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Text A1: *Shì* as a Cultural-linguistic and Traditionary Text

The word *shì* appears frequently in current Chinese terms, for example: *xíngshì*, the propensity (tendency) or dynamic of the situation; *shìlì*, to judge someone's status based on one's power (*shì*); *caíshì*, the power of the wealthy; *dìshì*, the terrain or geographical area judged to be advantageous or disadvantageous; or as *shì zaì bì xíng*, to say that something to be done is imperative (as being forced). Without exception, the key word that determines the meanings reflected in these various combinations is *shì* which first became widely used in pre-Qín China.

It has been noted that *shì* (tendency) was a popular idea in all pre-Qín schools,[1] which appeared around the sixth to the third centuries BC. It has continuously appeared in later writings down the centuries. For example, in a text from the Jìn Dynasty (266–420 AD), we already see *shì rú pòzhú*, which first appeared in the "Xíshū" chapter of *Dù Yù zhùan* which describes that "(a military action) as like the splitting of a bamboo culm; once the knife is carried down several nodes of the culm, the bamboo will be split into half smoothly," i.e., "once the strength of the army has successfully manifested itself."[2]

1. In late *Chunqiu*, in Sun Wu's *The Art of War*, one finds a description of *shì* as a crossbow stretched to its maximum, *shì rú zhāng nú*, which appeared in "*Shì Biān*," in *The Art of War* by Sun Wu in late *Chūnqiū*. In another chapter in the same book it also says, *bīng wú cháng shì*, *shuī wú cháng xíng*, that the array of troops follows no constant disposition, just like water flows in no fixed form, see Sun Wu, "*Xūshí*," in *The Art of War*.

2. Translated by me. In Chinese it says, "*Jīn bīng wēi yǐ zhèn, shì rú pò zhú, pì rú pò zhú, shù jié yǐ hoù, jiē yǐn rèn eŕ jěi.*" (See "Xí shū," in *Dù Yù zhùan*.)

Shì, implying timeliness and tendency, is used in a coined phrase, *shíshì*. This meaning is best elaborated on in the works of Wáng Fūzhī in the Late Ming dynasty. In his interpretation of *Yìzhuàn*, he creatively combines his idea of *shì* with *Yìzhuàn* philosophy. In his writing, we can see how time and tendency, or propensity, are related. For example, he says, "If the moments differ, the *tendencies* differ, the logics which govern the processes also differ."[3] And "the *tendency* depends on the opportunity of the *moment* just as the internal logic depends on the *tendency*."[4] Also "(o)ne must appraise the *moment* in such a way as to detect its *tendency* and, consequently, seek to conform with its coherence."[5]

I do not intend to trace the etymology of *shì*. In this chapter the survey of *shì* will be limited to some seminal texts from pre-Qín China, the purpose of which is to construct the semantic scope for *shì* as a text. I have, in the introduction, explained the idea of text, intertext, intertextuality, and text within texts. In this chapter, I will treat *shì* as a cultural-linguistic text, and see it through Gadamer's lens as a traditionary text, which means that it has its *effect* in contemporary oral and written texts, with its meanings born far earlier, and have been passed down through generations.[6] I also see it as a text appropriated by various thinkers who used it in distinctive ways. While each may contribute to one or more of the facets of meaning, the fluidity between different shades of meaning is maintained. Where it appears in the texts of these thinkers, it appears as a text within each individual text. The maintenance of fluidity between texts will allow us to preserve as many aspects as possible of the ways power had been defined in these early texts.

These inclusive meanings, as will be understood later in this chapter, will be Text A1. In the introduction I designate my initial intersubjective experience of *shì* as Text 0. Text A1 will serve as a motif that is to be read into Text 0, as well as into Text A2, *Yìzhuàn*. The integrated Texts A1 and A2 will be the Text A that will form a Chinese Christian double vision hermeneutics with Text B (the Pauline Texts B1 + B2).

3. Wáng, *Sònglùn*, ch. 15, 260, cited from Jullien, *Propensity*, 209. In Chinese, it says, "*Shì yì ér shì yì, shì yì ér lǐ yì*."

4. Wáng, from one section of *Dútōngjiànlùn*, ch. 12, "Mǐndì," 386, cited from Jullien, *The Propensity of Things*, 209. In Chinese it says, "*Shì yīn hū shì, lǐ yīn hū shì*." This section argues about the unavoidable fall of King Mǐn.

5. Wáng, *Sònglùn*, ch. 4, 106, cited from Jullien, *Propensity*, 209. In Chinese it says, "*Zhī shí yǐ shěn shì* (*shì* as an event or a thing), *yīn shì* (propensity or circumstance) *ér qiú hé yú lǐ*." Here and the above, italic mine.

6. With "effect," I am inferring from Gadamer's "historically effected consciousness."

1. To Survey Shì in Early Literary Contexts

As stated in the introductory chapter, *Yìzhuàn* reflects an integration of philosophical ideas from the pre-Qín period, including those of Confucianism, Daoism, the Yīn-yángjiā, Fǎjiā (Legalist or standardizer), and probably Bīngjiā (military strategist) schools with a predominantly Confucian philosophy. The division of different schools has been a convention in the study of pre-Qín philosophy. This has been recently rejected, for example by Michael Puett, who argues that it is unhelpful and often misleading to categorize pre-Qín texts according to schools.[7] However, to help us appreciate the dialectic tension between the Confucian and other schools especially Fǎjiā, the legalist or standardizer, it is better to retain the conventional classification. As François Jullien points out, there had been opposition between the Confucians or the "moralists" represented by Mèngzǐ and those he called the "realists" and "legalists."[8] For Confucians, what was important was "personal merit," while for the realists, it was "the occupation" of the "position of authority."[9] The study of *shì* here takes this division for granted so that the distinctive use of the word *shì* in the texts as shown in the following can be better appreciated.

Viewing the popularity of *shì* among these different schools, one wonders what was the socio-political background—the Warring States—they shared. The Warring States era reflected a time of social turmoil and political instability in early China. It was also one of the most dynamic and vibrant periods for philosophical debate, from the perspective of politics or virtue. It continued and reflected what had already been chaotic in the Chūnqiū period. According to Xúnzǐ's record, in the early Chūnqiū period, there were known to be seventy-one states, each with a designated feudal-lord.[10] By the time of Qín's conquest the other states, only six states remained, namely, Yān, Qí, Chǔ, Hán, Wèi and Zhào. To use Victor H. Mair's words, the Chūnqiū and the Warring States periods were marked by "an intensification of interstate rivalry and a growing tendency to use

7. Puett, *To Become a God*, 25 n. 44. He contends that many of the so-called "schools" only "first appeared in our received texts in the essay of 'Yaozhi,' by Sima Tan (d. 110 BC)." Thus, he argues that "our concern should be to explicate the claims of each text within the debates of the time. Discussion of these claims in terms of a 'school' is seldom helpful." "Yaozhi" should be "Lùn liùjiā yaòzhǐ"; see also Hansen, *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought*, 345–46.

8. Jullien, *Efficacy*, ix, 30–31.

9. Jullien, *Efficacy*, 31.

10. See Xúnzǐ, "Rú Xiào: 1."

military force to achieve domination, rather than relying on diplomacy and relatively small-scale armed conflicts to maintain the alliances and balances that had characterized the Spring and Autumn period."[11] In other words, during that period, it was normal that a king would measure his own power by the display of power, i.e. *shì* among neighboring states.

Under such political circumstances, the relationship between "a ruler and the feudal lords" was inevitably "ambivalent."[12] One could imagine that the king of Zhoū competed with feudal lords and the feudal lords with one another for power and domination in terms of how big a territory they owned and how strong a military power they were able to deploy. The concern of the weaker states, however, was how to avoid confronting the greater powers.

In that context, the political philosophers engaged themselves in debate about the merits of 'the kingly way' (*wáng daò*) and the abusiveness of 'the autocratic way' (*bà daò*), the use of moral power and the power of authoritative position and influence (*quán shì*).[13] The autocratic and authoritative ways are always associated with *shì*. As Jullien points out, a prince who manipulates his subjects is like the spirits that haunt the human world. He "never has to 'make an effort,' since his subjects," as if being haunted, "feel themselves to be determined, not by some external causality, but simply by their own spontaneity."[14] Thus, one sees similar domination, which is invisible but is infused in one's body and soul.[15] To make use of a *shì*, as "[t]he art of a ruler," is to "[get] everyone else to contribute toward the maintenance of his own position."[16] Such was the background where *shì* appeared.

This brief depiction of the socio-political environment of that period can at least allow us to have a basic awareness of the nuances of the word *shì* as used in the works reviewed below. I will limit myself to reviewing the work of Sūn Wǔ (sixth century BC), Hán Fēi or Hán Fēizǐ (280–233 BC),[17] and Xúnzǐ (c.310/2–230 BC). Sūn Wǔ represents the militarist, Hán Fēi the Legalist, and Xúnzǐ the major post-Mencius Confucianist schools

11. Mair, 23.

12. Mair, 23–24.

13. For an early discussion of this, see Xúnzǐ, "Wáng Bà", check online the Chinese Text Project at http://ctext.org/xunzi/wang-ba. John Knoblock translates bà as "lord-protector." For his, see Knoblock, *Xunzi: Book 7–12*, 140.

14. Jullien, *Propensity*, 51.

15. For this aspect of power, see my discussion of Pierre Bourdieu below.

16. He refers to a passage in *Huáinánzǐ*, chapter 9. See Jullien, *Propensity*, 49.

17. For the dating of *Sūn Wǔ*, see the following.

during the Warring States period.[18] I will try to reveal how this word was used by them. At the same time, the tug-of-war between the Legalist or Standardizers' and Confucian political ideologies will be hinted at.[19]

The dialectic relationship between a Chinese pastor's preoccupation with *shì* and Confucian way of life based on moral excellence (*dé*) that permeates the Chinese psyche in general as a cultural moral ethos will be at the background of the discussion of *shì* vis-à-vis the Confucian-Legalist dialectic ideological relationship.

1.1: Sūn Wǔ

The authorship of *Sūnzǐ Bīngfǎ*, *The Art of War* is conventionally attributed to Sūn Wú. The dating for Sūn Wǔ himself, and the evidence of his existence are hard to ascertain, as is argued by Mair. Nevertheless, "[t]he conventional view is that the author was a man named Sun Wu who was a great military theorist and who allegedly lived around the end of the Spring and Autumn period, making him a contemporary of Confucius."[20] According to John Minford, he was possibly alive roughly a hundred years before Sūn Bìn (380–316 BC), a contemporary of Mèngzǐ (371–289).[21] As for the dating of the book, Mair argues "the pattern of war, battle tactics, the conduct of armies, strategic planning, and weaponry" are irrelevant to the Spring and Autumn period but perfectly compatible with the Warring States period.[22] What matters here is that the book and its author were contemporary with *Yìzhuàn*, around the time of the Warring States. For the purpose of this thesis, these texts will be attributed to the pre-Qín period to match with the presupposition that philosophers during that

18. Other major theorists who had discussed *shì* include Shèn Daò (350–275? BC), Guǎn Zhòng (685–645 BC), Guǐgǔzǐ (475–221 BC), Lǔ Bùweǐ (290?–235 BC), to Hàn dynasty in Huáinánzǐ (206 BC– AD 9) and Wáng Chōng (AD 27–97?). Ames' work (*The Art of Rulership*) does not cover Guǐgǔzǐ and Wáng Chōng. See also Jullien, *Efficacy*.

19. That the Legalism and Confucianism represent rival voices in many ideas in pre-Qín is a basic assumption among scholars, see Cheng's discussion in "Legalism versus Confucianism."

20. Mair, 12.

21. See Minford, xx.

22. He thus rules out any date that is before the Warring States. He believes the whole corpus "was not all written by the same person." Thus no single date can be attributed to it. See Mair, 27–28.

time had a variety of philosophical and political ideas at their disposal to develop individual standpoints and arguments.

Sūn Wǔ's *Sūnzǐ bīngfǎ* (*The Art of War*), chapter 1, "Shǐjì," refers to *shì* as follows: "when an advantageous assessment has been heeded, one must create for it a favorable configuration (*shì*) to assist the war effort externally. A favorable configuration (*shì*) is one that signifies the creation of power (*quán*) in accordance with advantage."[23] As was noted earlier, it is hard to translate *shì* because of its multivalent meanings. The above is the first evidence of *shì* rendered as "configuration." The same word in the same section is understood by Minford as "dynamic potential energy of the situation,"[24] also abbreviated to "dynamic." Lionel Giles translates it as "circumstances."[25] Given the above translations, we might summarize *shì* as 'power which is dynamic and implies potential'. It is related not so much as a self-contained object but as a factor working within a situation, and is better understood not as an idea that stands independently, but in relation to other factors that form its "configuration." Thus, in considering *shì*, there is a tendency to take account of what is advantageous.

In other words, the tendency (*shì*) normally tilts towards or favors what one finds advantageous. Here one finds the "subjective" factor at work. By believing that something is advantageous, one has already made a judgement. A judgement that it is a *shì* includes a judgement of its tendency towards what it judges to be advantageous. The knowledge of such a *shì* is based on a pre-knowledge of what makes a *shì*. Here we have an external circumstance or situation which is not entirely external; rather it is the subjective judgement of it that we have. This two-in-one external/subjective dimension, can be called the intersubjective aspect, as previously illustrated in the double vision hermeneutic methodology.

23. Mair, 78. In Chinese, it says, "*Jì lì yǐ tīng, naǐ yǐ wéi shì, yǐ zǒu qí wài; shì zěh, yīn lì ér zhì quán yě.*" For other references, see Giles, *The Art of War*, 56. Giles' translation is among the earliest, but is worth referring to. Minford renders it as "settle on the best plan / Exploit the dynamic within / Develop it without. Follow the advantage / And master opportunity: This is the dynamic" (6, 111–12). Minford's consideration of the economy of words in accordance with the Chinese text leaves too much space to guess what it means. See also Samuel Girffith, 66. For *quán*, Mair renders it as "power," Minford as "opportunity," Giles uses "plans," and Griffith as "balance." In this regard, Minford, Giles, and Griffith all try to reflect *quán* as in *quányí*, to get the best decision by calculating the pros and cons. By reading *quán* as "power, Mair however associates *shì* with power, probably of a political kind. Both of these readings capture the nuances in one sense or another.

24. Minford, 111.

25. See note 181.

The next noteworthy feature is that a judgement of *shì* is based on calculation. The emphasis is on the measuring of circumstances, i.e., advantageous, favorable, or beneficial. Its focus is not about one's *dé* (virtue or moral power) or character, but one's ability to calculate and fathom the internal dynamic of the situation. As Jullien describes, it is a "[C]alculation of the relation between the forces in play," thus an expert should know how to take account of "a series of factors" in a situation to come up with the best calculation.[26]

Thirdly, related to a calculation is the timing, which is also found in Sūnzǐ's use of *shì*. Chapter 5, "Bīngshì," states,

> The raging torrent can by its gushes float the boulders along its course; this is due to its *shì*; by one shot a swooping falcon breaks the back of its prey; this is due to its precision. Therefore, a good warrior makes good use of a risky *shì* (circumstance) and a blinking moment (*jié*); such a *shì* is likened to the bending crossbow, such a timing (*jié*) the releasing of the trigger (*shì rú zhāng nǔ, jié rú jī fā*).[27]

Besides speed, it is the precise use of force in combination with good timing that should be taken into account when measuring a *shì*. To be able to estimate the "raging torrent" is about knowing the movement of the force and allowing oneself to follow it.[28] Thus, the ability to grasp the exact moment should be acquired by a good general or a leader. Moreover, being a leader, one "does not only make his subordinates be accountable for (the result of a battle)," but rather "makes use of the dynamic propensity of the circumstances ("*gù shàn zhàn zhě, qiú zhī yú shì, bù zhé yú rén*."[29]

26. Jullien, *Efficacy*, 24.

27. Cf. the translation of Lionel Giles, 56. Mair, 92–93; Minford, 169–70, and Griffith, 92. Mair's and Minford's translations are both closer to Griffith. A few words on translation are needed. This section examines the translators' adoption of freedom of expression in the Chinese language, afforded by its use of metaphor and metonymy. For example, the literal translation of *shì rú zhāng nǔ* should be: power is like a bending crossbow. The simile "bending crossbow" is the power, the *shì*. How can it be rendered this way? What is assumed is "the tension found within the bending crossbow." The metonymic twist is assisted by the word "*rú*". Therefore, a more complete translation should be: "power is something like the tension one may find in the bending crossbow." But to translate a poetic prose in this fashion would be to sacrifice all the beauty and rhythm of the original work.

28. For the implication of "to allow," see Jullien, *Efficacy*, vii. The way of "allow" things to grow, a *shì* to grow, or a result to show, without interrupting or forcing the process, according to Jullien, reflects a Daoist philosophy, see *Efficacy*, 89–91.

29. Cf. Giles, 57. The *shì* in parenthesis is mine. Mair renders *rén* (men) in these

To be able to make use of the efficacy of *shì* depends on the judgement of timing, force and movement, based on one's intuitive calculation, a judgement which appears to emerge naturally from one's inner being.

In *The Art of War* chapter 6: "Xūshí (The Void and the Concrete)" it also says, "as the water has no constant form, so the array of troops has no constant disposition" (*bīng wú cháng shì, shuǐ wú cháng xíng*).[30] Because an army is like water, therefore a general should learn to deploy his troops according to the strength and weakness of the enemy as much as the water conforms to the highs and lows of the land.[31]

One wonders what is comparable between water and an army. Water belongs to nature, while an army is made of people, thus they belong to different categories. However, here again one has to go deeper to find the subtle, almost obscure link the language itself never finds necessary to clarify. As much as clarity seems to be lacking, it expects the reader to look for compatibility beneath the surface, i.e. not from their shape but their disposition. The key to their compatibility is thus the "*wú cháng,*" the non-regular, non-constant factor as the essence of these two things. Hence one sees *shì* being used as "disposition" to resemble the potential of the water to produce different forms, adjusting according to external factors. In other words, it is the continuous "changes" one should pay attention to. Thus, besides calculating and fathoming the internal dynamic of the situation and grasping the proper timing, *shì* involves one's act in accordance with the disposition and form of external factors, like water follows the form of the land.

If Mair's dating of Sūn Zǐ to the Warring States period is correct, it is revealing to see in *Yìzhuàn*, as I will show in chapter 4, similar images carrying a Confucian tone, in contrast to those in *Sūnzǐ Bīngfǎ*. This again reflects an ideological rivalry: as much as Sūn Zǐ's idea of *shì* is compatible with *Yìzhuàn* in terms of judging proper time and propensity, it is *shì* as interpreted through the lens of the *Yìzhuàn* hexagramic system, that will be adopted to contrast with the *Yìzhuàn* moral vision. We will provide further evidence in what follows from Hán Feī, before examining an integrated effort as demonstrated by Xúnzǐ.

instances as "subordinates", and renders "*qiú zhī yú shì*" as "looking the effect of combined energy," see Mair, 93. See also Jullien's interpretation in *Propensity*, 29–30.

30. My translation.

31. See Sun Wu, "Xūshí (The Void and the Concrete)" in *The Art of War*.

1.2: Hán Fēi

Hán Feī probably synthesized Shang Yāng's (d. 338 BC) idea of *fǎ* (law or standard), Shēn Búhaì's (d. 337) idea of *shù* (statecraft, techniques, methods and the like) and Shèn Daò's (ca. 395–315 BC) idea of *shì*.[32] Interestingly, although known as a legalist, he was a student of Xúnzǐ, a Confucian.[33] Thus, it is very interesting to observe how his idea differs from the Confucians in terms of their focus on the ideal state as built on a leader's moral character, i.e. his humaneness, and his on *shì*.

In "Nánshì," *Hán Fēi Zi*, Hán Fēi debated the determining power of *shì*. He argued against contemporary or earlier Confucians, who thought a ruler could gain the trust of his people by virtue of his humane-righteousness, *rényì*, and instead postulated that they secured their rule through succumbing to *shì*. For example, he argued, that though already known as a sage in his time, cultivating and manifesting the Daò, and sojourning from one state to another teaching the way of *rényì*, humaneness and righteousness, Zòngní (Confucius) failed to convince even one state ruler to adopt his way of *rényì*. The reason, according to Hán Feī, was that those who valued benevolent love were rare, and those who were able to practice righteousness were hard to find.[34]

He further alluded to the case of former sage kings (Yaó and Shùn) and villain kings (Jié of Xià dynasty and Zhoù of Shāng dynasty) to advance his argument. Contrary to the contemporary assertion that the state could be ruled in an orderly fashion if it had a sage-ruler, he argued the determinant was not the sagacity of the person who ruled the state, but his use of *shì*. Similarly, if a villain successfully usurped a state and created disorder, it was not because of who he was, but his ability in using *shì*. Hán Feī thus contended that *shì* can be used by either a virtuous or villainous person, the difference being simply that: villainous people are many, while virtuous people few.[35]

A second point to be made is that although Hán Fēi seems to have been influenced by Shèn Dào, he criticized him for interpreting *shì* as an internal natural law who argued that the water goes down stream due to its *shì* of going down, rather than being due to a situation caused by human

32. See Chan, *Source Book*, 252.

33. For one recent argument against the idea that Xúnzǐ was probably not a Confucian but rather a philosopher whose ideas are closer to the Legalist, see Cheng, "Legalism versus Confucianism."

34. Hán Fēi, "Wǔ dú," in *Hánfeīzǐ*, chapter 5.

35. Hán Fēi, "Nanshì," in Chén, *Hánfeīzǐ jiàoshì*, 73–87.

effort.[36] Contrary to Shèn Daò, Hán Fēi argues that in as much as how things change, human factors in power dynamism are as determinative in human affairs as in human history. Thus Hán Fēi goes beyond the mechanistic idea of power by emphasizing the importance of human factors in power relation as well as historical propensity. Nevertheless, there is no evidence as to whether Hán Feī has elaborated on the psychological factors at work in human affairs or networks, or on a moral judgement of power. What is lacking, however, can be found in Xúnzǐ's work.

1.3 Xúnzǐ

Living after the Daoist-legalist Shāng Yāng and Shèn Dào and Confucianist Mèngzǐ, and having the advantage of exposure to The Scholars' Palace at Jìxià, the centre of academic studies and philosophical debates for different schools of his time,[37] Xúnzǐ was aware of Confucianism's idealization of people's ability to achieve personal good and the state's welfare. He was also aware of the argument between Confucians and Legalists.[38] He did not totally reject the interpretation of *shì* according to the Legalists and had appropriated some of it into his own thinking. He was concerned that the use of manipulative and autocratic power had become common. It had jeopardized the ideal of humane-righteousness as the core value a ruler should possess. As in "Wáng Bà: 1–2," Xúnzǐ argued that even if one may have secured power thanks to the efficacy of *shì*, one needed to consider three conditions of becoming a ruler. The first was a ruler whose rule was based on his "righteousness," who will be called "a king;" the second by "his credit" to be called "a lord-protector (*bà*)"; and the third by "his manipulation of power (*quánmoǔ*)." The one who uses *quán moǔ* "is doomed to fall."[39]

Being aware of the legalist's emphasis, he placed more emphasis than his Confucian predecessors on how to order the state with *lǐ* (propriety or rite) and law (fǎ), not in the manner of a Legalist per se, but as a realist Confucian.[40] In *Xúnzǐ*, chapter 16: "Jiāngguó piān" (On Strengthening

36. For the relationship between Shèndào and Hán Fēi, see Wáng, "Shèn Daò sīxiǎng zhī fēnxī," 251.

37. See Yan-qin Peng et al., "Bridging Confucianism and Legalism," 51.

38. In this respect, he was close to his own student Hán Fēi. For Hán Fēi's argument, see "The Synthesis of Legalistic Doctrine" in Chan, *Source Book*, 252–60.

39. See Xúnzǐ, "Wáng Bà: 2," translation mine.

40. I adopt this designation from Rickett, who uses it to describe Guǎn Zhòng and

the State) he declares, "To obtain a position of power that allows one to dominate others (*chǔ shèng rén zhī yì*) and so to carry out the way of domination that no one in the whole worlds feels resentment—such were Tang and Wu."[41] Here *yì* (grip or grasp) is understood as *shì*,[42] without the *radical lì* (power or force) of the latter. Both convey a comprehensible meaning on their own.[43]

It is known that Tang, as referred to above, was the founding king of the Shāng dynasty, who seized power from the last king of the Xià dynasty, King Jié, and Wu was King Wǔ of Zhoū, the founder of the Zhoū dynasty who conquered King Zhoù of Shāng, a king as equally villainous and immoral as King Jié. Xúnzǐ did not avoid acknowledging that it was Tàng's and Wú's domination (*yì*) that allowed them to obtain power, yet no one showed resentment of their doing so.

In a debate between Xúnzǐ and the Lord of Línwǔ, the latter argued, "In warfare what should be most prized is the power inherent in advantageous circumstances (*bīng zhī gùi zhě yì lì yě*),"[44] to which Xúnzǐ objected, who instead proposed the way of a humane king which was based on his humaneness and will-spirit (*zhì*).[45] Although he also referred to *shì*, his argument was different. In other words, a humane king should not focus only on *shì* but cultivate his moral character. The sage-king model provides a Chinese pastor with a model he or she can emulate, rather than following the propensities of *shì*.

2. Interpreting *Shì*

We have discussed *shì* as it appeared accordingly in three thinkers' works. I do not however assume that by referring to three thinkers' usage of this word, I have thus gathered three clear cut meanings of this word, nor have I exhausted its meanings. Rather, the background is more a political and

also Xúnzǐ, see Rickett, "Introduction," 13.

41. Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 241, 343, n. 26

42. Or *yì* as "art."

43. For the Chinese linguistic terminologies here and a study of semantic radicals and phonetic radicals or components of Chinese characters, see Reldman and Siok, "Semantic Radicals in Phonetic Compounds," 19–35; Zhou and Marslen-Wilson, "Sublexical Processing in Reading Chinese," 37–63. Yì appears in Xunzi in 49 paragraphs, search http://ctext.org/xunzi?searchu=%E5%9F%B6. It seems that this word is used by him in multifarious ways, with meanings differing from *shì*.

44. Here *yì* means *shì*, which Knoblock translates as "circumstances."

45. Knoblock, *Xunzi*, 218.

military context, while the style of communication in conveying the idea is more flexible. The earlier the text, the less moralizing is the use of *shì*. In the case of Sūnzǐ, *shì* is more a term to depict geographical and natural phenomena as well as including military dispositions, military weaponries or tools. The purpose is to depict the power, the speed, the flow, and the inner force deposited within the *shì* as dispensable for those who know how to make use of them. Likewise, a general makes judgement and takes advantage of the *shì* in the formation and deployment of his troops in order to win a victory in battle. The judgment of a circumstance is compared to an estimation of how strong and fast a raging torrent may be, or how swiftly a falcon may capture its prey. *Shì* is related to timing and speed. Thus if *shì* is interpreted as power, it is not about a certain A exercising his or her power over or dominating a certain B.[46]

2.1: Redefining Power

A brief reference to Steven Lukes' and Pierre Bourdieu's definition of power will help show the distinctiveness of *shì* as described above.[47] The purpose here, however, is not to do a comparison or a detailed discussion of power per se, but to integrate Lukes' and Bourdieu's ideas into our understanding of *shì* as gathered above.

According to Steven Lukes' summary, the exercise of power is often found in the manner of exerting power especially where decision making is called for in a given situation. Based on such an understanding, behind any power which is exercised must be a certain intention by the one who activates it. The result of the decision being made will determine which of the parties will be the winner in that power struggle. The one who wins may imply that his power prevails.[48] What is depicted above as *shì* in terms of power, speed and flow of a given geographical and natural *shì* is not so much of power relations between A and B, but between various factors.

Thus there are situations in which no decision is explicitly made, such as where one is disabled psychologically or loses the power to make any decision. A person may be incapacitated from having been dominated by certain people exerting a strong influence over them for a long period. This again reflects "binary power relations."[49]

46. See Lukes, *Power*, 109.
47. See Lukes, *Power*; Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*.
48. Lukes, *Power*, 5.
49. Lukes, *Power*, 108–9.

2.2: Power that Dictates One's Nature

Attempting to define power beyond this "binary" formula, Lukes redefines power as "a capacity" rather than "the exercise of that capacity," because a power "may never be, and never need to be, exercised."[50] Rather power can be found where "the securing of compliance to domination,"[51] i.e., the securing of "the consent to domination of willing subjects" is manifested.[52] Domination is therefore an imposition or "significant constraint upon an agent or agents' desires, purposes or interests, which it frustrates prevents from fulfillment or even from being formulated."[53] It is that which "dictates of one's judgment" or "one's nature."[54]

Accordingly, "those subject to it (power) are rendered less free."[55] Lying behind this notion is the idea of freedom of choice, i.e., the freedom to choose one's preference and ability to judge what should be preferred. However, now as one's "nature" is controlled over or dominated, it is somehow less able to function or "to use reason correctly."[56] Because of the "sustaining" influence of power that can stunt and blunt the subject's "capacity for rational judgment," the subject can be misled into having an illusion "of what is 'natural' and what sort of life their instinctive 'nature' dictates".[57] In other words, the "natural" is not natural at all. The nature that they believe they possess still possessing is but an illusion.

This power as domination or which dictates "one's nature" is well interpreted by Bourdieu in his notion of "symbolic violence," by which he means "a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims," and its effect,[58] that shapes the "*habitus*" i.e., "the embodied dispositions which yield 'practical sense' and organize actors' visions of the world

50. Lukes, *Power*, 12.

51. Lukes, *Power*, 108–9.

52. Lukes, *Power*, 109. However, one should understand that the "'willing' and 'unwilling' compliance to domination are" not necessarily "mutually exclusive," meaning "one can *consent* to power and resent the mode of its exercise" (italics his). See Lukes, *Power*, 150.

53. Lukes, *Power*, 113, also 85.

54. Lukes, *Power*, 116–17.

55. Lukes, *Power*, 114.

56. Lukes, *Power*, 115.

57. Lukes, *Power*, 115.

58. Lukes is referring to "[t]he effect of symbolic domination (whether ethnic, gender, cultural or linguistic, etc.)" in Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, 37, cited in Lukes, *Power*, 140.

below the level of consciousness in a way that is resistant to articulation, critical reflection and conscious manipulation."[59] Such effect is "durably and deeply embedded in the body in the form of dispositions."[60]

Moreover, with regard to the *habitus*, one has to understand how it is created by "the durable effects" of the "social order" of the said social or cultural group exerted on the effected one.[61] According to Bourdieu, social agents are "endowed with *habitus*, inscribed in their bodies by past experience."[62] He argues that the *habitus* is "a product of history," which

> produces individual and collective practices—more history—in accordance with the schemes generated by history. It ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the "correctness" of practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms.[63]

Elaborating on Bourdieu, Lukes argues, "social norms and conventions of the various fields are 'incorporated', or 'inscribed', into their bodies, thereby generating 'a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking.'"[64] This process can also be described as the internalization of the social and traditional norms. As Bourdieu describes, "the internal dispositions—the internalization of externality—enable the external forces to exert themselves, but

59. Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, 1–2 which is based on his study focusing on male domination over female and of the notion of *habitus*. For the former, for example he says, "Being included, as man or woman, in the object that we are trying to comprehend, we have embodied the historical structures of the masculine order in the form of unconscious schemes of perception and appreciation. When we try to understand masculine domination we are therefore likely to resort to modes of thought that are the product of domination" (*Masculine Domination*, 5). For the latter, for example he says, see Lukes, *Power*, 140.

60. See Bourdieu, see *Masculine Domination*, 39, 41; also Lukes, *Power*, 141.

61. Lukes, *Power*, 140. For Bourdieu, see *Masculine Domination*, 41.

62. See Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 70, cited in Lukes, *Power*, 141.

63. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 54.

64. Lukes, *Power*, 141. For Bourdieu, see *The Logic of Practice*, 70. This is similar to Lukes' earlier notion about those who look for "conformity," "public self-ascription" and "solidarity" i.e., for cultural or group-related identity when they are dominated by the culturally defined values which have been infused in their being. See Lukes, *Power*, 119.

in accordance with the specific logic of the organisms in which they are incorporated, i.e., in a durable, systematic and non-mechanical way."[65]

2.3: Multivalent Meanings of Shì: Political Power, Political Propensity, Moral Excellence

To return to our discussion of *shì*, in Hán Feī, one sees that for him *shì* is used in relation to political power. Instead of emphasizing that the ruler or the king himself has the power to dominate his subjects, Hán Feī's discussion reveals that attention is paid to the circumstances and political affairs that help shape a *shì*, a political propensity which the ruler can take advantage of. What he needs to do to rule is simply to follow the *shì*. Or perhaps the submission of the people is due to power having infused the blood and body of the people to such an extent that they are unable to do anything other than submit to the rule of these rulers.[66] Alternatively it is merely the result of the kings' moral excellence rather than coercion that people feel compelled to follow them.

A preferable reading might be that the focus is not so much on a ruler's overpowering (A = king overpowers B = people)[67] but on the nature of the circumstances and propensity he is making use of. Perhaps, it is also not largely focused on how the dominated people are affected and exploited. People are not important in this regard. Rather, of primary importance is that through the teaching of the art of rulership, a king may know how to make use of a *shì*.

To sum up, the idea of juxtaposing moral excellence with *shì* is seen in Shèn Daò and Hán Feī, but it is in Xúnzǐ that the significance of moral excellence overtakes that of *shì*. In Xúnzǐ, the manipulation of power (*quánmoǔ*) to establish the ruler's advantage to rule over his subjects by overpowering them, is rejected. In Xúnži, the discussion of *shì* has turned into a moral philosophy rather than simply a political philosophy. While moral philosophy cannot be fully explored in this thesis, the underlying implication is implied.

65. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 55.

66. For the allusion to "the body and blood," see Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 70.

67. See the discussion above.

3. Relating *Shì* to Double Vision Hermeneutics

Shì has travelled down through the centuries and survived longer than any individual or generation since its early inception. In Gadamer's word, with its rich gamut of ideas reverberating with each use, *shì* is a "traditionary text". Having been transmitted as part and parcel of the tradition, it will exist in Chinese culture for as long as the Chinese language is being used and taught alongside its literary and historical background. As individuals learn to use this word, they appropriate the whole package of meaning and implication together with its efficacy in the history and society. Individuals are *as much cultural-linguistically effected as historically effected*.[68]

Shì as shown in the various texts discussed above is a text within texts. I have assumed that it is also a traditionary text as well as a text that carries high cultural linguistic currency. As a Chinese, knowing instinctively when to use this word, *shì*, as a text, has been from the first learnt as a traditionary text in its linguistic form as well as its cultural implications. By this I mean the range of meanings as defined within the various literary contexts I have discussed above which have been infused into daily usage by those who use the word. Thus what happens is "a continual deferment of an idea or a meaning" in Chinese culture through the passing down of a text in "a network of writings," as Johanne Liu interprets it.[69]

Moreover, as Gadamer has defined, in one's experience of an art, there is "a unity" between the person and that which is experienced which constitutes "a new mode of being one."[70] According to him, the work of art is not an object that stands over against a subject in its own right. The work of art as the subject changes the person who experiences it.[71]

Thus, having been learnt, *shì* as a traditionary text has been appropriated. It has become part of me. Having been appropriated, *shì* remains in me who experiences it, and becomes part of me. The text is no longer an object out there but exists intersubjectively in me, as well as remaining a traditionary text independently of me. Such an intersubjective relationship with *shì* is thus not merely the dialog between the writers and the readers as asserted by Yeo.[72] What needs to be underlined is an under-

68. See chapter 2.

69. Liu, "Music [*yue*] in Classical Confucianism," 63. Liu discusses about intertextuality, see the introduction of this thesis.

70. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 53, 58.

71. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 103.

72. Yeo, "Culture and Intersubjectivity," 86.

standing of *shì* as a cultural-linguistic inheritance that has already made me an *effected consciousness*. It has its effect on me before any conscious dialog with it takes place.

Having thus interpreted my intersubjective relationship with *shì*, two further dimensions of intertextual and intersubjective relationship require explication: the one found between *shì* and *Yìzhuàn* and the other between *shì* and "principalities and powers." These two dimensions are currently suspended and kept within my subsidiary awareness. While I focus on deliberating on *shì*, my focal awareness has been active in explaining what it means in the pre-Qín text as well as its cultural significance. I thus highlight it as a traditionary text. However, in the existential dimension, my understanding of *shì* through the lens of Pauline understanding of "principalities and powers," albeit existing in my subsidiary awareness, never ceases to exist. These dimensions coexist synchronically.

In the next chapter, the intersubjective relationship between *shì* and *Yìzhuàn* will be first elucidated.