wanted and needed them for warfare from the second century BCE (Mair 2003, 183).

Tripartite and Dualistic Divining System

Another important point to make that follows on from the hypothesis of Zhou (2006) and Ramsden (2021) is in regard to the divination that took place in the Zhou dynasty. According to Shaughnessy (2022, 85–86), lónggǔ - dragon bones (龍骨) started to show up in the antique markets of China at the end of the nineteenth century. The pieces were eventually traced back to Ānyáng, Hénán (河南), historically the last capital of the Shang dynasty. The core of the《易經》*Yìjīng* (*Classic of Changes*) is a Western Zhou dynasty divination text called the《周易》*Zhōuyì*, which was the product of Zhou culture.[12] The importance of divination in the Zhou dynasty cannot be overestimated. In 1977, archaeologists excavated a large building site at Fèngchú (鳳雛), Qíshān (岐山), Shǎnxī (陝西), in an area referred to as the Zhōuyuán (周原). In one corner of the excavated pit were 16,700 pieces of turtle shell, more than three hundred pieces of ox bone, and three hundred pieces of inscribed turtle shell. The themes behind these pieces resembled activities undertaken by the first Zhou kings (eleventh century BCE)

12 Shaughnessy (2022) makes a clear distinction between the two texts: "The《周易》*Zhōuyì* refers solely to the hexagram and line statements of the text—especially as understood within the context of the Zhou dynasty (1045–249 BCE). The《易經》*Yìjīng,* on the other hand, is the entirety of the received text inclusive of the canonical commentaries, the so-called "Ten Wings" (十翼), especially as understood as a "classic" (經)".

(Shaughnessy 2022, 98). Many of these inscriptions proposed an activity and ended with a prayer, with the subject of healing being a common one. In Shaughnessy's (2022) seminal work, he explains how divination analysis can be divided into four parts (Shaughnessy 2022, 119).

- The "command" (mìng 命) to the turtle, or topic to be divined
- The "crack" (bǔ 卜), which was to be interpreted
- The "oracle" (zhòu 繇), or attempt to put the interpretation into words
- The "prognostication" (zhàn 占), such as "auspicious" (jí 吉) or some variation of that, such as "long-term auspicious" (héng jí 恆吉), "not auspicious" (bù jí 不吉), or "very auspicious" (shén jí 甚吉) (Shaughnessy 2022, 136)

Shaughnessy (2022, 133) explains that the oracle portion of the divination is particularly interesting as its most common format is reminiscent of poetry from ancient China's《詩經》*Shījīng* (*Classic of Poetry*). It is further explained that, although there are different formats, the classic form of a divinatory oracle is of three rhyming four-character phrases. The first phrase describes the crack, and the following couplet relates to the topic of divination. This number system is particularly significant as it resembles the tripartite and dualistic system of the Indo-Europeans. The three examples below of divining as found in ancient Chinese texts convey how Zhou kings used this numbering system and show that divining was not only for kings.

> 《禮記.坊記》子云：善則稱人，過則稱己，則民讓善。《詩》云：考卜惟王，度是鎬京；惟龜正之，武王成之。
>
> [The] Master said, [if it is] good then name [the] person, [if it is] excessive (wrong) then name oneself, then [the] people [will] assist [what is] good. [In the *Classic of*] *Poetry,* [it is] said, only [the] king contemplated, examined [and] divined [the] consideration of capital Hào. Only [the] tortoise-shell [was] proper, [so Zhōu] Wǔ Wáng completed [it] (made it so).

《禮記.曲禮上》卜筮不過三 ，卜筮不相襲。龜為卜，策為筮，卜筮者，先聖王之所以使民信時日。

Bǔ (or bo) [and] shì [should] not pass (be performed more than) three [times and] bǔ [and] shì [should] not mutually overlap (be done together). Turtle-shells are bǔ [and] yarrow stalks are shì. Divination [was used by] early (ancient) shèng[rén]-kings [to] make [the] people trust [the] seasons [and] days.

《禮記.曲禮上》取妻不取同姓；故買妾不知其姓則卜之。

[When] obtaining [a] wife, [do] not get [one with the] same surname. Therefore, [in] purchasing [a] concubine, [if you do] not know her surname, then divine [with turtle shells].

Important Roles in Zhou Dynasty China and the Idea of an Indo-European Mage

In the time of the Zhou dynasty, the wū - mage or shaman (巫), bǔ (or bo) - diviner (大卜, 卜師, 卜人), and yī - physician (醫), among others, played a significant role in royal duties and the king's courts. The wū were in charge of many differing duties.[13] While the roles of the yī and bǔ and the evolution of their function/s can be quite well defined, the wū's role during and after the Zhou dynasty is more complex.

13 According to Boileau (2002, 359), functions of the wū can be determined from the《周禮》*Zhōulǐ*. One important point to make is that within this text, there is no mention of the character for a male shaman - xí (覡), but only the male (nán)wū (男巫) and female (nǚ)wū (女巫). The male wū's role was as follows (Boileau 2002, 359): In charge of sacrifices to the deities of mountains and rivers. In the winter ceremony, the wū made offerings (or shot arrows) in the great temple hall as a type of exorcism. In the spring, they were in charge of protecting the country from certain types of disease. When the king offered condolences, the wū together with invocators preceded him. The female wū's functions were (Boileau 2002, 359): Being in charge of ablutions and anointing during exorcism activities. Dancing for drought. When the queen offered condolences, they would with the invocators precede her. In times of great calamities of the state, they prayed, sang and wailed.

In summary, it seems as though there were two different types of wū, with highly differing functions. Wū therefore seems to be a generic term incorporating different types of people/functions. When searching for the use of this wū (巫) character in early Chinese texts, one of the most common uses is with dancing. In this case, the wū seems to have a strong affinity with something similar to the Siberian Shaman.[14]

Both the wū and the yī sometimes overlap each other regarding medical duties and treatment; the wū healers (巫醫) are clearly different from the yī. Below are examples discussing the differing roles of the wū and yī.

> 《淮南子.說山訓》病者寢席，醫之用針石，巫之用糈藉，所以救鈞也。貍頭愈鼠，雞頭已瘺，虻散積血，斫木愈齲，此類之推者也。
>
> [The] sick [patient is lying on a] sleeping mat, the yī uses stone needles, the wū uses sacrificial rice (polished rice offerings) [and a ritual] straw mat [used in sacrifices], so [they both can] rescue [the] patient. [The] head [of a type of wild] cat [can] treat [a] rat [disease], [a] rooster's head [can] eliminate fistulas, [the] gadfly [can] scatter blood accumulations, chopped wood treats cavities (?), these kinds [can be] chosen.

For other examples, see:《史記.列傳.扁鵲倉公列傳》,《後漢書. 列傳.桓譚馮衍列傳上》and for more examples on the wū and their connection to healing and medicines, see appendix 1.

Both the wū and the yī were also connected to the king and royal courts.

> 《禮記.禮運》王，前巫而後史，卜筮瞽侑皆在左右，王中心無為也，以守至正。
>
> [At the] front [of the] king [was the] wū and behind [the] historian/s. [The] diviners,

14 For more on the Siberian Shaman, see Ramsden (2022a).

musicians [and] assistants[15] [were] all at [the] left [and] right. [The] king [was in the] middle doing nothing (wúwéi), [except] abiding [in the] most (complete) uprightness (correctness).

For more examples, see: 《禮記.檀弓下》and《禮記.喪大記》.

The yī used herbal decoctions and needles, as opposed to the wū, who did not use needles. Below are examples of textual references on how the yī treated people and their connection to the royal family.

《論衡. 率性》古貴良醫者，能知篤劇之病所從生起，而以針藥治而已之。

[In] ancient [times a] precious [and] good yī could know [where] serious [and] severe diseases arose from, and [used] needles [and herbal] medicine [to] treat [patients], that is it.

《孟子.公孫丑下》王使人問疾，醫來。

[The] king made [a] person (messenger) inquire [about the] illness [and the] yī came.

《禮記.曲禮下》君有疾，飲藥，臣先嘗之。親有疾，飲藥，子先嘗之。醫不三世，不服其藥。

[When the] monarch has [an] illness, [and is required to] drink [herbal] medicine, [the] minister first tastes [it]. [When a] parent has [an] illness, [the] child (son) first tastes [it]. [When an] yī [has] not [had a family practise of medicine for more than] three generations, the medicine [should] not [be] taken.

15 This character yòu (侑), could also refer to comfort people, i.e., people that encourage eating and drinking but can also just mean assistants. Gǔ (瞽) can also mean blind or blind musicians.

《墨子.非攻中》今有醫於此，和合其祝藥之于天下之有病者而藥之，萬人食此，若醫四五人得利焉，猶謂之非行藥也。

Now this [is like an] yī here [too], [they] combine a (single) medicine [to] apply [for all] under [the] sky [who] have [an] illness [as] medicinal (treatment). [If] ten thousand (all) people eat (take) this [medicine], [it seems] like [the] yī [would] benefit four [or] five people, still [it is] not called [an] effective medicine.

The wū were commonly separated into male and female wū, especially regarding the wū that seem to be related to shamanism.

《漢書. 志.郊祀志.郊祀志上》在男曰覡，在女曰巫 ...

For [a] male [they are called] xí, for [a] female [they are] called wū ...

For more examples, see: 《風俗通義.祀典.禊》and《國語.楚語下》.

In other places in Classical Chinese texts, an immortal wūxiān (巫仙) is also mentioned. The character combination of wūzhù (巫祝) is common and seems to mean the shaman-like wū. Wūgǔ (巫蠱) is one the most frequent combinations of characters seen in ancient Chinese texts related to the wū. Gǔ (蠱) is sometimes thought to be a kind of toxic insect that is the sole survivor from being put in a box with other poisonous insects. In the context of the shaman, wūgǔ probably means to cast a spell (or curse), which would commonly result in a psychological illness. Most of these versions of the wū seem to have an affinity with the Siberian shaman in the way they are involved in "talk", rainmaking, drumming/dance and mysterious abilities (see appendix 2).

To complicate matters, wū is also used as a name. It is possible to learn the origins of this name from《姓氏考略》*Xìngshì Kǎolüè*. Wū is also a component of several characters, such as wū (誣) (with the "speech radical" 言), which means to deceive. Shì (筮) (with the "bamboo radical" 竹) refers to the yarrow stalks used in Zhou dynasty divination. Líng (靈) with the "cloud radical" 雨 and "three mouths"

□—this character has many meanings but can mean spirit. Yī (毉) is a variant character for yī (醫) — it is a rare character and means physician.

While there is nearly no doubt that shamans were part of the wū category, there does appear to be a second type of wū playing a more central role as something similar to an official. For example, Wūxián (巫咸). One potential controversy with these characters is that they are a name of a person, thereby not necessarily representing a category of wū. Of particular interest in relation to Wūxián is that he is mentioned as being a type of astronomer and a high ranking official, since he manages the king's affairs.

To further investigate this second type of wū, in the《說文解字》*Shuōwén Jiězì* it is possible to find some answers. Firstly, wū appears to be described as a category, secondly it illustrates the female dancing wū, thirdly it explains that the first out of all the wū was Wūxián. The《說文解字》*Shuōwén Jiězì,* therefore, appears to describe two different types of wū. Through investigation of ancient Chinese literature, it can be noted that the wū tribe started during the time of Huángdì with Wūpéng (巫彭), which seems to be the family that Wūxián came from. The Wū family is particularly related to medicine and divining with yarrow stalks. In their case, there is no mention of Siberian shaman-like practices.

> 《莊子.外篇.天運》巫咸袑曰：來吾語女。天有六極五常，帝王順之則治，逆之則凶。
>
> Wūxián Shào[16] said, "come I [will] tell you. [The] sky has six extremes [and] five norms. [When the] emperor follows [these], then [all is well] managed, [if the emperor runs] counter [to these], then [there are] bad omens".

16 In regard to this, the name Wūxián Shào, the Shào appears to be in reference to what the wū were called in the Shang dynasty (巫咸袑：商代神巫，名袑). The fact that the wū were used in both the Shang and Zhou royal courts is consistent with archaeological discoveries.

《史記.本紀.殷本紀》巫咸治王家有成。

Wūxián managed [the] king's household (affairs) successfully.

《說文解字.卷六.巫部》巫: 祝也。女能事無形，以舞降神者也。象人兩褎舞形。與工同意。古者巫咸初作巫。凡巫之屬皆从巫。

[A wū is a] zhù. [These are] females [who] can engage [in] no form [and] dance, [so a] spirit descends. [This] resembles (or this character resembles) [a] person [with] two sleeves dancing [in one] form. [With] gōng (工) [it has the] same meaning. [In] ancient [times] Wūxián [was the] first [to] be [a] wū. [Therefore], all wū [belong to this] category [of wū, as] all wū come [from this].

《姓氏考略》黃帝時巫彭作醫，此為巫氏之始。

[In the] times [of] Huángdì, Wūpéng did medicine, [from] this the wū clan started.

Further textual references regarding Wūpéng and Wūxián can be seen below. The first two examples explain the name of their home mountain, the relationship these wū have to medicine, and, potentially, the origin of the Chinese character líng (靈), in terms of how it got its meaning.

《山海经·大荒西经·靈山十巫》有靈山，巫咸，巫即，巫盼，巫彭，巫姑，巫真，巫礼，巫抵，巫谢，巫罗十巫，从此升降，百藥爰在。

[In] Língshān [there] is Wūxián, Wūjí, Wūpàn, Wūpéng, Wūgū, Wūzhēn, Wūlǐ, Wūdǐ, Wūxiè [and] Wūluō, ten [different] wū. From here, [they] ascend (to the sky or) descend (to the earth), [and this is where] one hundred (all) [different types of herbal] medicine like [to] be.

《说文解字》记载：靈，巫也，以玉事神。

[It is] recorded: Líng [is the same as] wū; [they use] jade [to] attend [the] spirits.

《吕氏春秋·卷十七·审分览·勿躬》：巫彭作醫，巫咸作筮 ...

Wūpéng did medicine, Wūxián did [divining with] yarrow stalks.[17]

These wū who are not related to the Siberian Shaman are of particular interest because they correlate to a paper written by Victor Mair (1990a) entitled: *Old Sinitic *Mʸag, Old Persian Maguš, and English "Magician"* and another paper called *Questions on the Origins of Writing Raised by the Silk Road* by Tsung-i (1991). Both these papers discuss a discovery at a Western Zhou dynasty site in Zhōuyuán, in which a cross-like engraving (similar to the iron-cross except with only straight lines) was carved into a mollusk-shell depiction of a human head having features suggesting it was Caucasian in race and conveying the figure might have been a wū (Tsung-i 1991, 4). This symbol is significant because the same one can be found on pottery in West Asia, and also because the head was wearing a pointed hat, associated with being Tocharian (Tsung-i 1991, 4).

Mair (1990a) describes the two mollusk-shell carved-head figures found in Zhōuyuán as unmistakably Caucasian and Europoid in features, with one having the incised cross-like symbol engraved on top of its head. Both heads have been dated to the early eighth century and were not thought to be Saka in origin. Mair (1990a, 30–31) points out that he found "strikingly similar" bone carvings on a human head unearthed in Ānyáng, which was Shang and not Zhou, suggesting "there can be little doubt that this Shang piece and the two Western Zhou pieces belong to the same category of residents in China". Mair (1990a, 31) differs from Tsung-i (1991, 4) in that he believes the head coverings

17 In pre-Qin and Han texts, characters for divining with yarrow stalks (卜筮) appear to be much more common than divining with turtle shells (卜龜). As seen above, the reason for this may be because the Wū family started using this method of divining with yarrow stalks first, and only at a later date did the turtle shell divining arise.

and time period are the same as those found on the head of an Aramean portrayed in an Urartian relief at Zincirli in the middle to late Hittite style (832–810 BCE).

Mair (1990a, 34–35) goes on to discuss how these Caucasians may have come to arrive in China and further explains that the translation of "shaman" for wū is incorrect, because the word shaman represents a religious system practised by the peoples of Siberia and centred around trance. According to Mair (1990a), the word "mage" would be a better translation as it represents the function and role they played in the Zhou court more succinctly. In the case of the wū or mage, they were closely associated with the courts and rulers and were responsible for divination, astrology, prayer, and healing with medicines. Mair (1990a, 36–39) believes that the Old Sinitic word for wū and English mage both derive from the same Indo-Iranian "magus" and that the Magi were not only Zoroastrian priests but also administered tasks and worked for various peoples and religious groups. One such example is the Magi of the Bible, relating to the birth of Jesus and the three gifts.[18]

Further analysing the cross symbol found on these Magi in China, Mair (1990a, 40) suggests that this exact symbol can be found in Chinese as the earliest form of the character for wū (巫). Mair (1990a, 43) goes onto the postulate (twenty-six years before Zhou [2006] and thirty-one years before the *Indo-Europeans in the Ancient Yellow River Valley* [Ramsden, 2021]) was published, that for an Indo-European mage to be present in China proper during the Shang and Zhou dynasties, where they likely held important positions, would seem odd if there were no other such instances or ties. Mair (1990a, 43–47) finishes his discussion on the subject by explaining the extensive linguistic evidence for Sinitic and Indo-European cultural exchange from at least the Late Neolithic.

18 The fact that this other type of wū (mage-like) was involved in astronomy, medicine, ceremony, and managing the king's affairs is extremely important as it suggests a person similar in function to the Zoroastrian Magi. In the writing on Pythagoras, we learn that he studied numbers from the Phoenicians, astronomy from the Chaldeans, spent twenty-two years in Egypt studying astronomy and geometry, and also spent twelve years in Babylon studying with the Magi, where he learnt arithmetic, music and especially "the most perfect worship of the Gods (Guthrie 1987, 61)". This last function of the Magi, regarding the perfect worship of the God/s, fits in line with the function of the wū as seen in Chinese texts above and those mentioned by Mair (1990a).

BREAKDOWN PERIOD AND THE EMERGENCE OF NEW PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Throughout early history, self-help and fictional story-telling texts have commonly been sold as propaganda or promotional material, used as tools to amass followers for a new political regime or religious/philosophical movement. This can be seen extensively in both Chinese and Indian literature. In China for example, it appears as though dàojiào - religious Daoism (道教) arose as a response to the arrival of Buddhism (Knauer 2006, 90–91). Within the religious Daoist compendium there are a large number of texts that discuss the fictional lives of famous Daoist immortals. In these there is a recurrent theme in which a Daoist is portrayed as being more spiritually advanced, when compared to their Buddhist counterparts in both knowledge and cultivation practices.

The *Dàodéjīng*, a well-known Chinese philosophical text, was among the many philosophies that were sold to rulers as part of "how to govern a state" literature, likely compiled and/or written down during the Warring States period (475–221 BCE). In the case of the *Dàodéjīng*, the shèngrén was used as the main example of an exemplar figure for rulers and individuals to model themselves on. Just as the priests of the Vedic religion were responsible for maintaining order over chaos but lost their seat of power with Alexander the Great's invasion—forcing them to reinvent themselves—the wū of the Zhou dynasty (both shamans and mages) may have similarly lost their significance as the dynasty fell, unable to foresee or prevent its collapse.

From this, a "new" form of philosophy emerged (Daoism), where the shèngrén took centre stage, and changed from the likely earlier idea of him as a capable ruler, to become instead a more philosophically inclined, virtuous person,[19] whereby new literature, such as the *Dàodéjīng* was "sold" to

19 In the *Dàodéjīng*, the shèngrén is an exemplar figure of someone who has embraced the Dao. The key point is that he is a person that both the rulers and commoners should model themselves on. Within the *Dàodéjīng* he is described as follows (Ramsden, 2022b, 167): 1. He uses the concept of wúwéi (chapter 2, line 3; chapter 26, line 2; chapter 47, line 3; chapter 63, line 3; chapter 64, line 5). 2. He teaches others by being an example (chapter 2, line 3). 3. He treats people like straw dogs in the way he lets nature take its course (chapter 5, line 1). 4. He does not live for the self (chapter 7, line 2). 5. He does not live his life by getting attached to the desires that arise from fulfilling the five senses (chapter 12, line 6). 6. He holds onto the one (chapter 22, line 1). 7. He is always helping the people (chapter 26, line 2). 8. He does not harm people (chapter 28, line

the public and rulers. This literature not only conveys how an individual should act in accordance with nature but also how a leader should govern a state, based on principles found in nature. Whether or not the concept of the Daoist shèngrén was a new idea or not, there is clear evidence that the *Dàodéjīng* went against the norm of the time, where the shèngrén was nearly always conveyed as being related to capable ancient rulers, such as Yáo (堯), Shùn (舜) and the early Zhou kings. These capable shèngrén-kings were experts in ceremony, ran a state/country, gave the people music, were highly cultivated, and followed the changes of the sky and the earth to best govern a country (see appendix 3 for further details). The new Daoist literature, and especially the *Dàodéjīng*[20], changed this, whereby the shèngrén was no longer related to a shèngrén-king. In the case of the *Dàodéjīng*, the shèngrén is not only someone for a ruler to model himself on but more importantly, someone for the average person to take as an exemplar figure to emulate. In another piece of important Daoist literature, the *Huángdì Nèijīng*, the shèngrén is described as being a great doctor.[21]

The earliest version of the *Dàodéjīng,* written on bamboo slips, was found in a tomb near the town of Guōdiàn (郭店) in Jīngmén (荊门), Húběi (湖北), and dated to approximately 300 BCE. This would mean the text was likely composed during the collapse of the Zhou dynasty, contemporary with the

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4; chapter 60, line 3; chapter 66, line 3). 9. He gets rid of extremes, extravagances and excesses (chapter 29, line 5). 10. He does not stand out from other people (chapter 49, line 1). 11. He helps people to be natural and simple (chapter 49, line 4; chapter 64, line 7). 12. He does not interfere (chapter 57, line 3). 13. He follows the principles of wúwéi (chapter 57, line 3; chapter 64, line 5). 14. He is balanced in his actions (chapter 58, line 4). 15. He takes things to be difficult, so in the end, they are not (chapter 63, line 4). 16. He has no desires (chapter 64, line 7). 17. He does not stand out as something special (chapter 70, line 6). 18. He has no sickness (chapter 71, line 3). 19. He is not boastful (chapter 72, line 4). 20. He understands the difficulties of life (chapter 73, line 3).

20 Zhuāngzi still spoke about the shèngrén-kings.

《莊子. 雜篇.天下》禹，大聖也，而形勞天下也如此。

Yu [was a] great shèng[rén], and [thus] physically fatigued [his] body [for all] under [the] sky [in] this way.

21《黃帝內經.素問.疏五過論》故曰：聖人之治病也，必知天地陰陽四時經紀五藏六府雌雄表裏刺灸砭石毒藥所主，從容人事，以明經道，貴賤貧富，各異品理，問年少長，勇怯之理，審於分部，知病本始，八正九候，診必副矣。

Therefore [it is] said: [When the] shèngrén treats disease, [he] must know [the] sky, earth, yin [and] yang, [the] four times (seasons), jīngjì, five zàng, six fǔ ...

Warring States period and after the time of Kǒngzǐ - Confucius (孔子). This Warring States time is particularly significant as it would have been a period of great change and upheaval, when a dynasty that had lasted for hundreds of years collapsed. During this time, the entire country was rife with war, political structures were in a state of flux, and, more than likely, many older cultural norms were disappearing and being replaced with new ones.

This allowed for the emergence of many new schools of thinking and philosophy. As so often in history, times of great transformation (commonly during or after war) were marked with significant change that sometimes permitted the publishing of a vast amount of new literature across a broad range of subjects, where each school vies for its political and societal dominance.[22]

The *Dàodéjīng* appears to be part of one of these schools, where it presents its novel Daoist thought and what would become the Huánglǎo - Yellow Old (黃老) tradition. Another school of thought which gained much momentum is now known as Confucianism. Both these philosophies of thought were novel for their time but still used earlier ideas from the Zhou dynasty. Interestingly, while they are remarkably different, they also have many similarities.

One of the core philosophies that permeates many early Chinese texts that came out of this Warring States period (featured heavily in both Daoism and Confucianism) is the idea of living in accordance with nature, i.e., following the seasons. This seems particularly odd, as why would it be necessary for people living in large urban centres to structure their lives around living with the seasons? A nomad, however, would probably consider the principle to be the most fundamental requirement because this is what survival depends on. Another similarity found in many of these texts from this time period is the idea and in-depth discussion (albeit from different angles) of the shèngrén.

After the breakdown of the Zhou, it appears as though the wū no longer had the same standing in politics and played a substantially less significant role, if any at all. The reason for this observation is that most of the material related to them is connected to the Zhou dynasty, after which they appear

22 While it is up for scholarly debate whether it actually occurred, an example of these schools of thought vying for political and societal dominance is the life story of Kǒngzǐ, and in-particular how he ordered the execution of his competitor at the time (Shǎozhèng Mǎo - 少正卯), as soon as he gained the power to do so with his appointment as Minister of Crime.《荀子.宥坐》孔子為魯攝相，朝七日而誅少正卯。Kǒngzǐ served [as the] regent (or Minister of Crime) [for] Lǔ, [and] after seven days [in office, he] executed Shǎozhèng Mǎo.

much less frequently in Chinese texts. The diviners also seem to take a much less important role. Another significant and obvious change is that now the yī take centre stage and the wū markedly lose their standing as healers. This is extremely obvious with the emergence of the *Huángdì Nèijīng*.[23] This text uses early Daoist ideas, such as taking the shèngrén not as an ancient capable ruler, but as someone who is a highly capable yī.

In this period of cultural breakdown, the shèngrén is portrayed in two different ways following opposite directions. Firstly, within the new Daoist literature, he is an exemplary figure for both a ruler and individual to model themselves on. Secondly, the shèngrén is not recognised as someone an individual can be like, but rather as one of the great and capable leaders of ancient times. Daoism and Confucianism differ on the shèngrén idea but are very similar with regard to other concepts. For example, the teaching of wúwéi, commonly thought to be the cornerstone philosophy of the *Dàodéjīng,* is also frequently used in Confucian writing. It was used by all three of the great Confucian philosophers of antiquity: Kǒngzǐ (孔子), Mèngzǐ - Mencius (孟子) and Xúnzǐ (荀子). It was used by Confucian scholars not only in a philosophical sense but also in a way to describe how nature functions.[24]

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23 In preface of the《傷寒論》*Shānghán Lùn* (*Treatise on Cold Damage*), compiled or written at the end of the Han dynasty, the wū are described as incompetent healers and something akin to a modern-day witch doctor.

怪當今居世之士，曾不留神醫藥 ... 惟名利是務 ... 卒然遭邪風之氣，嬰極之疾，患及至，而方震栗。降志屈節，欽望巫祝，告窮歸天，束手受敗。

[It is] strange [to me that] now[adays, this] generation [of] scholars (or learned men) [do] not keep [their] spirit (pay attention) [to] medicine [and] herbs ... [Instead, they] only [seek] fame [and] benefit (fortune) as [their] business ... [When they then] suddenly encounter evil wind qì (a pathogenic factor), [and develop an] extreme illness [and] great suffering, [they] shake [and] tremble. Lowering [their] ideals [and] forfeiting [their] integrity, [they] venerate [and] look [to the] wūzhù, [whereby they] declare [the] end [is near and they will soon] return [to the] sky (die). [With] tied hands, [they] accept defeat.

24《論語.衛靈公》子曰：無為而治者，其舜也與，夫何為哉，恭己正南面而已矣。

[The] Master said, "[who could use] wúwéi [for] managing, it [is] Shùn [who could do this], is it not. What [was] done!? He properly (with uprightness) faced south, that was it".

《孟子.盡心上》孟子曰：無為其所不為，無欲其所不欲，如此而已矣。

Mèngzǐ said, "wúwéi it [is] not doing [what you do not want to do], no desire, it [is] not desiring [what you do not want to desire], in this way, that is it".

《荀子.解蔽》故仁者之行道也，無為也；聖人之行道也，無彊也。

The *Dàodéjīng* is a text that was produced during major political upheaval and the collapse of the Zhou dynasty. The author suspects that just as with other texts of the time, there was likely considerable overlap and mixing of more ancient Zhou dynasty ideas with contemporary ones.

According to the author's analysis, there are many aspects of the *Dàodéjīng* that could potentially be linked to the Zhou dynasty's Indo-European nomadic culture. Therefore the key features that make up the Indo-European identity—such as the duality and tripartite systems, chariots, horses, and a Sky-God—should also be visible in the *Dàodéjīng*. Below is a summary of some core Indo-European cultural norms found within the *Dàodéjīng.*

CORE INDO-EUROPEAN CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS FOUND IN THE *DÀODÉJĪNG*

Dualistic System

From the start to the end of the *Dàodéjīng*, it is possible to observe dualistic ideas to a point where dualism is even used as a sentence structure. For example, in the *Dàodéjīng* the characters for the sky and earth are commonly used in tandem, and nearly all concepts are represented in a dualistic manner, including the core philosophy of the text: Wúwéi ér wú bù wéi - no-action, so nothing is not done (無為而無不為).

Chapter two of the *Dàodéjīng* provides one of many examples of this dualistic philosophy, in this case, conjoined opposites.

(Xúnzǐ:) Therefore, benevolence [is] walking the Dao, [which is] wúwéi, [the] shèngrén [also] walks the Dao, [so] nothing [is] forced.

《孔子家語. 大昏解》孔子曰: ... 無為而物成，是天道也 ...

Kǒngzǐ said: "Wúwéi and things become (come to fruition), [this] is [the] Sky's Dao".

《道德經》故，有無相生，難易相成，長短相形，高下相傾，音聲相和，前後相隨。

Therefore, [to] have [and] not [have] mutually create, difficult [and] easy mutually become, long [and] short mutually shape, high [and] low mutually lean, voice [and] sound mutually harmonise, front [and] back mutually follow.

Chapter thirty-six is another example, in this case of dualistic extremes: When one side reaches its zenith, it turns to become its opposite.

《道德經》將欲歙之，必固張之，將欲弱之，必固強之，將欲廢之，必固興之，將欲奪之，必固與之。是謂微明。

[What you] desire [to be] inhaled (contracted) must first [be] opened (expanded), [what you] desire [to be] weakened must first [be] strengthened, [what you] desire [to be] abandoned must first rise [up], [what you] desire [to be] seized must first [be] given. [This] is called [the] faint brightness.

Chapter eleven discusses the function of wú - emptiness (無)[25] and its yǒu - use (有), and how they mutually complement each other.

《道德經》三十幅共一轂，當其無，有車之用。

Thirty spokes together [make a] single hub, by its emptiness, [the] vehicle has use.

25 The character for wú (無) within the *Dàodéjīng* can mean emptiness as seen in chapters eleven and twenty-eight (wújí - 無極) but can also mean no or non as seen with non/no-action - wúwéi (無為).

In chapter forty-two, there is a direct mention of yīn (陰) and yáng (陽), which is a dualistic science based on the observation of the seasons from which wǔxíng - Five Movements (or phases) (五行), Chinese medicine, and other traditional Chinese arts were developed.

> 《道德經》萬物負陰，而抱陽，沖氣以為和。
>
> [The] ten thousand things carry yin [on their back] and hold (or embrace) yang [in their arms, the] mixing [of] qì [is what makes] the harmony.

Tripartite System

In chapter forty-two, there is mention of a tripartite system as seen in one of the most famous lines of the *Dàodéjīng*.

> 《道德經》道生一，一生二，二生三，三生萬物。
>
> [The] Dao produces one, one produces two, two produces three [and] three produces [the] ten thousand things.

This one, two, three follows the trinity model of the sky, earth and man. In the《太上老君中經.卷上》*Tàishàng Lǎojūn Zhōngjīng,* it says: The sky is one, the earth is two and man is three. This likely has a connection to the Zhou dynasty trigrams of the *Yìjīng,* where one solid horizontal line (yang) splits into two horizontal lines (yin), and then these, when combined in different variations, make up the three lines of each of the eight trigrams.

HORSES AND CHARIOTS

If the *Dàodéjīng* was a text related to the Indo-European Zhou, it would have to contain at least some references to horses and chariots. In analysing this point, there are two chapters of interest. In chapter forty-six, two types of horses are mentioned. The first is zǒumǎ (走馬), or galloping horses, which could also be translated as "fine horses". The second is róngmǎ (戎馬). This róng comes from Xīróng, which was the area of China where Indo-European tribes were known to live (Ramsden 2021, 32–33).

> 《道德經》天下有道，卻走馬以粪，天下無道，戎馬生於郊。
>
> [When everything that is] underneath [the] sky has Dao, galloping horses (fine horses) [go back to being used for their] dung, [when everything that is] underneath [the] sky [does] not [have the] Dao, róng (war) horses [give] birth on [the] outskirts [of the city].

In chapter sixty-two, the Son of the Sky (another Zhou dynasty concept) is mentioned with his three ministers and four chariot horses. In the Mǎwángduī versions A and B, sì 駟 (a team of four horses) is sì 四 (four) (Ramsden 2022b, 143). While there is no direct mention of a "chariot", this character for a team of four horses is understood to mean four chariot horses.

> 《道德經》人之不善，何弃之有。故，立天子，置三公，雖有拱璧以先駟馬，不如坐進此道。
>
> The people [that are] not good, why have [them] abandoned? Therefore, [when] establishing [the] Son [of the] Sky [and putting in] place [the] three ministers, although [a] large flat round ornament of jade with a hole at the centre [is] offered before (or preceding) [the] four [chariot] horses, [it is] not like sitting [down and] moving towards (or kneeling down and presenting) the Dao.

Sky-God (天)

One key characteristic by which we recognise Indo-Europeans historically is their reverence for a Sky-God. In many old Chinese texts, i.e., pre-Han dynasty, the character for sky is combined with the following:

- Tiānmìng - 天命 (Mandate of the Sky)
- Tiānzǐ - 天子 (Son of the Sky)
- Tiāndì - 天地 (sky and earth)
- Tiānxià - 天下 (under the sky)

By analysing the way in which the sky character is used within the *Dàodéjīng*, certain nuances of the text are brought to light. There are three core ideas related to the tiān - sky (天) character and its use in the *Dàodéjīng*.

- Firstly, within the *Dàodéjīng,* the sky character is used in a way where it is something related to natural phenomena.
- Secondly, the character is also used in a way to describe something that existed before it.
- Thirdly, the character is used in a way to represent the sky as something akin to a God.

These three different uses of the character for sky within the text may relate back to early periods of the Zhou dynasty, as they do appear to follow Indo-European cultural traits in some places. The use of sky in the way indicating that something came before it can be found in chapter one.

> 《道德經》無名天地之始，有名萬物之母。
>
> Nameless, the start (or beginning) [of the] sky [and the] earth. [To] have [a] name, the mother [of] ten thousand things.

In chapter five, this use is reinforced as there is something not related to the sky and earth that created everything (probably the Dao).

> 《道德經》天地之間，其猶橐籥乎，虛，而不屈，動，而愈出。
>
> Between the sky [and the] earth, it [is] like [a] bellows. Empty, yet [it is] not exhausted, moving, yet more [goes] out.

In chapter twenty-five, this idea is once again reinforced but more clearly, as the reader learns of something existing before everything.

> 《道德經》有物混成，先天地生，寂兮，寥兮，獨立不改，周行，而不殆，可以為天下母。
>
> [There was some]thing mixed [and] becoming, [it was] born before [the] sky [and the] earth, still (or silent) ah, silent (or empty) ah, standing alone [with] no change, moving cyclically, yet [with] no danger (end), [it] can [be] the mother [of all that is] underneath [the] sky.

This idea of something existing before the sky is especially important from an Indo-European perspective. Ramsden (2022c, 31–32) describes the Dao as using a concept equivalent to one used by the Indo-European Zoroastrians and Indo-European peoples of the Vedic period. In this case, the Dao, ṛta and aṣa are all one related concept with varying names across three different regions. The argument for this hypothesis is as follows:

- It is fairly well established and accepted that ṛta is equivalent to the Zoroastrian concept of aṣa.
- It should be noted that the Dao is the core concept presented in the *Dàodéjīng*. This same argument could also be put forward for the idea that ṛta permeates all early Rigvedic thought, as it is the principle of cosmic order. There is a strong correlation between the idea of Dao presented in the *Dàodéjīng* and that of ṛta, where ṛta can be described as: the principle of cosmic order that ensures the integrated functioning of the natural order, divine order, human order, and sacrificial order (Holdredge 2004, 215).

- The Dao, ṛta, and aṣa all have a tripartite function.[26]
- The Vedic ṛta also came before the gods: Ṛta was not created or willed by any being or beings, the gods or any other above them. It existed before them but became known to them. (Brown 1961, 373)
- A powerful correlation can be made between the Dao and ṛta as they are both similar to nature, the natural world, nature's regulation, nature's order, and nature's way.

Throughout the *Dàodéjīng,* there are many chapters that support the idea that the sky character is more than just a natural phenomenon. In chapter eight of the later Wáng Bì version, three characters are changed from the earlier Mǎwángduī version.

Wáng Bì version:

> 《道德經》居善地，心善淵，**與善仁**，言善信，正善治，事善能，動善時。
>
> [A] good dwelling [is with the] earth, [a] good heart [is an] abyss, good partaking (dealings) [is] benevolent, good talk [is] trustworthy, good uprightness (governance) [is done with] good management, affairs [are handled with] good abilities, [and] activities [are done with] good timing.

Mǎwángduī Version B:

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26 Ramsden (2022c, 31): Aṣa (Zoroastrian); earth, atmosphere, and heaven (Ara 2006, 107). Society was based on three groups; āthravan (priest), rathaēštār (one who stands in the chariot) and vāstryō-fšuyant (husbandman) (Ara 2006, 106). The concept of ṛta has three key features; gati (continuous movement or change), saṅghaṭana (a system based on interdependence of parts) and niyati (inherent order of interdependence and movement) (Sharma 1990, 16), while society was based on; Brāhmaṇa (priest), kṣatra, (warrior) and vaiśya (herder-cultivators). The Dao also followed tripartition:《道德經.四十二章》道生一，一生二，二生三，三生萬物。 *Dàodéjīng*, chapter forty-two: [The] Dao produces one, one produces two, two produces three [and] three produces [the] ten thousand things.

《道德經》居善地，心善淵，予善天，言善信，正善治，事善能，動善時。

> In the Mǎwángduī version B, yǔshànré 與善仁 (good partaking [is] benevolent) is yǔshàntiān 予善天 (good giving [is like the] sky). In the Mǎwángduī version A, these characters are omitted.

This is an interesting change, as it seems to suggest that the sky is something more God-like. The only other explanation for the sky being "good" is that it gives sunshine and rain.

In chapter nine, there is the concept of the Dao of the sky. Once again, is this in reference to the sky as a natural phenomenon or something else? Also, how can the sky have a Dao, as the Dao is something separate from it? One possible answer is that, in this case, the Dao means way or method.

《道德經》功遂身退，天之道。

> [After a] deed [is] satisfied (finished), [the] body withdraws, [this is] the Dao [of the] sky.

The characters for Tiān zhī Dao - the Dao [of the] Sky (天之道) appear in chapter nine, line 5; chapter seventy-three, line four; chapter seventy-seven, lines one and two, and chapter eighty-one, line five, suggesting the concept's importance. In chapter sixteen, it is said that to be kingly is to be like the sky, and to be like the sky is to be like the Dao. The Zhou kings required the Mandate of the Sky to rule. This mandate makes the most sense if the sky is seen as a God. In the *Ṛgveda* and other Indo-European religious groups, favour from the Sky-God was needed to rule and was fundamental to success. It is interesting that as later Daoist texts primarily discuss the Dao, and there is less mention of this sky. Is it possible that the *Dàodéjīng* represents a transitional text at the end of the late Zhou dynasty, as the Zhou kings lost the Mandate of the Sky, and there is a move away from the idea of the Sky-God to that of the Dao?

Chapter sixty-seven describes the sky as something God-like in the way it provides parental affection.

《道德經》天將救之，以慈衛之。

[When the] sky wants [to] save, [it] guards (or protects) [with] parental affection.

Chapter sixty-eight below is particularly intriguing as it may suggest the loss of worship for this Sky-God in the Warring States period. If the translation below is changed slightly, it would read: … "joining the Sky-God of old".

《道德經》是謂不爭之德，是謂用人之力，是謂配天古之極。

[This] is called the virtue [of] non-contention, [it] is [also] called using the strength [of] people (others), [and it] is [also] called the utmost (pinnacle) [of] joining [the] sky [of] old.

Chapter seventy-three is another example of the sky character potentially representing a Sky-God.

《道德經》天之所惡，孰知其故。 是以，聖人猶難之。

[What] the sky [finds] evil, who knows the why? So, [the] shèngrén also [has] difficulties [in understanding why].

Chapter seventy-three is interesting in the way the sky character is discussed in some detail. Here again, there is a comingling of this idea of the Dao and the sky.

《道德經》天之道，不爭，而善勝，不言，而善應，不召，而自來，繟然，而善謀。

> The Dao [of the] sky [does] not contend, yet [it is] good [at] defeating, [it does] not speak, yet [it is] good [at] responding, [it does] not summon, yet [it] comes itself, [it is] relaxed, yet good [at] planning.

Line five of chapter seventy-three appears to suggest the sky as something like a God.

> 《道德經》天網恢恢，疏，而不失。

> [The] net [of the] sky [is] vast, [it] scatters but [does] not neglect [anything].

Chapter seventy-nine uses this comingled idea of the sky and Dao, and again portrays the sky as God-like. Parallels with the *Ṛgveda* are interesting as Indra was commonly invited to sit with the priests and kings, whereby favours were asked and praise poetry was given.

> 《道德經》天道無親，常與善人。

> [The] sky's Dao [has] no relatives (preferential treatment), [and is] constantly with good people.

The last two lines of the *Dàodéjīng* convey that the Dao of the sky does not harm, just as the shèngrén's Dao does not contend. The final lines of the *Dàodéjīng* appear to suggest the sky as something more than a natural phenomenon and that the cornerstone philosophy for rulers and commoners is wúwéi.

> 《道德經》天之道利，而不害。

> The Dao [of the] sky benefits [all] and [does] not harm [any].

> 《道德經》聖人之道為，而不爭。
>
> [The] Dào [of the] sage acts, yet [does] not contend.

In the *Dàodéjīng*, of particular interest are the uses of the sky character in the following ways:

- Tiān zhī dào - 天之道 (The Dao of the Sky)
- Tiān gǔ zhī jí - 天古之極 (The Pinnacle Ancient Sky)
- Tiān wǎng - 天網 (The Sky's Net or Net of the Sky)
- Tiān dào - 天道 (The Sky's Dao)

These four ways of using the sky character appear to extend the meaning of the sky to something more than just a natural occurrence. The author has searched through many ancient Chinese texts to see if they could be found elsewhere. The four-character groupings shown above seem to be rare but can be found in the following texts below.

天之道 - *The Dao of the Sky*

> 《禮運》孔子曰：夫禮，先王以承天之道，以治人之情，故失之者死，得之者生。
>
> Kǒngzǐ said: "Rites [were used by the] early (or ancient) kings [to] receive the Dao [of the] sky, [and thereby] manage the emotions [of the] people. Therefore, lose [it and there is] death, get [it and] there [is] life".

The line above once again hints at this idea of the sky as something like a God. It also seems to follow with the way the three characters for the sky's Dao - tiān zhī dào (天之道) are used in the *Dàodéjīng,* where it says: The Dao [of the] sky benefits [all] and [does] not harm [any]. This is intriguing as it was the Zhou dynasty rulers who revered the sky. Therefore, the above paragraph only makes sense if the mention of the sky is referring to a God.

天古之極 - *The Pinnacle Ancient Sky*

> 《老子河上公章句.德經.配天》是謂配天古之極。能行此者，德配天也。是乃古之極要道也。
>
> So, [this is] called the utmost (pinnacle) [of] joining [the] sky [of] old. [Those who] can do this, join virtue [with the] sky (or match the sky's virtue). This is [the] most important (or essential) Dao [of] ancient [times].

This line is similar to that of the *Dàodéjīng,* chapter sixty-eight: [This] is called [the] virtue of non-contention, [it] is [also] called using [the] strength [of] people [and it] is [also] called the utmost (pinnacle) [of] joining [the] sky [of] old. Why would one want to join with the sky of ancient times? As with the previous example, this line only makes sense if "sky" is changed for God or Sky-God.

天網 - *The Sky's Net*

> 《後漢書.列傳. 蘇竟楊厚列傳上》畢為天網，主網羅無道之君，故武王將伐紂，上祭于畢，求助天也。
>
> Bì[27] is [the] net [of the] sky, [it] governs the ensnaring [of] monarchs without [the] Dao. Therefore, Wǔwáng (King Wū - founder of Zhou dynasty) attacked Zhòu (Zhòu Wáng - last king of the Shang dynasty) [and], offered sacrifices to Bì, [to] seek help [from the] sky.

This translation comes from the《後漢書》*Hòu hànshū* or (*Later Book of Han*) and is one of those rare examples where the reader gets an exact meaning of an unusual character set such as tiānwǎng - sky's

27 Bì is the nineteenth of the twenty-eight constellations into which the celestial sphere was divided. It means net.

net (天網). This sentence is particularly interesting as it suggests that the ancient Chinese character for sky may represent a God.

天道 - *The Sky's Dao*

The characters for tiāndào (天道) are commonly used within early Confucian writings. These same characters can be observed in both the *Dàodéjīng* and the writings of Zhuāngzǐ. In Confucian writings, they seem in most circumstances to represent the "natural sky", (i.e., one that controls the seasons and has a relationship to weather). This runs counter to the way they are used in the *Dàodéjīng.* For example, in chapter seventy-nine (i.e., something more than just a natural phenomenon): [The] sky's Dao [has] no relatives (preferential treatment), [and is] constantly with good people.

There is no doubt that in these early writings of the Warring States period, the sky, among other meanings, is described as something related to natural phenomena, as seen in the examples below. The last example, however, is important, because it clearly portrays how these two characters tiāndào (天道) represent something God-like, and how this God was revered by Zhōu Gōng (周公), who was a member of the early Zhou dynasty royal family. This suggests that the Zhou rulers worshipped a Sky-God.

> 《論衡.譴告》夫天道，自然也，無為。
>
> [The] sky's Dao, [is] natural (or nature), [it is] wúwéi (without action).
>
> 《論衡.自然》天道無為，故春不為生，而夏不為長，秋不為成，冬不為藏。陽氣自出，物自生長；陰氣自起，物自成藏。
>
> [The] sky's Dao [is] wúwéi (without action), therefore spring [does] not produce and summer [does] not grow, autumn [does] not mature [and] winter does [not] store. [Instead], yang qì [comes] out itself, things produce [and] grow themselves; yin qì arises itself [and] things complete [and] store themselves.

《史記.列傳.太史公自序》夫陰陽四時，八位，十二度，二十四節各有教令，順之者昌，逆之者不死則亡，未必然也，故曰使人拘而多畏。夫春生夏長，秋收冬藏，此天道之大經也，弗順則無以為天下綱紀，故曰四時之大順，不可失也。

Yin [and] yang, [the] four times (seasons), eight directions, twelve degrees, twenty-four solar terms, all have [their] instruction. Follow [these and there is] flourishing, [go] counter [and even if] not [all] die [now,] then [later there will still be] complete destruction; [although this is] not necessary. Therefore, [it is] said, make [the] people restrained and especially fearful. Spring produces, summer grows, autumn contracts [and] winter stores; this [is] the Great Classic [of the] sky's Dao.[28] Not following [the sky's Dao], then [there is] no [type of] action [that can lead to everything] under [the] sky [being in] law [and] social order. Therefore [it is] said, the great following (order) [of the] four seasons, cannot [be] lost.

《漢書.傳.董仲舒傳》天道之大者在陰陽。陽為德，陰為刑；刑主殺而德主生。是故陽常居大夏，而以生育養長為事；陰常居大冬，而積於空虛不用之處。

The greatness [of] sky's Dao is [from] yin [and] yang. Yang is virtue, yin is punishment; punishment governs killing and virtue governs life. Therefore, yang's normal dwelling (time) [is the] great summer, [this is the time of] life, birth, nourishment [and] growth,

28 "Spring produces, summer grows, autumn contracts and winter stores". This line and idea likely represent the foundation from which yin and yang, and the wǔxíng were developed, which in turn were used to create several traditional Chinese arts and sciences. Hence, it was called the Great Classic. The idea of this "Great Classic (i.e., following the seasons/changes)", likely originated from the Zhou king's reverence for a Sky-God and the concept of following the seasons.

[it] is [the time to] do things. Yin's normal dwelling (time) [is the] great winter, and accumulates [where there is] emptiness [and] unused places.

《黃帝內經.靈樞經.經別》黃帝問於岐伯曰：余聞人之合於天道也，內有五藏，以應五音，五色，五時，五味，五位也；外有六府，以應六律。六律建陰陽諸經而合之十二月，十二辰，十二節，十二經水，十二時，十二經脈者，此五藏六府之所以應天道。

The paragraph above, from the *Huángdì Nèijīng,* says that man "should" unite with the sky's Dao. This is because this text modelled the human body on what could be observed in the natural world.

《莊子.外篇.在宥》何謂道？有天道，有人道。無為而尊者，天道也；有為而累者，人道也。主者，天道也；臣者，人道也。天道之與人道也，相去遠矣，不可不察也。

What [is] called [the] Dao? [We] have [the] sky's Dao [and we] have people's Dao. Wúwéi and reverence, [is the] sky's Dao. [To] have action and fatigue [is the] people's Dao. [The] lord (or ruler) [is the] sky's Dao, [the] minister [is the] people's Dao. [The] sky's Dao [and the] Dao [of the] populous [are] far apart. [This can]not, not [be] examined.[29]

《春秋繁露.郊事對》周公，聖人也，有祭於天道。

Zhōu Gōng [was a] shèngrén; [he] made sacrifices to [the] Sky's Dao.

29 In this paragraph, there is the sky's Dao and people's Dao. Wúwéi and reverence is the sky's Dao, and action and fatigue is the people's Dao. The lord is the sky's Dao, and the minister is the people's Dao. This portrays how it was the ruler's function to revere the sky (as if it was a God).

By pulling out these four uses of the character for sky across texts other than the *Dàodéjīng*, it seems as though ideas are mixed. In one case, the sky is seen as natural phenomenon, while in other areas, it appears to be God-like. In ancient Chinese, it is common and normal for one character to have multiple meanings. The mixing of meanings, as seen above, seems deeper than this. One plausible reason for the overlap is that, as the Zhou dynasty came to an end, so did the worship of the Indo-European Sky-God. In this case, much of the new literature for the time period no longer focused on ritual, ceremony, sacrifice, divining, and the appeasing of a Sky-God, but instead on following and living with the sky's natural cycles. As the literature was produced during a time of great political, cultural, and societal change, it also appears that some of these early texts are mixing ideas between the new and old versions of the sky.

To further discover whether the sky character could mean a Sky-God, it is possible to observe in pre-Qin and Han writings the characters of zūn tiān (尊天), meaning to revere the sky. In the three examples below, the Zhou dynasty's Son of the Sky seems to be revering and worshipping the sky. This would only make sense if the sky was a God.

> 《墨子.卷一.法儀》昔之聖王禹，湯，文，武，兼天下之百姓，率以尊天事鬼，其利人多，故天福之，使立為天子，天下諸侯皆賓事之。
>
> [In] ancient times the shèngrén-kings, Yǔ (the Great), Tāng, Wén, [and] Wǔ, united the hundred surnames (all people) under [the] sky, [and] led them [to] revere [the] sky [and] engage [the] ghosts (or spirits). [This] benefited many people. Therefore, [the] sky [gave] blessings [and] established the Son [of the] Sky, [whereby] all [the] lords under [the] sky, served [them as] guests.
>
> 《墨子.卷二.尚賢中》所以得其賞何也？曰其為政乎天下也，兼而愛之，從而利之，又率天下之萬民以尚尊天，事鬼，愛利萬民，是故天鬼賞之，立為天子，以為民父母，萬民從而譽之曰聖王，至今不已。

So, how [did they] get rewarded? [It was] said: [When] they governed [all] under [the] sky, [they] united and loved [the people]. From [this, all the people] benefitted, and [they] led [all] under [the] sky, [and] ten thousand people [to] esteem [and] venerate [the] sky, [and] engage [the] ghosts (or spirits).[30] [They] loved [and] benefitted [the] ten thousand people, so therefore, [the] sky [and] ghosts rewarded [them and] established the Son [of the] Sky, [and] made [them the] father [and] mother [of the] people. [The] ten thousand people from [this] praised [them and all] called [them] shèngrén-kings till [this] day.

《禮記.祭義》昔者，聖人建陰陽天地之情，立以為《易》。易抱龜南面，天子卷冕北面，雖有明知之心，必進斷其志焉。示不敢專，以尊天也。善則稱人，過則稱己。教不伐以尊賢也。

[In] ancient times, [the] shèngrén established the conditions [of] yin [and] yang, [the] sky [and] earth, [and] set up [the *Classic of*] *Changes*. [The] changes [were divined] holding [a] tortoise shell facing south.[31] [The] Son [of the] Sky [with his] robe [and]

30 The character guǐ (鬼) tends to mean a spirit of the dead. It is interesting to note that the Shang kings were different from the Zhou in that they were involved in ancestor worship and not revering a Sky-God. One question here is whether the Zhou kings were also involved in ancestor worship, which they learnt from their former foes.

31 This idea of facing south has permeated Chinese culture for a long time. The reason for this south-facing idea is given in the《春秋繁露》*Chūnqiū Fán Lù*. It is primarily related to the idea that because the south is hot (as opposed to the cold north), it is rich in yang and thereby full of growth and abundant in everything. Therefore, it seems as though it became etiquette for people (and especially rulers) to face south, to symbolise a commitment to making a country prosperous. It is interesting though how in the Zhou dynasty, the ruler faced north.

《春秋繁露.天辨在人》故刑者德之輔，陰者陽之助也，陽者歲之主也。天下之草木隨陽而生落，天下之三王隨陽而改正，天下之尊卑隨陽而序位。幼者居陽之所少，老者居陽之所老，貴者居陽之所盛，賤者居陽之所衰。藏者，言其不得當陽。不當陽者臣子是也，當陽者勻是也。故人主南面，以陽為位也。陽貴而陰賤，天之制也。禮之尚右，非尚陰也，敬老陽而尊成功也。

Therefore, punishment [is] virtue's assistance, yin [is] yang's helper [and] yang governs [the year] (the seasons). [All] the flora under [the] sky follows yang and [thereby], grows [and] falls (withers). All [the] three kings under [the] sky follow

> ceremonial cap faced north. Although [his] heart [was] bright [in] knowing (he was intelligent), [he] had [to] continue [the divination and] break his [own] will (aspirations) [and] dare not reveal [his] concentration (take his own way) [and instead let the divination speak for itself, thereby] revering [the] sky. [If it was] good then [he] named [the] person (ascribed it to others), [if it was] excessive (wrong) then [he named] himself. [Thus, he] taught not [to] boast [and instead] revere [the] worthy.

This idea that the king is keeping his mind free from thought and aspirations is particularly interesting in light of what is mentioned in the《禮記》*Lǐjì* (*Book of Rites*) below, where it says the king should have no-action (same wúwéi as the *Dàodéjīng*) and just be upright (正), which suggests; to be free from thought, and to just maintain focus on what was required and being performed.

> 《禮記.禮運》王，前巫而後史，卜筮瞽侑皆在左右，王中心無為也，以守至正。

> [At the] front [of the] king [was the] wū and behind [the] historian/s. [The] diviners, musicians [and] assistants [were] all at [the] left [and] right. [The] king [was in the] middle doing nothing (wúwéi), [except] abiding [in the] most (complete) uprightness (correctness).

Seeing what may be one of the earliest definitions of wúwéi sheds new light on the way it may have been understood originally and how it evolved in the *Dàodéjīng*. In this case, it was originally an empty

---

yang and put [things] right. [Thereby, all] superiors [and] subordinates under [the] sky follow yang [and take their] ordered place. [The] young reside [where the] yang [is a] little, [the] old reside [where the] yang [is] aged. [The] valuable reside [where the] yang [is] abundant, [the] inexpensive reside [where the] yang [is] lacking. Concealment (storage), [is] not talking [about] getting [and] being [not equal to] yang. Not being yang, [this] is [the] minister, [to] be yang, [this] is equality (reaches all). Therefore, [the] sovereign faces south, as [this] is [the] place [of] yang. Yang [is] valuable (esteemed) and yin [is] cheap (degraded), [the] sky regulates [this]. Ceremony [and etiquette] esteem the right, [they do] not value yin, respect [the] old yang (elders) and revere success.

state of mind required by the king when worshipping and performing ceremonies to the Sky-God. The shèngrén is a ruler who benefits and works for the people, and the shèngrén-king is someone who has had his position bestowed upon him by the Sky-God. The Zhou dynasty kings were thereby likely expected to have a pure mind and not one of selfish desires. It was also paramount that the king kept a pure and empty mind when revering the Sky-God.

The hypothesis for the sky character representing a Sky-God has some strong evidence to support it, while at the same time also meaning the sky of natural phenomena. It is likely both these ideas were used in the Zhou dynasty, with the Sky-God the most important. During the Warring States period, however, the reverse seems to occur, wherein the Sky-God primarily loses significance and the sky of natural phenomena becomes the dominant tradition. Interestingly, across nearly all well-known Chinese schools of thought and ancient texts is the concept of adhering and living with seasonal change in one form or another. Not only did kings and royal courts have to adhere to this rule, but so did the common people. Running counter to following seasonal changes was thought to lead to chaos, disaster, and bad health.

The concept of following the seasonal changes is at the heart of understanding ancient Chinese history pre-Qin and Han, and traditional Chinese culture and arts. As the following of the sky and its changes has its origins in the Zhou dynasty, after which we see an evolution of the concept for the next few hundred years. It is important to point out, as mentioned previously, that, following the seasonal changes in particular is fundamental to a nomadic way of life and much less important for those living in large urban populations. The counterargument to this is that the importance of seasonal change in agriculture and success in agricultural activities led to the grain needed to feed the large urban populations of ancient China. While this counterargument is noteworthy, the depth at which the changes were followed and especially revered seem to go far beyond the basic four seasonal changes and rain required for agricultural success.

PARALLELS BETWEEN THE *DÀODÉJĪNG*, *ṚGVEDA* AND EARLY INDIAN TEXTS

According to Jamison and Brereton (2014, 22) the main reason for the intricacy of the *Ṛgveda* praise poetry and attention to detail by the Rigvedic poets is due to the importance Vedic society and culture placed on the spoken word and the truths it could reveal. Jamison and Brereton (2014, 23) explain how the truths that Rigvedic poets formulated were often "hidden truths" found in paradox and that poets spoke of their insight (dhīti). Many of these unique insights were related to the intricate patterns and associations observed in the natural world. This is similar to much of what the *Dàodéjīng* is trying to relay to its reader, in the way the early Daoists observed a concept in nature and then through symbology and other means, tried to convey this to the reader or listener.

Mair (1990b and 2009) not only discusses how wúwéi has had an enormous impact on Chinese culture but also how there are Sanskrit words, especially numerous in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, that essentially mean the same thing but with different moral implications. Mair (1990b, 140–148; 155–161) also discusses the connection between Daoism and yoga, with a particular focus on the *Bhagavad Gītā*. He explains that the evident similarities between the two traditions are not merely coincidental.

Ramsden (2022c) discusses the same ideas as Mair (1990b) but takes a different view in that one type of non-action in ancient India may have had no relationship to that of the Chinese version. In this case it is explained that the idea of saṃsāra, karma and rebirth originate on the eastern side of India (maybe with the Jains) away from the centre of the Vedic religion, and that Buddha (who took many root ideas from the Jains) wanted no karma (karma means action), so that there was nothing to be reborn, and he could break free from saṃsāra (wandering) through nibbāna (to blow out). Ramsden (2022c) suggests that the Jains believed primarily in a non-action of the body and conducted ritual suicide (the ultimate form of non-action) through starvation and doing nothing at all, which Buddha tried, nearly died, and then changed the non-action to more of a non-action of the mind.

The key distinction that set Buddha's philosophy apart from others of his time was the concept of anattā (no-self). While mental thoughts and visualisations could be considered part of "one's" self, it was taught that the true state of being lay beyond them. Instead, beneath layers of thoughts and mental images, there existed a pure awareness—an observer (observing the thoughts and images) that was independent of any notion of self.

Ironically, as soon as Buddhism left India and entered China, this concept of no-self was quickly changed to emptiness and lined up with Daoist thought of the time. According to Ramsden (2022c, 27), traditionally, the first Buddhist text in Chinese was the《佛說四十二章經》*Fú Shuō Sìshí'èr Zhāng Jīng* (*Forty-two Chapters Spoken by Buddha Classic*), and in this text, it is possible to find the character for Dao (道) used many times. One can also observe the characters for non-action, wúwéi (無為). This text gives clear insight into how early Buddhism was immediately changed and adapted to fit the new Chinese culture.

Ramsden (2022b) suggests that the wú (無) of wúwéi (無為) can mean emptiness and not just "no", "non" or "nothing". Thereby, wúwéi, which is commonly translated as non-action or do nothing, could also mean "emptiness in action". In this case, Ramsden (2022b, 75) connects wúwéi to the Dao by defining the Dao as that action within emptiness that cannot be seen with the naked eye but has brought all life into existence, while at the same time maintaining it.

This conveys that the idea of early Buddhist non-action, the foundation from which the religion was built, is different and unrelated to the non-action of the *Dàodéjīng*. Given that Northwestern India was culturally distinct and geographically distant from the Greater Magadha, where Jainism and Buddhism emerged (Bronkhorst, 2007), the concept of non-action with Vedic roots (i.e., Indo-Aryan origins), as seen in the *Bhagavad Gītā* and noted by Mair (1990b) as being something similar to the non-action of the *Dàodéjīng*, is both plausible and logical.

NOMADIC LIFESTYLES COMPARED TO THAT OF LARGE CHINESE URBAN CENTRES

In the *Dàodéjīng*, chapter twenty, there is a discussion of a desolate wasteland from a positive point of view, highlighting the idea of living on the fringes of society, where a person is not caught up in his own desires and thereby is truly free. This idea of a desolate wasteland (or remote area) is of consequence, as nomads (and other distant/non-civilised peoples) were commonly associated with such areas. In this way, the paragraph below may be suggesting a comparison between a nomadic lifestyle (or at least one away from society) with that of city living.

> 《道德经.二十章》荒兮，其未央哉。眾人熙熙，如享太牢，如登春臺，我獨泊兮，其未兆，如嬰兒之未孩。
>
> [A] desolate [wasteland] ah, it [does] not end! All [the] people [are] prosperous, like enjoying [themselves at the] great sacrificial [feast], like ascending [the] platform [in] spring. I alone [am] anchored (tranquil) ah, [with] no omens, like [an] infant [with] no laughter (or smile).

The character huāng - desolate/wastelands (荒) as used in the *Dàodéjīng* is significant as it is sometimes this character which refers to the home of the nomads. This character can also be used as a broad-based reference for the lands of non-Hàn Chinese in classical Chinese texts.

> 《史記.本紀.五帝本紀》方五千里，至于荒服。南撫交阯，北發，西戎，析枝，渠廋，氐，羌 ...
>
> [In the] square [of] 5000 miles, reaching [the] desolate (wastelands) ... [there was the] ... Xīróng ...

Ford (2010), primarily through the use of examples from the《史記》*Shǐjì* (*Records of the Grand Historian*) describes evidence that the Xiōngnú, a nomadic (likely proto-Turkish) confederation was strongly against city living and criticised the building projects of the Chinese, which exhausted the people and took away their freedom of life. Below are examples taken from Ford (2010)[32] as references which compare the nomadic way of life with that of the large urban centres found in ancient China. These references provide insight into how early nomadic confederations thought about life.

32 The classical textual references are the same, but translations are different.

《史記.列傳.匈奴列傳》故其急則人習騎射，寬則人樂無事。

Therefore, in [times of] urgency, then [the nomadic] people train [in] horse riding [and] archery. [In time of] relaxation, then [the] people [are] happy [with] nothing [to] do.

《史記.列傳.匈奴列傳》夫力耕桑以求衣食，築城郭以自備，故其民急則不習戰功，緩則罷於作業。

Effort [in] cultivating (or ploughing) [and] Mulberry [tree cultivation to] get [fine] clothes [and] food. Building city walls [and] outer fortifications [for] self-protection, therefore [in] urgent times, then [the] people [are] not trained [in] military skill (or the people are busy and then not trained for military skill). [In] unhurried [times], then [the Chinese people are] endlessly doing enterprise (work) (or could mean, weary from their labour).

《史記.列傳.平津侯主父列傳》夫匈奴無城郭之居，委積之守，遷徙鳥舉，難得而制也。

[The] Xiōngnú [have] no city walls [where they] live, [and do not] gather [and] accumulate [things or resources to] guard (or keep watch). [They] move [and] shift (come and go) [as] birds [and are thereby] difficult to control.

《史記.列傳.平津侯主父列傳》匈奴人眾不能當漢之一郡，然所以彊者，以衣食異，無仰於漢也。今單于變俗好漢物。

[The] Xiōngnú [though] numerous, cannot match [even] one commandery [of] the Hàn [Chinese]. [They are] strong because [their] clothes [and] food [are] different [and

they do] not rely on the Hàn. Now[adays], Chányú (the Xiōngnú leader) [has] changed [their] customs [and thinks] good [of the] Hàn [things].

EARLY DAOIST HEALTH CULTIVATION METHODS

The *Huángdì Nèijīng* appears to be, at least in some places, part of this greater early Daoist literature. It is likely from the same era, as can be seen in the language, similar concepts, the idea of following nature, and the use of yin and yang to create its system of medicine. What is interesting about this text is how it uses the idea of the shèngrén differently than other texts of the same time period but more in line with the *Dàodéjīng*. The following paragraphs found below are from the first chapter of the *Huángdì Nèijīng,* which sets up the foundational concepts of how to live a healthy life. A large part of the nomadic lifestyle was not only living outside of urban centres but also trading with them, where the nomads (commonly warriors) got a sense of urban life and all that came with it. It does seem in the paragraphs below that the writer/s of the text are warning people against the dangers and limitations of an urban lifestyle and suggesting they stay away from all that city life brings.

《黃帝內經.素問.上古天真論》*Huángdì Nèijīng* (~250–100 BCE)

上古之人，其知道者，法於陰陽，和於術數，食飲有節，起居有常，不妄作勞，故能形與神俱，而盡終其天年，度百歲乃去。

The people [in] more ancient [times], they knew [the] Dao, [they followed the] laws [of] yin [and] yang (lived with the seasons), adjusted [themselves] to [the] method [of] numbers, ate [and] drank [in regular] periods, woke [and] slept with regularity, [and did] not absurdly make [themselves] fatigued. Therefore, [their] form (body) and spirit could [come] together, and [were thereby able to] use up their natural lifespan [and] pass one-hundred years of age [before they] went (died).

今時之人不然也，以酒為漿，以妄為常，醉以入房，以欲竭其精，以耗散其真，不知持滿，不時御神，務快其心，逆於生樂，起居無節，故半百而衰也。

Nowadays, the people [are] not so, [they drink] alcohol [as if it] is rice porridge, [they take the] absurd [to] be normal, [get] drunk [and] enter [the] bedroom (have sex), [in the end their] desires [have] exhausted their essence, [and they have] dissipated their genuine.[33] [They do] not know [how to] protect [and] fill [their essence and energies], [they do] not regularly manage [their] spirit [and instead are only] engaged [in the] happiness [of] their heart (sensual pleasures). [They live] counter to [that which] produces happiness, [their] wake [and] sleep [times have] no periods (regularity). Therefore, [at only] fifty years of age [they are old] and weak.

夫上古聖人之教下也，皆謂之虛邪賊風，避之有時，恬惔虛無，真氣從之，精神內守，病安從來。

[In] more ancient [times], the teachings [of] the shèngrén [were] as follows: All [that which is] called Deficiency Evil Thieving Wind [should be] avoided [at] the [right] time.[34] [A] tranquil, cheerful [and] empty [state should be maintained as the] genuine qì comes [from this]. [Furthermore], internally guard [your] essence [and] spirit, [whereby] disease [and illness will remain] dormant [and have no place to] arise from.

33 "Genuine" refers to genuine qì, which can sometimes represent an idea similar to the modern-day immune system and/or that qì which is the most basic substance that maintains organ function, i.e., the human body depends entirely on this qì.

34 This idea of keeping the balance internally and avoiding the seasonal pathogens externally are all related to doing the right practices at the right time of the year, i.e., following the seasons. Deficiency Evil Thieving Wind is a fundamental concept in Chinese medicine. It is linked to the idea that mental and physical fatigue is one of the primary causes by which external pathogens can invade the body and internal diseases arise. To counteract this, the key method was to live with seasons; do the right things at the right time of the year.

是以志閑而少欲，心安而不懼，形勞而不倦，氣從以順，各從其欲，皆得所願。

So, ease [your] aspirations and [have] few desires, [keep a] calm heart and without fear. [Use the] form (body) [for] work [but] without fatiguing [it]. From [this, your] qì [will be] smooth [and flowing], [and] from this all [you] desire [and] all [you] wish, [you] can get.

故美其食，任其服，樂其俗，高下不相慕，其民故曰朴。

Therefore, [all] food is beautiful (tasty), [all] clothing is acceptable, [and all] customs are enjoyable. [Whether you or others have a] high [or] low [status], [regard] both [as something] not [to be] envious [of]. [In this way] the people [are] therefore called simple (honest and sincere).

是以嗜欲不能勞其目，淫邪不能惑其心，愚智賢不肖，不懼於物，故合於道。

So [in this way], sensual desires cannot strain the eyes, [and] sexual perversions cannot mislead the heart. [When the] foolish, wise, worthy [and] unworthy [have] no fear for things, therefore [they can be] unite [with the] Dao.

所以能年皆度百歲，而動作不衰者，以其德全不危也。

So, [your] years can all pass [to] one hundred years old, and [your] movements [will] not [be] weak because your virtue [is] complete [and] not [in] danger.

According to the early Daoists of the *Huángdì Nèijīng,* the method to maintain good health was simple. Live in accordance with the seasons, eat modestly, sleep and wake in a regular cycle (likely early sleep

and early rise), do not do anything in excess and do not chase your desires excessively. Be happy, satisfied and accepting of where you live and what you do. To further emphasise the point of not fatiguing oneself (no excesses), it was suggested that nearly all illness comes from exhausting oneself mentally and/or physically. The secret to health and a long life in-particular, is hinted to be sufficient rest and simple living. Fatiguing oneself physically through hard labour, unrestrained sexual activity, and endless craving to fulfil the senses were believed to shorten one's life span by half.

As seen above, with the example of the Xiōngnú way of life and thinking, these core principles may derive from a nomadic way of living, such as following the seasons, living in accordance with nature, staying on the fringes of society and not allowing the senses to be seduced by luxury goods, alcohol, sex and the appearance of "easy" living in urban centres. Living in urban centres was probably seen as the mother of all evils, as one loses mental freedom as the mind becomes a slave to the senses and all physical freedom is lost, as one's "body" works as a slave for the elite and/or government. Ultimately, according to the *Huángdì Nèijīng*, this loss of freedom leads to poor health, a weak body and a shortened life.

CONCLUSION

This paper has endeavoured to provide further evidence to substantiate the hypothesis that the early Zhou were Indo-European. New evidence to support this idea is the Huángdì nation's relationship with horses, the tripartite and dualistic divining systems, the idea of an Indo-European mage, and Sky-God worship as seen in ancient textual references. This paper also discusses the breakdown period in which, after nearly eight-hundred years of rule, the Zhou dynasty came to an end. This marked a time of great change and upheaval in both society and politics, where many older norms were changed for newer ones, and numerous new schools of thought arose. Most of these schools made an effort to promote their own material with the production of new literature aimed at both kings and the common people. In this case, both Confucianism and Daoism emerged as two of the most popular. Both promoted ways to live one's life and a means to govern a country or state. Both believed in following the seasons and living in accordance with nature and following the concept of wúwéi.

It seems as though many schools of the time period used the shèngrén as the predominant exemplar figure. Confucianism and Daoism differed significantly from each other in their use and idea of what a shèngrén was. In Confucianism, the shèngrén was an ancient capable leader, while in Daoism the shèngrén was a more philosophically inclined, wise man whom not only a leader could model himself on but also a commoner. This made Daoism a philosophy not only for the rulers but also for the people, allowing it to build a large following.

Confucianism, like many other schools of the time, had a romantic view of the past, in which the shèngrén-kings ruled and exhausted themselves for the benefit of the people and thereby made a successful country. The *Dàodéjīng* is different in that it did not promote these romantic ideas but instead suggested what is potentially an even earlier idea, where the best kind of government is one that does not interfere with the lives of the people. This idea would work well for a nomadic society but likely struggle in large and populous urban centres such as those found in China at the time.

This paper suggests that the *Dàodéjīng* is a text that emerged during the breakdown period of the Eastern Zhou dynasty (especially the Warring States time period) and appears to have cultural elements of both the older Zhou dynasty and other contemporary ones for the time. Evidence for this has been provided to demonstrate the *Dàodéjīng's* connection to the Indo-European Zhou dynasty, especially through the analysis of the sky character. To further examine this sky character, examples have been provided from several different ancient Chinese texts to demonstrate the Zhou as worshippers of a Sky-God, which further strengthens the idea that the Zhou rulers were Indo-European.

The *Dàodéjīng,* as with other schools of the time, promoted the common theme of living with the seasons and natural cycles. This seems odd as following the seasons is of absolute paramount importance to nomadic societies for basic survival and much less significant for those living in cities. This idea of following the changes appears to stem from the early Zhou dynasty, which is likely related to ancient ceremonies and customs of nomadic tribes as a means to recognise all the signs of seasonal, climate and weather changes.

The *Dàodéjīng,* along with some other texts of the same time period portray the idea of non-interference with nature, to follow the seasons and to live on the periphery of society as the ideal way of living. This is further emphasised in the first chapter of the *Huángdì Nèijīng*, where the reader is told that, in order to live a long life, a person must not exhaust him/herself, and must guard his or her senses

against all those things that would come with city living. City living is conveyed as something somewhat evil in the way one is enticed through the desire for sex, goods, and what appears to be a better life but instead only leads to a loss of one's lifespan and a weakened body. These ideas follow very closely the actual historical textual evidence that shows that nomads such as the Xiōngnú traded with the cities of China for fine goods and other desirable things, and that, while some leaders liked the new lifestyle, others were absolutely opposed to it, for they believed all freedom would be lost by giving up their traditional nomadic lifestyle.

APPENDIX 1: THE WŪ'S RELATIONSHIP WITH MEDICINE

《姓氏考略》黃帝時巫彭作醫，此為巫氏之始。

[In the] time [of] Huángdì, Wūpéng did medicine, [from] this the wū clan started.

《說文》巫彭初作醫的事。

Wūpéng [was the] first [to] do medicinal things.

《論語.子路 》子曰南人有言曰人而無恆，不可以作巫醫。

[The] Master said: "[The] people [in the] south have [a] saying: people without constancy cannot be [a] wū physician".

For more examples, see: 《脩文. 說苑》, 《潛夫論.思賢》, 《逸周書.大聚解》, 《黃帝內經.靈樞經.賊風》, 《論衡.程材》, 《太玄經.常》, 《太玄經.失》, 《漢書.志.郊祀志.郊祀志上》, 《漢書.傳.爰盎晁錯傳》.

APPENDIX 2: SIBERIAN SHAMAN-LIKE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WŪ

Dancing shaman

> 《墨子.卷八.非樂上》其恆舞于宮，是謂巫風。
>
> Their constant dancing at [the] imperial palace is called [the] wū's custom.

For another example, see:《後漢書.列傳.王充王符仲長統列傳》.

Drums of the shaman

> 《扬子法言.君子卷第十二.揚子法言》... 巫鼓。
>
> ... shaman drums.

For another example, see:《後漢書.列傳.劉玄劉盆子列傳》.

Shaman talk

> 《論衡.訂鬼》童謠口自言，巫辭意自出。口自言，意自出，則其為人，與聲氣自立，音聲自發，同一實也。
>
> Nursery rhymes [are] spoken [from a child's] mouth [by] itself (spontaneously). [The] wū's speech [and] thought [also come] out themselves (spontaneously). [If the] mouth itself speaks, [and the] thought itself [comes] out, then this is [from a] person (human). [The] voice qì establishes itself, [and] sound emits [by] itself, both [are] one [in the same] thing.

For more examples, see:《潛夫論.正列》and《論衡.論死》.

Rainmaking

> 《論衡.明雩》天旱不雨，寡人欲暴巫 ...
>
> Drought, [and] no rain, [the] king desires [to] punish [the] wū ...

Mysterious Abilities

> 《莊子.內篇.應帝王》鄭有神巫曰季咸，知人之生死存亡，禍福壽夭，期以歲月旬日，若神。
>
> [In] Zhèng [there] is [a] spirit wū called Jìxián. [He] knows [about] people's birth, death, preservation, disasters, misfortune, luck, lifespan, premature death; allotting [to these the] age (year), month, period of time (in tens) [and] days, like [a] spirit.

For another example, see:《論衡.是應》.

APPENDIX 3: THE SHÈNGRÉN AS A CAPABLE LEADER (COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH PRE AND EARLY ZHOU KINGS)

《墨子.卷二.尚賢中》故古聖王以審以尚賢使能為政，而取法於天。雖天亦不辯貧富，貴賤，遠邇，親疏，賢者舉而尚之，不肖者抑而廢之。

Therefore, [the] ancient shèngrén-kings examined [and] valued [the] worthy [to] make [a] capable government, and took [the] model [of the] sky (as their example). Even [the] sky [does] not distinguish [between the] poor [and] rich, expensive [and] cheap, far [and] near, related [or] unrelated. [The] worthy [were] elevated and valued, [while the] unworthy [were] restrained and discarded.

然則富貴為賢，以得其賞者誰也？曰若昔者三代聖王堯，舜，禹，湯，文，武者是也。

So then, [those with] wealth [and] position [that] are worthy, who got rewarded? [It was] said: [In the] past, three dynasties [had] shèngrén-kings: Yáo, Shùn, Yǔ, Tāng, Wén [and] Wǔ [all] were.

所以得其賞何也？曰其為政乎天下也，兼而愛之，從而利之，又率天下之萬民以尚尊天，事鬼，愛利萬民，是故天鬼賞之，立為天子，以為民父母，萬民從而譽之曰聖王，至今不已。

So, how [did they] get rewarded? [It was] said: [When] they governed [all] under [the] sky, [they] united and loved [the people]. From [this, all the people] benefitted, and [they] led [all] under [the] sky, [and] ten thousand people [to] esteem [and] venerate [the] sky, [and] engage [the] ghosts (or spirits). [They] loved [and] benefitted [the] ten thousand people, so therefore, [the] sky [and] ghosts rewarded [them and] established

the Son [of the] Sky, [and] made [them the] father [and] mother [of the] people. [The] ten thousand people from [this] praised [them and all] called [them] shèngrén-kings till [this] day.

則此富貴為賢，以得其賞者也。然則富貴為暴，以得其罰者誰也？曰若昔者三代暴王桀，紂，幽，厲者是也。

Those [who gained] wealth [and] position by [being] worthy got rewarded. Then [from those who gained] wealth [and] position through violence, who got punished? [It is] said: [In] ancient times, three dynasties [had] violent kings, [namely] Jié, Zhòu, [and] Yōu [and] Lì.

《商君書.農戰》聖人知治國之要，故令民歸心於農。歸心於農，則民樸而可正也。

[The] shèngrén knows the essential [in] managing [the] state. Therefore, [he] commands [the] people [to] return [their] hearts to agriculture. [To] return [their] hearts to agriculture, then [the] people [are] simple [and] can [be] upright (proper).

《商君書.農戰》惟聖人之治國，作壹，摶之於農而已矣。

Only [the] shèngrén [can] manage [a] state, establish unity, [and] focus [the people] on agriculture, that is it.

《孟子. 公孫丑上》見孟子，問曰周公何人也？曰古聖人也。

[When he] saw Mèngzǐ, [he] asked [him] saying: “What [kind of] person [was] Zhōu gōng”? [Mèngzǐ] said: “[An] ancient shèngrén”.

《莊子. 雜篇.天下》禹，大聖也，而形勞天下也如此。

Yu [was a] great shèng[rén], and [thus] physically fatigued [his] body [for all] under [the] sky [in] this way.

《孟子. 滕文公上》堯，舜既沒，聖人之道衰。

[After] Yáo [and] Shùn [were] gone, [the] Dao [of] the shèngrén [was in] decline.

《春秋繁露.郊事對》周公，聖人也，有祭於天道。

Zhōu Gōng [was a] shèngrén, [he] made sacrifices to [the] Sky's Dao.

For more examples, see: 《商君書.來民》,《揚子法言.五百卷第八》,《孟子.盡心上》,《孟子.萬章上》,《禮記.大傳》,《春秋繁露.奉本》,《白虎通德論.聖人》,《孟子. 滕文公上》,《韓非子. 顯學》,《韓非子. 心度》.

THE SHÈNGRÉN AS A RULER WHO WORKS WITH THE NATURAL WORLD

《禮記.禮運》故聖人參於天地，并於鬼神，以治政也。

Therefore, [the] shèngrén joins with [the] sky [and] earth [and is] together with [the] ghosts [and] spirits, so [as to] manage [the] government.

《禮記.禮器》天道至教，聖人至德。

[The] sky's Dao [is the] greatest teaching, [and the] shèngrén [has the] greatest virtue.

《禮運.禮記》故聖人作則，必以天地為本，以陰陽為端，以四時為柄，以日星為紀，月以為量，鬼神以為徒，五行以為質，禮義以為器，人情以為田，四靈以為畜。

Therefore, [the] shèngrén made [the] laws. [He did this by] ensuring [he took the] sky [and the] earth [as] the root, yin [and] yang [as] the start, [the] four times (seasons) [as] the authority, [the] days [and] stars [as] the record, [the] moon as [a] measurement, [the] ghost [and] spirits as with them, [the] wǔxíng [as] a quality, ceremony [and] righteousness as implements, people's emotions [as] a field (to be cultivated), [and the] four mythical creatures as domestic animals (or livestock).

《禮記.祭義》昔者，聖人建陰陽天地之情，立以為《易》。易抱龜南面，天子卷冕北面，雖有明知之心，必進斷其志焉。示不敢專，以尊天也。善則稱人，過則稱己。教不伐以尊賢也。

[In] ancient times, [the] shèngrén established the conditions [of] yin [and] yang, [the] sky [and] earth, [and] set up [the *Classic of*] *Changes*. [The] changes [were divined] holding [a] tortoise shell facing south. [The] Son [of the] Sky [with his] robe [and] ceremonial cap faced north. Although [his] heart [was] bright [in] knowing (he was intelligent), [he] had [to] continue [the divination and] break his [own] will (aspirations) [and] dare not reveal [his] concentration (take his own way) [and instead let the divination speak for itself, thereby] revering [the] sky. [If it was] good then [he] named [the] person (ascribed it to others), [if it was] excessive (wrong) then [he named] himself. [Thus, he] taught not [to] boast [and instead] revere [the] worthy.

THE SHÈNGRÉN AS A HIGHLY CULTIVATED PERSON

《論語.季氏》孔子曰君子有三畏，畏天命，畏大人，畏聖人之言。小人不知天命而不畏也，狎大人，侮聖人之言。

Kǒngzǐ said: "[A] jūnzǐ (person of noble character) has three [that he] reveres. [Firstly, he] reveres [the] Mandate [of the] Sky, [secondly, he] reveres great men [and thirdly, he] reveres the words [of the] shèngrén. [A person of] low status [does] not know [the] Mandate [of the] Sky and [does] not revere [it], great men, [he] disrespects [them], [and the] shèngrén [he] insults [his] words".

《新書.道術》故守道者謂之士，樂道者謂之君子，知道者謂之明，行道者謂之賢。且明且賢，此謂聖人。

Therefore, [those who] preserve [the] Dao [are] called the scholars. [Those who] delight [in the] Dao [are] called the jūnzǐ. [Those who] know (understand) [the] Dao [are] called the bright, [those who] walk (practise) [the] Dao [are] called the worthy. [Those who are] bright and worthy, they [are] called shèngrén.

《新書.脩政語上》故言之者見謂智，學之者見謂賢，守之者見謂信，樂之者見謂仁，行之者見謂聖人。

Therefore, [those who] speak [about the Dao are] called wise, [those who] study [it are] called worthy, [those who] guard [it are] called trustworthy, [those who take] pleasure [in it are] called benevolent, [and those who] walk [it are] called shèngrén.

《揚子法言.吾子卷第二》聖人虎別，其文炳也。君子豹別，其文蔚也。

[The] shèngrén [is in the] tiger category, his pattern (stripes) [are] bright. [The] jūnzǐ [is in the] leopard category, his pattern (spots) [are] grand.

THE SHÈNGRÉN AS AN EXPERT IN CEREMONY

《禮記.禮運》故唯聖人為知禮之不可以已也 ...

Therefore, only [the] shèngrén knows ceremony cannot cease (be abandoned) ...

《大戴禮記.曾子天圓》聖人立五禮以為民望 ...

[The] shèngrén established [the] five ceremonies to serve [as] people's observations (guidance) ...

SHÈNGRÉN AND THEIR CONNECTION TO MUSIC

《禮記.樂記》樂也者，聖人之所樂也，而可以善民心，其感人深，其移風易俗，故先王著其教焉。

[In] music, [the] shèngrén [found] pleasure, and [saw that it] could [make the] hearts [of the] people good. [It could bring about] deep feelings (or emotions) [in] people, [and thereby] shift manners [and] change customs. Therefore, early (or ancient) kings established it [as a] teaching (or a subject to be taught).

《禮記.樂記》然後，聖人作為鞉，鼓，椌，楬，壎，篪，此六者德音之音也。

Later, [the] shèngrén made [the] yā, gǔ, yì, jié, xuān and chí. These six [are] the sounds [of] virtuous music.

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