# SHU KING

## *The Book of Documents*

CONFUCIUS

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# Shu King: The Book of Documents

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# PREFACE.

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While submitting here some prefatory observations on the version of the Shû King presented in this volume, I think it well to prefix also a brief account of what are regarded as the Sacred Books of the Religions of China. Those religions are three:--Confucianism, Tâoism, and Buddhism.

I. I begin with a few words about the last. To translate any of its books does not belong to my province, and more than a few words from me are unnecessary. It has been said that Buddhism was introduced into China in the third century B.C.; but it certainly did not obtain an authoritative recognition in the empire till the third quarter of our first century [1]. Its Texts were translated into Chinese, one portion after another, as they were gradually obtained from India; but it was not till very long afterwards that the Chinese possessed, in their own language, a complete copy of the Buddhist canon [2]. Translations from the Sanskrit constitute the principal part of the Buddhistic literature of China, though there are also many original works in Chinese belonging to it.

II. Confucianism is the religion of China par excellence, and is named from the great sage who lived in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C. Confucius indeed did not originate the system, nor was he the first to inculcate its principles or enjoin its forms of worship. He said of himself (Analects, VII, i) that he was a transmitter and not a maker, one who believed in and loved the ancients; and hence it is said in the thirtieth chapter of the Doctrine of the Mean, ascribed to his grandson, that 'he handed down the doctrines of Yâo and

Shun, as if they had been his ancestors, and elegantly displayed the regulations of Wăn and Wû, taking them as his models.'

In fulfilling what he considered to be his mission, Confucius did little towards committing to writing the views of antiquity according to his own conception of them. He discoursed about them freely with the disciples of his school, from whom we have received a good deal of what he said; and it is possible that his accounts of the ancient views and practices took, unconsciously to himself, some colour from the peculiar character of his mind. But his favourite method was to direct the attention of his disciples to the ancient literature of the nation. He would neither affirm nor relate anything for which he could not adduce some document of acknowledged authority. He said on one occasion (Analects, III, ix) that he could describe the ceremonies of the dynasties of Hsiâ (B.C. 2205-1767) and Yin (B.C. 1766-1123), but did not do so, because the records and scholars in the two states of *K*âu, that had been assigned to the descendants of their sovereigns, could not sufficiently attest his words. It is an error even to suppose that he compiled the historical documents, poems, and other ancient books from various works existing in his time. Portions of the oldest works had already perished. His study of those that remained, and his exhortations to his disciples also to study them, contributed to their preservation. What he wrote or said about their meaning should be received by us with reverence; but if all the works which he handled had come down to us entire, we should have been, so far as it is possible for foreigners to be, in the same position as he was for learning the ancient religion of his country. Our text-books would be the same as his. Unfortunately most of the ancient books suffered loss and injury after Confucius had

passed from the stage of life. We have reason, however, to be thankful that we possess so many and so much of them. No other literature, comparable to them for antiquity, has come down to in such a state of preservation.

But the reader must bear in mind that the ancient books of China do not profess to have been inspired, or to contain what we should call a Revelation. Historians, poets, and others wrote them as they were moved in their own minds. An old poem may occasionally contain what it says was spoken by God, but we can only understand that language as calling attention emphatically to the statements to which it is prefixed. We also read of Heaven's raising up the great ancient sovereigns and teachers, and variously assisting them to accomplish their undertakings; but all this need not be more than what a religious man of any country might affirm at the present day of direction, help, and guidance given to himself and others from above. But while the old Chinese books do not profess to contain any divine revelation, the references in them to religious views and practices are numerous; and it is from these that the student has to fashion for himself an outline of the early religion of the people. I will now state what the books are.

First, and of greatest importance, there is the Book of Historical Documents, called the Shû and, since the period of the Han dynasty (began B.C. 202), the Shû King. Its documents commence with the reign of Yâo in the twenty-fourth century B.C., and come down to that of king Hsiang of the *K*âu dynasty, B.C. 651-619. The earliest chapters were not contemporaneous with the events which they describe, but the others begin to be so in the twenty-second century B.C. The reader will find a translation of the whole of this work without abridgment.

Second, and nearly as important as the Shû, there is the Shih, or the Book of Poetry. It contains in all 305 pieces, five of which are of the time of the Shang dynasty (called also the Yin), B.C. 1766-1123. The others belong to the dynasty of *K*âu, from the time of its founder, king Wăn, born B.C. 1231, to the reign of king Ting, B.C. 606-586. The whole is divided into four Parts, the last of which is occupied with 'Odes of the Temple and the Altar.' Many pieces in the other Parts also partake of a religious character, but the greater number are simply descriptive of the manners, customs, and events of the times to which they belong, and have no claim to be included in the roll of Sacred Texts. In this volume will be found all the pieces that illustrate the religious views of their authors, and the religious practices of their times.

The third work is the Yî, commonly called the Book of Changes. Confucius himself set a high value on it, as being fitted to correct and perfect the character of the learner (Analects, VII, xvi); and it is often spoken of by foreigners as the most ancient of all the Chinese classics. But it is not so. As it existed in the time of the sage, and as it exists now, no portion of the text is older than the time of king Wăn, mentioned above. There were and are, indeed, in it eight trigrams ascribed to Fû-hsî, who is generally considered as the founder of the Chinese nation, and whose place in chronology should, probably, be assigned in the thirty-fourth century B.C. The eight trigrams are again increased to sixty-four hexagrams. To form these figures, two lines, one of them whole (------) and the other divided(--- ---), are assumed as bases. Those lines are then placed, each over itself, and. each over the other; and four binograms are formed. From these, by the same process with the base lines, are obtained eight figures,--the famous trigrams.

Three other repetitions of the same process give us successively sixteen, thirty-two, and sixty-four figures. The lines in the figures thus increase in an arithmetical progression, whose common difference is one, and the number of the figures increases in a geometrical progression, whose common ratio is two. But what ideas Fû-hsî attached to his primary lines,--the whole and the divided; what significance he gave to his trigrams; what to the sixty-four hexagrams,--if indeed he himself formed so many figures; and why the multiplication of the figures was stayed at sixty-four:--of none of these points have we any knowledge from him. There is some reason to believe that there were texts to the hexagrams under the dynasties of Hsiâ and Shang, but none of them have been preserved. It may be that king Wăn and his equally famous son, the duke of *K*âu, adopted much of what they found already existing, and incorporated it with their own interpretations of the figures; but they, and they alone, are accepted as the authors of the text of the Yî. King Wăn, we are told, at a time when he was imprisoned by the tyrannical sovereign with whom the dynasty of Shang or Yin ended, took in hand the ever-changing hexagrams, and appended to each a brief explanation of the meaning which the trigrams composing it suggested by their union to his mind; and in some cases the practical course in affairs to which that meaning should direct. His son did for the separate lines of each hexagram what Wan had done for the whole figure. Confucius is said to have entered into their labours about 600 years afterwards. Several appendixes are ascribed to him, in which there is an attempt to explain the origin of the Fû-hsî figures, and many of the interpretations of Wăn and his son. The early linear figures; the notes of Wăn and the duke of *K*âu; and the Confucian appendixes:--these constitute the Yî.

The work was from the first intimately connected with the practice of divination, which, we know from the Shû, entered largely into the religion of the ancient Chinese. This goes far to account for its obscure and enigmatical character; but at the same time there occur in it, though in a fragmentary manner, so many metaphysical, physical, moral, and religious utterances, that the student of it is gradually brought under a powerful fascination. In consequence, moreover, of its use in divination, it was exempted by the superstitious tyrant of *Kh*in from the flames to which he condemned all the other Confucian literature in B.C. 213. It has thus come down to us entire, and a translation of the whole of it will be given.

An additional interest belongs to the Yî as the fountainhead from which the comparatively modern philosophers of the Sung dynasty (began A.D. 960) professed to draw what has been called their 'atheo-political' system. As an appendix to the translation of the Yî, there will be given an outline of that system, and an attempt will be made to test the correctness of the interpretation of this classic by its authors.

The fourth of the great classics is the Lî *K*î, or the Record of Rites; but it is only one of a class that we may denominate the Constitutional and Ritual Books of ancient China, especially under the *K*âu dynasty. They are often mentioned together as 'the Three Rituals.' The first of them: is called *K*âu Lî, the Rites of *K*âu, and also *K*âu Kwan, the Officers of *K*âu, which latter is the better name for it. It is the official book of the *K*âu dynasty. The prevailing opinion is that it was the production of the duke of *K*âu; and if it were not composed in its present form by him, it contains, no doubt, the substance of the regulations which he made for the administration of the government, after the dynasty of

Shang had passed, through the achievements of his father and brother, into that of Kâu. Under the various departments in which that administration was arranged, it enumerates, the principal and subordinate officers belonging to each, and describes their duties. After the fires of *Kh*in, the work was recovered nearly complete in the first century B.C. A good translation of the whole work was published in 1851, at Paris, by M. Edouard Biot.

The second Ritual Collection bears the name of Î Lî, which has beep translated 'the Decorum Ritual,' and 'the Rules of Demeanour.' It was recovered earlier than the former, and is as voluminous. It consists of the rules by which a scholar or officer should regulate his behaviour on social and state occasions. It has not yet, so far as I know, been translated into any European language.

The third Collection, more voluminous than either of the others, was made also under the Han dynasty. In the first century B.C., it was an immense compilation of 214 books arranged in five divisions. The 214 were reduced to eighty-five by Tâi Teh, a scholar of the time, and his eighty-five again to forty-six by a cousin, called Tâi *Kh*ăng. Three other books were added to these towards the end of the Han period, forming forty-nine in all, which have come down to us under the title of Lî *K*ì, or 'the Record of Rites,' and have long constituted by imperial authority one of the five King. An abridgment of this work was translated by M. J. M. Callery, at Turin, in 1853, with the title,--'Lî *K*ì, ou Memorial des Rites, traduit pour la première fois du Chinois, et accompagné de notes, de commentaires, et du texte original.' Callery's work, however, contains only thirty-six of the forty-nine books of the Lî *K*ì, and most of those thirty-six in a condensed form. Whether it will be possible to give in these Sacred Books of the East translations of the whole of

these Rituals; and if that be not possible, by what principles to be guided in the selection of portions of them:--these are questions to be determined after further deliberation. Many passages contain more of the mind of Confucius himself on the sacrificial worship of his country, and the ideas underlying it, than we find elsewhere.

But it must not be forgotten that these ritual books do not throw so valuable a light on the ancient religion of China as the older Shû and Shih. They belong to the period of the *K*âu dynasty, and do not go back as contemporaneous records to the dynasties beyond it and the still remoter age of Yâo and Shun. The views of Confucius, moreover, as given in them, do not come to us at first hand. They were gathered up by the Han scholars five and six centuries after his death, nor can we be sure that these did not sometimes put ideas of their own into the mouth of the sage, and make additions to the writings which were supposed, correctly or incorrectly, to have come from his immediate disciples.

We owe the fifth and last of the Kings of China to Confucius himself. It is what he called *Kh*un *Kh*iû, or 'the Spring and Autumn,' a very brief chronicle compiled by him of the annals of his native state of Lû for 242 years, from B.C. 722 to 481. But there is not much to be gleaned from it for the Sacred Texts; and if we were to launch out into the three supplements to it of Ẓo *Kh*iû-ming, Kung-yang, and Kû-liang, the result would not repay the labour. A translation of the whole of Ẓo's supplement much the most important, is given in my work on the *Kh*un *Kh*iû, published at Hong Kong in 1872.

There is another short treatise attributed to Confucius,--the Hsiâo King, or 'Classic of Filial Piety.' Though not like one of the five great works that have been described, it was the first to receive the denomination of a King,--and that from

the lips of the sage himself,--if the account which we have received of the matter is to be relied on. This little work does not come to us, like the *Kh*un *Kh*iû, as directly from the pencil of Confucius, but in the shape of conversations between him and his disciple *Z*ăng-*z*ze, put on record in the first place, probably, by some members of *Z*ăng's school. No portion of the ancient literature has more exercised the minds and engaged the attention of many of the emperors of successive dynasties. The Hsiâo seems to me an attempt to construct a religion on the basis of the cardinal virtue of Filial Piety, and is open to criticism in many respects. A translation of it is given in the present volume.

The classical books are often spoken of as being 'the five King' and 'the four Shû.' The King have all been separately referred to above; the four Shû is an abbreviation for the Shû or Books of the four Philosophers. The first is the Lun Yü, or 'Discourses and Conversations,' occupied chiefly with sayings of Confucius and conversations between him and many of his disciples. The second is the Works of Mencius, perhaps the greatest thinker and writer of the Confucian school after the Master. I hope to be able to give both these works. The third of the Shû is the Tâ Hsio, or 'Great Learning,' ascribed, like the Hsiâo, to *Z*ăng-*z*ze. The fourth is the Kung Yung, or 'Doctrine of the Mean,' the production of *Z*ze-sze, the sage's grandson. Both of these treatises, however, are taken from the Lî *K*î. The whole of the Four Books were translated and published by me in 1861.

III. The third Religion in China is what is called Tâoism. It was, like Confucianism, of native origin, and its acknowledged founder was Lî R, called also Lî Po-yang, and, after his death, Lî Tan. More commonly he is designated Lâo-*z*ze, translated by some 'the Old Philosopher,' and by others 'the Old Boy' from a fabulous story that his mother carried

him in her womb for seventy-two years, so that when he was at length cut out of it, his hair was already white. His birth is referred to the year 604 B.C., so that he was between fifty and sixty years older than Confucius. There are accounts, hardly reliable, of interviews and discussions between the two men.

Lâo-*3*ze's system often goes with English writers by the name of Rationalism; but if that name be retained, the term must be taken in quite a peculiar sense. His doctrine was that of the Tâo, but it is not easy to determine what English term will best express the meaning of the Chinese character. The only record which we have of Lâo-*3*ze's views is the Tâo-teh King, or 'Classic of Tâo and Virtue,' a treatise of no great length. It was published at Paris in 1842, with a translation in French, by the late Stanislas Julien, under the title of 'Le Livre de la Voie et de la Vertu.' Appealing to the views of *K*wang-*3*ze and other writers of the Tâoist school, M. Julien says that 'Le Tâo est dépourvu d'action, de pensée, de jugement, d'intelligence,' and adds that 'it appears impossible therefore to take it for the primordial reason, the Sublime Intelligence, which created and rules the world.'

A translation in English was published, in 1868, by the Rev. Dr. Chalmers of Canton, under the title of 'the Speculations in Metaphysics, Polity, and Morality, of "the Old Philosopher."' Dr. Chalmers retains the term Tâo in his English Text, and says, 'I have thought it better to leave the word Tâo untranslated, both because it has given the name to the sect,--the Tâoists,--and because no English word is its exact equivalent. Three terms suggest themselves,--the Way, Reason, and the Word; but they are all liable to objection. Were we guided by etymology, "the Way" would come nearest to the original, and in one or two passages the idea of a Way seems to be in the term; but this is too

materialistic to serve the purpose of a translation. Reason again seems to be more like a quality or attribute of some conscious Being than Tâo is. I would translate it by the Word in the sense of the Logos, but this would be like settling the question which I wish to leave open, viz. what amount of resemblance there is between the Logos of the New Testament and this Tâo, which is its nearest representative in Chinese.'

Two other translations of the Tâo-teh King have appeared, both in German:--Lao-tsze's Tao Teh King, aus dem Chinesischen ins Deutsche übersetzt, eingeleitet, und commentirt, von Victor von Strauss (Leipzig, 1870)' and 'Lao-tse, Tao-te-king, "Der Weg zur Tugend," aus dem Chinesischen übersetzt und erklärt von Reinhold von Plänckner,' also published at Leipzig. Strauss closely follows Julien, while Plänckner allows himself great freedom in dealing with his original. Notwithstanding these four attempts to give the meaning of 'the Old Philosopher' in three European languages, there is room for a new version, which will be submitted to the reader in due course. It is only by an intense and long-continued study of the original that we can come to an agreement as to the meaning of the Tâo. I propose not only to give a translation the Tâo-teh King, but also of the works of *K*wang-*ʒ*ze, the most remarkable of the early writers of the Tâoist school.

Whatever Lâo-*ʒ*ze intended by the Tâo, Tâoism has, in the course of time, borrowed largely, both from Confucianism and Buddhism. It inculcates a morality of a high order in some respects, and has developed a system of grotesque beliefs and practices, ministering to superstition, and intended to refine and preserve the breath of life. Its practical teachings will be exhibited in the most popular of all the Tâoist writing,--the treatise on 'Actions and their

Recompenses,' and perhaps in one or more, besides, of the, characteristic productions of the system.

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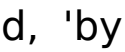
The version of the Shû that appears in this volume is substantially the same as that in the third volume of my large edition of the Chinese Classics, and which was published in 1865. I wrote out the whole afresh, however, having before me not only my own version, but the earlier translations of P. Gaubil in French and Dr. Medhurst in English. Frequent reference was made likewise to a larger apparatus of native commentaries than I had formerly used. Going to the text anew, after more than twelve years devoted mainly to the continuous study of the Chinese classics, I yet hardly discovered any errors which it was necessary to correct. A few verbal alterations were made to make the meaning clearer. Only in one case will a reader, familiar with the former version, be struck with any alteration in this. The Chinese character 帝 (Tî), applied repeatedly to the ancient Yâo and Shun in the commencing books of the classic, and once in the 27th Book of the fifth Part, was there translated by 'emperor,' while it is left untranslated in the present volume, and its name transferred to the English text.

Before adopting this change, I had considered whether I ought to translate Tî in all other instances of its occurrence in the Shû (and invariably in the Shih), and its intensified form Shang Tî ( 上帝 ) by our term 'God.' Gaubil rendered Tî for the most part by 'le Seigneur,' and Shang Tî by 'le Souverain Maître,' adding sometimes to these names Tî and Shang Tî in brackets. Medhurst translated Tî by 'the

Supreme,' and 'the Supreme Ruler,' and Shang Tî by 'the Supreme Ruler.' More than twenty five years ago I came to the conclusion that Tî was the term corresponding in Chinese to our 'God,' and that Shang Tî was the same, with the addition of Shang, equal to 'Supreme.' In this view I have never wavered, and I have rendered both the names by 'God' in all the volumes of the Chinese Classics thus far translated and published.

What made me pause before doing so in the present volume, was the consideration that the object of 'the Sacred Texts of the Religions of the East,' as I understand it, is to give translations of those texts without any colouring in the first place from the views of the translators. Could it be that my own view of Tî, as meaning God, had grown up in the beat of our controversies in China as to the proper characters to be used for the words God and Spirit, in translating the Sacred Scriptures? A reader, confronted everywhere by the word God, might be led to think more highly of the primitive religion of China than he ought to think. Should I leave the names Tî and Shang Tî untranslated? Or should I give for them, instead of God, the terms Ruler and Supreme Ruler? I could not see my way to adopt either of these courses.

The term Heaven (  , pronounced Thien) is used everywhere in the Chinese Classics for the Supreme Power, ruling and governing all the affairs of men with an omnipotent and omniscient righteousness and goodness; and this vague term is constantly interchanged in the same paragraph, not to say the same sentence, with the personal names Tî and Shang Tî. Thien and Tî in their written forms are perfectly distinct. Both of them were among the earliest characters, and enter, though not largely, as the phonetical

element into other characters of later formation. According to the oldest Chinese dictionary, the Shwo Wăn (A.D. 100), Thien is formed, 'by association of ideas,' from yî (  ), 'one,' and tâ (  ), 'great,' meaning what is one and undivided, and great. Tâi Thung, of our thirteenth century, in his remarkable dictionary, the Liû Shû Kû, explains the top line of it as indicating 'what is above,' so that the significance of the character is what is above and great.' In both these dictionaries Tî (  ) is derived from  or  (shang), 'above,' or 'what is above:' and they say that the whole character is of phonetical formation, in which I am not able to follow them [3]; but Tâi Thung gives the following account of its meaning:--'Tî is the honourable designation of lordship and rule,' adding, 'Therefore Heaven is called Shang Tî; the five Elementary Powers are called the five Tî; and the Son of Heaven [4]--that is, the Sovereign--is called Tî.' Here then is the name Heaven, by which the idea of Supreme Power in the absolute is vaguely expressed; and when the Chinese would speak of it by a personal name, they use the terms Tî and Shang Tî;--saying, I believe, what our early fathers did, when they began to use the word God. Tî is the name which has been employed in China for this concept for fully 5000 years. Our word God fits, naturally into every passage where the character occurs in the old Chinese Classics, save those to which I referred above on p. xxiii. It never became with the people a proper name like the Zeus of the Greeks. I can no more translate Tî or Shang Tî by any other word but God than I can translate *z*ăn (  ) by anything else but man.

The preceding is a brief abstract of the reasoning by which I was determined to retain the term God for Tî and

Shang Tî in this volume, excepting in the cases that have called for these observations. But in the account of Tî which I have adduced from Tâi Thung, it is said that 'the sovereign is also called Tî;' and most of my readers know that Hwang Tî ( 皇帝 ) is the title of the emperor of China. How did this application of the name arise? Was it in the first place a designation of the ruler or emperor; and was it then given to the Supreme Power, when the vague Heaven failed to satisfy the thinker and worshipper, and he wished to express his recognition of a personal Being who was to himself his almighty ruler? If these questions be answered in the affirmative, Tî would be a name applied to the Supreme Being, just as we rise from the paternal relation among ourselves and call him Father. Or, on the other hand, was Tî the designation of the Supreme Lord and Ruler, corresponding to our God, and was it subsequently applied to the earthly ruler, thereby deifying him, just as the title Divus was given to a Roman emperor? I believe that it was in this latter way that Tî came to be used of the sovereigns of China; and therefore in again publishing a translation of the Shû, I resolved, that where the appellation is given in it to Yâo and Shun, and it is only to them that it is given, I would retain the Chinese term instead of rendering it, as formerly, by 'emperor.'

The following are the reasons which weighed with me in coming to this resolution:

First, the first really historical sovereign of China who used the title of Hwang Tî was the founder of the *Kh*in dynasty; and he assumed it in B.C. 221, when he had subjugated all the sovereignties into which the feudal kingdom of *K*âu had become divided, and was instituting the despotic empire that has since subsisted.

The *K*âu dynasty had continued for 867 years, from B.C. 1122 to 256, and its rulers had been styled Wang or kings.

*K*âu superseded the dynasty of Shang or Yin, that had endured for 644 years, from B.C. 1766 to 1123; and its rulers had similarly been styled Wang or kings.

Shang superseded the dynasty of Hsiâ, which had lasted for 439 years, from B.C. 2205 to 1767, and its rulers had been styled Wang, or kings, and Hâu, or sovereigns.

Thus, from the great Yü, B.C. 2205 to B.C. 221, that is, for nearly 2000 years, there was no Tî or emperor in China. During all that time the people had on the whole been increasing in numbers, and the nation growing in territory;--how did it come to pass, that the higher title, if it had previously existed, gave place to an inferior one?

Prior to the dynasty of Hsiâ, with the exception of the period of Yâo and Shun, the accounts which we have of the history of China have been, and ought to be, pronounced 'fabulous' and 'legendary.' The oldest documents that purport to be historical are the books in the Shû about Yâo and Shun, and even they do not profess to be contemporaneous with those personages. The earlier accounts open with a Phan-kû, in whose time 'heaven and earth were first separated.' To him succeeded the period of the San Hwang, or Three August Lines, consisting of twelve Celestial, eleven Terrestrial. and nine Human Sovereigns, who ruled together about 50,000 years. After them come a host of different Lines, till we arrive at the Wû Tî, or Five Emperors. The first of these is commonly said to be Fû-hsî, while he and two others are sometimes put down as the San Hwang, in order to bring in Yâo and Shun as the last two of the Tîs.

I have entered into these details because of the account which we have of the king of *Kh*in's assuming the title of

Hwang Tî. We are told:--'As soon as the king had brought the whole country into subjection, thinking that he united in himself the virtues of the three Hwangs, and that his merits exceeded those of the five Tîs, he changed his title into Hwang Tî.' The three Hwangs are entirely fabulous, and the five Tîs are, to say the least, legendary. That there were either Hwangs or Tîs ruling in China before the age of the Hsiâ dynasty cannot be admitted.

Second, it has been stated above, and is shown in the Introduction to the Shû, pp. 13-19, that the books in the Shû, previous to the Hsiâ dynasty, are not historical in the sense of their being contemporaneous documents of the times about which they speak. They profess to be compilations merely from older documents; and when they speak of Yâo and Shun as Tîs, the title Tî precedes the name or designation, instead of following it, as it ought to do, according to Chinese usage, if Tî is to be taken in the sense of emperor. Yâo Tî would be 'the emperor Yâo,' but we have Tî Yâo, where Tî performs the part of an adjective. King Wăn, the founder of the *K*âu dynasty, is invariably mentioned as Wăn Wang, 'Wăn the king.' To say Wang Wăn would be felt at once by every Chinese scholar to be inadmissible; and not less so is Tî Yâo for 'the emperor Yâo.' It was the perception of this violation of usage in Chinese composition, five years ago, that first showed me the error of translating Tî Yâo and Tî Shun by 'the emperor Yâo' and 'the emperor Shun.' It is true that in the early books of the Shû, we have Tî used alone, without the adjunct of Yâo or Shun, and referring to those personages. In those cases it does perform the part of a substantive, but its meaning depends on that which belonged to it as an adjective in the phrases Tî Yâo and Tî Shun. If it be ascertained that in these it means

'the Deified,' then when used singly as a noun, it will mean Divus, or the Divine One.

Third, the sovereigns of the Hsiâ, the Shang, and the Kâu dynasties, it has been seen, were styled Wang and not Tî. Confucius speaks repeatedly in the Analects of Yâo and Shun, but he never calls either of them by the title of Tî. Mencius, however, uses it both of the one and the other, when he is quoting in substance from the accounts of them in the Shû. This confirms the view that the early books of the Shû were current after the middle of the *K*âu dynasty, very much in the form in which we now have them; and the question arises whether we can show how the application of the title Tî as given in them to Yâo and Shun arose. We can.

The fourth Book of the Li Kî is called Yüeh Ling, 'the Monthly Record of the Proceedings of Government.' In it certain sacrificial observances paid to the five Tîs are distributed through the four seasons. The Tîs are Fû-hsî, Shăn-năng, Yû-hsiung or Hsien-yüan, *K*in-thien, and Kâo-yang, who are styled Thâi Hâo (the Greatly Resplendent), Yen Tî (the Blazing Tî), Hwang Tî (the Yellow Tî), Shâo Hâo (the Less Resplendent), and *K*wan Hsü (the Solely Correct); with each Tî there is associated in the ceremony a personage of inferior rank, who is styled Shăn (  = a Spirit). The language descriptive of the ceremony is the same in all the cases, with the exception of the names and months. Thus the first entry is:--'In the first month of spring, on such and such days, the Tî is Thâi Hâo, and the Shân is Kâu-mang.' Now this Kâu-mang was a son of Shâo Hâo, several hundreds of years later than Thâi Hâo, so that the associating them together, in this ceremony could only have arisen in later times.

However we explain the ceremony thus curtly described; whether we see in it the growing prevalence of nature-worship, or an illustration of the practice of worshipping ancient heroes and worthies:--Tî appears in the account of it plainly used in the sense of God. In each of the five instances, we have a Tî and a Shan, not an emperor and a spirit, but a God and a Spirit,--a Spirit standing in the same relation to the God, that *Kh*ăn ( 臣 = a subject or minister) stands in to a ruler. Thus it was that, by a process of deification, the title of Tî came to be given, in the time of the *K*âu dynasty, to the great names, fabulous and legendary, of antiquity; and thus it was that it was applied to the heroes Yâo and Shun. It may well be that the title Hwang Tî, used by a Chinese of the present emperor or of any emperor of the past, does not call up to his mind any other idea than that of a human sovereign; but being satisfied as to the proper signification of Tî as God, and as to the process by which the title came to be applied to the ancient Yâo and Shun, I could no longer render it, when used of them in the Shû, by emperor, and elected to leave it untranslated in the present volume.

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To any unimportant changes of translation it is unnecessary to refer. The dates B.C. in the introductions and notes are all one year more than in the translations formerly published. They are thus brought into accordance with those of P. Gaubil and the useful Chinese Chronological Tables of the late Mr. Mayers.

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The changes in the transliteration of Chinese names are very considerable. As foreigners are now resident in Peking, it seemed proper to adopt the pronunciation of the capital as given by Sir T. F. Wade in his Hsin Ching Lu and Tzŭ Erh Chi. At the same time, in order to secure as near an approach as possible to uniformity in all the volumes of the Sacred Books of the East, the letters employed were made to conform to those in Professor Max Müller's Scheme for the Transliteration of Oriental Alphabets. It was not easy at first to do this, for Chinese, having no alphabet, reluctated against being made to appear as if it had; but use has more than reconciled me to the method now employed. It was not possible to introduce into the table all the diphthongs in which Chinese speech is rich. The reader has to be informed that i before another vowel or a diphthong approximates to the sound of y, so that the whole utterance is still monosyllabic. The powers of *R* and ze must be heard before they can be appreciated.

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To call the attention of the, reader to passages in the Shû, embodying, more or less distinctly, religious ideas, an asterisk (*) will be found appended to them.

J*L*.

OXFORD,
18th April, 1879.

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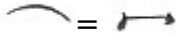
## Footnotes

1. I put the introduction of Buddhism into China before our Christian era thus uncertainly, because of what is said in the article on the history of Buddhism in China, in the Records of the Sui Dynasty (A.D. 589-618), the compilers of which say that before the Han dynasty (began B.C. 202) Buddhism was not heard of in China. They refer to contrary statements as what 'some say,' and proceed to relate circumstances inconsistent with them. It is acknowledged on all sides that Buddhist books were first brought to China between A.D. 60 and 70.

2. Mr. Beal (Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese, pp. 1, 2) says that 'the first complete edition of the Buddhist Canon in China dates from the Seventh century; that a second and much enlarged edition of it, called the Southern Collection, was prepared in A.D. 1410; that a third edition, called the Northern Collection, appeared about A.D. 1590; which again was renewed and enlarged in the year 1723.'

3. It is said in the Shwo Wăn that the phonetical element in Tî is  ; but this is pronounced *3*hze. Neither in form nor sound is there any similitude between it and Tî. An error, probably, has crept into the text. Dr. Chalmers, in his treatise on 'the Origin of the Chinese,' attempts (p. 12) to analyse the character into its constituent parts in the following way:--'The peculiar nature of the Chinese written language has done good service in stereotyping the primitive p. xxv belief in one Supreme Tî (  ), who is  "great," over, and  , "ruling," heaven (  ) and earth (  )' This is ingenious, but not entirely satisfactory. The three last steps are so; but the finding  (great) in the top part of  does not in the same way carry conviction to the mind.

4. Thien *3*ze, 'the Son of Heaven,' is a common designation of the sovereign of China. Originally *3*ze performed in the expression the part of a verb, and Thien *3*ze was equivalent to 'he whom Heaven sons,' that is, considers and treats as its son. See the second line of the ode, p. 318.

# INTRODUCTION.

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# CHAPTER I.
# THE NATURE AND HISTORY OF THE SHÛ.

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1. The Shû is the most ancient of the Chinese classical books, and contains historical documents of various kinds, relating to the period from about B.C. 2357-627. The character Shû shows us by its composition that it denotes 'the pencil speaking,' and hence it is often used as a designation of the written characters of the language. This, indeed, was the earliest meaning of it, but from this the transition was easy to its employment in the sense of writings or books, applicable to any consecutive compositions; and we find it further specially employed by Confucius and others to designate the historical remains of antiquity, in distinction from the poems, the accounts of rites, and other monuments of former times. Not that those other monuments might not also be called by the general name of Shû. The peculiar significancy of the term, however, was well established, and is retained to the present day.

The book has come down to us in a mutilated condition; but even as it is said to have existed in the time of Confucius, it did not profess to contain a history of China,

and much less, to give the annals of that history. It was simply a collection of historical memorials, extending over a space of about 1700 years, but on no connected method, and with frequent and great gaps between them.

The name King (now in Pekinese *K*ing) was not added to Shû till the time of the Han dynasty (began B.C. 202). If Confucius applied it to any of the classical works, it was to the classic of Filial Piety, as will be seen in the Introduction to the translation of that work. The Han scholars, however, when engaged in collecting and digesting the ancient literary monuments of their country, found it convenient to distinguish the most valuable of them, that had been acknowledged by Confucius, as King, meaning what was canonical and of unchallengeable authority.

2. In the Confucian Analects, the sage and one disciples quote from the Shû by the simple formula, 'The Shû says.' In the Great Learning, four different books or chapters of the classic, all in it as we have it now, are mentioned, each by its proper name. Mencius sometimes uses the same formula as Confucius, and at other times designates particular books. It is most natural for us to suppose that Confucius, when he spoke of the Shû, had in his mind's eye a collection of documents bearing that title.

One passage in Mencius seems to put it beyond a doubt that the Shû existed as such a collection in his time. Having said that 'it would be better to be without the Shû than to give entire credit to it,' be makes immediate reference to one of the books of our classic by name, and adds, 'In the Completion of the War I select two or three passages only, and believe them [1].' In Mo-*z*ze, Hsün-*z*ze, and other writers of the last two centuries of the *K*âu dynasty, the Shû is quoted in the same way, and also frequently with the specification of its parts or larger divisions, 'The Books of

Yü,' 'of Hsiâ,' 'of Shang,' 'of Kâu.' And, in fine, in many of the narratives of Ꝛo *Kh*iû-ming's commentary on the Spring and Autumn, the Shû is quoted in the same way, even when the narratives are about men and events long anterior to the sage [2]. All these considerations establish the thesis of this paragraph, that the Shû was an existing collection of historical documents before Confucius.

3. From the above paragraph it follows that Confucius did not compile the collection of documents that form the Shû. The earliest assertion that he did so we have from Khung An-kwo, his descendant in the eleventh generation, in the second century, B.C. Recounting the labours of his ancestor, An-kwo says, in the Preface to his edition of the Shû, that 'he examined and arranged the old literary monuments and records, deciding to commence with Yâo and Shun, and to come down to the times of *K*âu. Of those deserving to be handed down to other ages and to supply permanent lessons, he made in all one hundred books, consisting of canons, counsels, instructions, announcements, speeches, and charges.' The same thing is stated by Sze-mâ *Kh*ien in his Historical Records, completed about B.C. 100, but *Kh*ien's information was derived from An-Kwo. Such a compilation would have been in harmony with the character which Confucius gave of himself, as 'a transmitter and not a maker, believing and loving the ancients [3],' and with what his grandson says of him in the Doctrine of the Mean, that 'he handed down (the lessons of) Yâo and Shun, as if they had been his ancestors, and elegantly displayed those of Wăn and Wû, whom he took for his model [4].'

We have seen, however, that the collection existed in his time and before it. Did it then, as An-kwo says, consist of a hundred books? His authority for saying so was a Preface, which was found along with the old tablets of the Shû that