

A Study of Mystical Thinking in Ancient Chinese Expressions: Focusing on “Chen Wei”

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Abstract

Ancient Chinese have expressed culture that communicated with gods and spirits through sound and language. This culture has contained mystical thinking that expressed orally, through spoken words, presenting a form of sound. This paper comprehensively examined and summarized the materials of mystical thinking in ancient Chinese from the texts of “Chen Wei”, analyzing the forms of mystical consciousness and the linguistic cultural features that favor cautious speech and silence over verbosity. The study explores the origins of mystical thinking in Chinese culture, tracing it back to the ancient people's blessings and declarations to spirits through shamans and historians, as well as court and folk poetry and proverbs. It then discussed how this was inherited by the texts of “Chen Wei” in Han dynasty, and how the mode of linguistic expression gradually shifted from sound to writing, examining the evolution of the mystical thinking content in ancient Chinese culture.

Keywords: *Chen Wei, Language Worship, Language Magic, Mystical Consciousness.*

INTRODUCTION

The development history of the Chinese language, like other languages worldwide, began with sounds before written characters were invented. Taiyan Zhang stated in " *Essays on National Heritage* ": "字之未造 , 語言先之矣," illustrating that the development of language and writing started with spoken language, followed by "以文字代語言 , 各循其聲" (Zhang, 1977). This pattern also has existed in the linguistic and cultural spheres of various ethnic groups worldwide. Before the creation of written characters, communication with natural spirits and interpersonal communication relied primarily on spoken sounds. Consequently, sound was endowed with a mystical energy. Qingxia Dai, in "An Introduction to Sociolinguistics," proposed that primitive religious beliefs " language in human activities was more or less endowed with a mystical power " (Dai, 2005). He noted: "For those with primitive beliefs, the concepts expressed through language are equivalent to the material itself. Therefore, language has the potential to invoke everything that is desired" (Dai, 2005). "The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language" in the section on "Language Magic" points out: "Prophecies, spells, prayers, as well as many rituals of magic, witchcraft, and orthodox religions, demonstrated that people believe language can manipulate things, humans, and spirits. It is believed that language has the functions of relieving pain, avoiding disasters, exorcising evil spirits, bringing blessings to oneself, and bringing calamities to enemies. To achieve the desired effect, such language must usually be meticulous, with precise wording, pronunciation, and traditional oral forms" (Crystal, 2002). From the pre-Qin period to the Han dynasty, there was a mystical and sacred perception of language and characters among the ancients. "Huainanzi" recorded that after Cang Jie invented characters, "天雨粟、鬼夜哭" occurred; Japan's "Kojiki" mentions "一言主," which was related to the Japanese concept of "言靈(ことだま)" viewing language as a deity. Max Muller (1823-1900) once mentioned: "What we call myths were something transmitted and propagated through language" (Muller, 1994). The languages created in human life serve as tools to express their existence, and in culture, this tool was also seen as a symbol of imagery, playing an essential role in expressing and communicating within the spirituality and religion of primitive peoples.

From the perspective of cultural anthropology, the thinking behind language and written expression showed

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that, like many other ethnic groups, there was a phenomenon of language worship before the creation and use of written characters. This phenomenon gave mystical meaning to the sounds of language, making them a medium for communication between humans and the gods of nature. This medium, through rituals, prayers, songs, and prophecies, linked the mystical concepts in language thinking. In previous research discussions, such as Akira Tōdō's "*Chinese Characters and Their Cultural Sphere*," the process of the creation and spread of Chinese characters to Korea, Vietnam, and Japan was mentioned, along with the formation of cultural circles and their differences (Akira, 1988). Hajime Nakamura's "*The Thinking Methods of Eastern Nations*" also discussed the differences in linguistic thinking between Chinese and Japanese, particularly in terms of the meanings of forms and sounds (Nakamura, 1999). Nakamura noted that Chinese language emphasized "concrete studies," especially in the construction methods of Chinese characters, where Chinese people prefer concrete thinking methods (Nakamura, 1999). Additionally, Qingji Lian observed that "the number of pictographs in the early characters of Chinese was about six times that of ideographs. As stated in "*I Ching: The Book of Changes, Commentary on the Appended Judgments Part II*", '近取諸身，遠取諸物' (take what is close from the body, take what is far from objects), there is a close connection between this description and the formation of written characters. ... For ancient Chinese dictionaries, the initial characters that describe concrete objects far outnumber those that shape abstract concepts. Therefore, ancient Chinese had a strong ability to express concrete objects but lacked the ability to express abstract concepts, making them more focused on the reality of things" (Lian, 2001). This observation suggested that the characteristics of the Chinese language focused on the concrete "form," further exploring the meaning behind "characters."

However, before the creation of written characters, communication with spirits was still carried out through oral blessings by shamans. This method sometimes formed rhythmic songs accompanied by music and dance. In "*On Shamanic Literature*" Fujino Iwatomo believed that the prayers of the Shang dynasty were in the form of blessings, which "through questioning tones, divined the will of the gods, sharing similarities with "Tianwen" (Fujino, 1969). During the era of "*The Book of Songs*" when the various forms of literature had not yet fully differentiated, poetry, music, and dance were in a primitive unity, coexisting with blessings, spells, and mythological legends in a complex cultural state, closely integrated with primitive religion. Complex emotions such as faith in ancestors and fear of natural disasters were expressed through language. People widely believed in the vitality and responsiveness of language itself (Zhang, 2005). China is a country that worships characters, essentially having a 'character religion.' Chinese characters have practicality, sacredness, mystery, and aesthetic attributes, performing a function similar to religion by integrating society and strengthening identity (Wang, 2017). From an anthropological perspective, the origin of this mystical consciousness lies in the application of shamanistic and religious cultural practices in language, as previous studies have observed directly from the language itself and cultural phenomena.

However, regarding the mystical energy inherent in "oral language" and "written characters," the evolution of Chinese from "言" (expressing meaning through sound) to "文字" (expressing meaning through images) has yet to be thoroughly investigated and analyzed in relevant research literature. Therefore, most arguments were based on vague concepts rather than comprehensive examination of actual materials. Furthermore, blessings, prayers, children's rhymes, and prophecies in Chinese showed a semantic association with sound and a projection of mystical consciousness. Despite the emergence of written characters, these mystical thoughts continued to exist within the expressive form of Chinese language. A lack of previous studies investigated whether, besides the continuing influence of sound, the presence of images and symbols also affected the thinking patterns in expressing mystical matters in Chinese. Thus, this study attempted to conduct an in-depth study of materials related to mystical thinking found in ancient Chinese expressive texts.

Research Purpose

The first research objective was to clarify the ways in which ancient Chinese expressed mysterious phenomena, from oral sound expressions to written imagery and symbolic depictions. What were the patterns and forms that have existed throughout historical development, and what is the process of their evolution? To address this question, this study investigated the origins through dialogues with natural deities in ancient Chinese texts

and philosophical works of ancient scholars regarding language concepts. Following this, a comprehensive material analysis was conducted from the linguistic and written perspectives on Han dynasty apocryphal texts most directly related to mysterious concepts, examining the types and meanings of their external expressive forms and internal thought patterns.

The second, study objective was to delve deeper into clarifying how the magical power of language, originally presented through the oral sound energy in ancient Chinese expressions of mysterious phenomena, was further enhanced by the image energy of imagery and symbols. This study attempted to investigate how the Han dynasty apocryphal texts inherit ancient blessing words, sacrificial poems, and other contents, and then add the imagery of ancient sacred deities and nature. During the transformation of language into written form, the study explored how the structures of imagery and symbols were endowed with the significance of mysterious consciousness.

RESEARCH METHOD

The "Document Analysis" and "Thematic Analysis" were utilized as the analytical approaches in this study. Document analysis is a research method that involves the collection, analysis, summarization, and study of documents to extract the required information and provide an objective and systematic description of the documents. Document analysis emphasizes objectivity, systematic processes, and quantification as a research method (Ranjit, 2000). Thematic analysis is a data analysis method that can be combined with different research theories, such as grounded theory, phenomenology, or critical theory, to develop unique execution procedures or analysis focuses (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thematic analysis is a highly flexible data analysis method that can effectively integrate various qualitative research approaches, whether descriptive or interpretive. Descriptive research, also known as experiential, aims to authentically present the research subjects' perspectives on events. In contrast, interpretive research, also known as constructivist or critical, aims to deeply analyze and reflect on the social, cultural, economic conditions, or states reflected in the content provided by the research subjects, uncovering the underlying meanings hidden beneath apparent meanings (Wu & Chang, 2021). In short, descriptive study resents the factual surface of the data, while interpretive study concerns itself with the underlying meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2012, 2013). Thematic Analysis provides an effective data analysis tool, making it convenient for novice researchers to quickly get started without being confined to specific theories, and it can be combined with different theories (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

This study attempted to combine Document Analysis with Thematic Analysis to encode materials related to mystical consciousness in ancient Chinese according to their forms of expression (oral or written) and types of expression (blessings, poetry, prophecies, etc.). Then, the corresponding thought contents were analyzed thematically. This approach clearly analyzed the types of mystical thinking in ancient Chinese and understood the patterns of their evolution and development.

RESEARCH RESULTS

This study clarified the forms of mystical consciousness contained in the "names and titles" in the Chinese language, as well as the linguistic expression concepts of silence and cautious speech that arise from this mystical consciousness.

The Forms of Mystical Consciousness Contained In "Names and Titles" In Chinese

There had been much discussion in the philosophy of language in Chinese about the concept of 'name,' mostly focusing on political thought and exegesis. However, the discussion on 'titles' and 'expressing matters' related to mystical concepts had been relatively scarce. In the *Analects*, Confucius answered Zilu with these words: 'You were wild, You! A gentleman, when he did not understand something, should leave it aside. If the names were not correct, the language would not be in accordance; if the language was not in accordance, then affairs would not succeed; if affairs did not succeed, then propriety and music would not flourish; if propriety and music did not flourish, then punishments would not be appropriate; if punishments were not appropriate, then the people would not know where to put hand and foot. Therefore, the gentleman named things in such a way that they could be spoken, and spoke in such a way that they could be acted on. The gentleman was careful about what he said.' Confucius explained the sequence of 'name,' 'speech,' 'affairs,' 'propriety and music,' and

'punishments,' indicating that in Chinese, 'name' took precedence over other existences and was regarded equally with 'speech' and 'affairs' (Wang, 2008).

Sankuro Mori viewed 'name, speech, and affairs' as a unity from the perspective of religious culture, and he believed the reasons were: first, originating from the primitive magical concept and belief that 'name' and 'thing' were one; second, originating from the ancient belief in cause and effect that virtue must lead to fame (Mori, 2005). He cited 'The Doctrine of the Mean': 'Great virtue must obtain its position, must obtain its emolument, must obtain its fame, must obtain its longevity' as an example of his argument. Here, regardless of whether the 'rectification of names' originated from magical beliefs, the mysterious energy communication in language might indeed reflect corresponding thought patterns. The full text from 'The Doctrine of the Mean' was: 'The Confucius said, "Shun was truly greatly filial! He was virtuous as a sage, honored as an emperor, and possessed wealth throughout the four seas. The ancestral temples worshipped him, and his descendants preserved his legacy. Therefore, those with great virtue must obtain their rightful position, emoluments, reputation, and longevity. Hence, Heaven, in creating things, must endow them with their due capabilities. Thus, those who cultivate it nurture it, and those who neglect it destroy it. The Book of Poetry said: 'Joyous and harmonious was the noble man, manifesting admirable virtue! He was suitable for the people and beloved by them, receiving blessings from Heaven. Heaven preserved and extended his mandate!' Thus, those with great virtue had to receive the mandate. In the text, 'name' corresponded with 'emoluments,' 'position,' and 'longevity,' and was granted by Heaven. This linguistic concept of naming and commanding, as found through this study, frequently appeared in the Chen Wei. Previous research indicated that the Confucian concept of calamities and anomalies in the Chen Wei originated from the Doctrine of the Mean: 'When a state was about to flourish, there had to be auspicious signs; when a state was about to perish, there had to be omens of misfortune. This was evident in the divinations of tortoise shells and yarrow stalks and manifested in the movements of the four limbs. Calamities and blessings were about to come: for the good, there would be prior knowledge; for the bad, there would be prior knowledge. Therefore, utmost sincerity was like divinity.' This mystical concept suggested that the source of 'name' was derived from Heaven, indicating a conceptual correlation.

The types of 'titles and names' used in Chen Wei could generally be categorized into:

Simple Names (Private Names Referred to Solely by Oral Address)

In the texts of Chen Wei, the type of simple names, or "單稱名," referred to private names used purely for oral address. For example, in "*Qian Zao Du*(the Weishu related to the *I Ching*)," it is stated: "故乾坤氣合戊亥，音受二子之節，陽生秀白之州，載鍾，名太乙之精也." Zheng Xuan explains this: "乾為金，金於鍾律為商。人象乾德而生殖之一姓也。商，名也，太一之精也。言太一常行乾宮，降感其母而生之耳。其帝一也." This referred to the ancient emperors' titles, specifically the mystical essence named Taiyi. Similarly, the document records: "元歷無名，推先紀曰甲寅," which discussed the ancient names of calendar cycles and the starting points of eras.

During the period when writing had not yet been created, names had to be known through oral expressions. In "*Shi Lei Mou*(the Weishu related to the *I Ching*)," it was documented: "候終以季月八日，考經緯用事之氣，不效立五德，鄴之期算其節，以吹律卜名，以紜胥，必視熒惑所在." This mentions "吹律以卜名," referring to the practice of using musical tones to divine mystical names, correlating with astronomical and meteorological observations. This practice demonstrated that before the invention of writing, the names of sages and emperors were derived from "listening." The document further states: "聖人興起，不知姓名，當吹律，聽以別其姓。黃帝吹律以定姓也."

During the Warring States period, Shen Buhai also discussed the concept of "name": "名者，天地之綱，聖人之符，天地張綱，聖人用符，則萬物之情，無所逃之矣。...以其名聽之，以其名視之，以其名命之。...無事天下自極." Shen Buhai's discourse aligns with the "吹律卜名" records in prophecy texts, indicating that at this time, the act of naming was still in the stage of "listening to the name."

Unique Titles (Common Titles Used to Refer to Entities)

An example of this type could be found in "*Kun Ling Tu*(the Weishu related to the *I Ching*): "德配天地，在正不在私，稱之曰帝。帝者，天號也." This "title" is mandated by Heaven and is referred to as "Emperor" among humans. According to "*Xuan Ji Qian*(the Weishu related to the *Shangshu*): "帝者天號，王者人稱。天有五帝以立名，人有三王以正度," it could not be understood that the title "Emperor" originates from the celestial title revered by humanity.

In this context, the term "帝" (Emperor) was a common title derived from the respect and reverence for the heavens, signifying a title bestowed by divine mandate. In contrast, the term "王" (King) was a title used by humans. This differentiation between celestial and human titles illustrated the belief that rulers received their authority and legitimacy from heavenly powers, reflecting the mystical consciousness embedded in ancient Chinese language and titles.

Combined Names and Titles (Combining Private Names with Common Titles)

There were instances where an individual's private name is combined with a common title. For example: "別序聖人，題錄興亡，州土名號，姓輔發符." Here, the "names and titles" of "州土" (territories) are part of a prophecy. Another example is: "皆所以危亡之象也，或名好字號及黨官邦." Zheng Xuan explains: "本以為官號，邦所出之地名也." In these cases, "names and titles" often refer to place names in prophecies.

A comprehensive review of the "*Compilation of the Weishu*" reveals that the entries for "names and titles" correspond to mystical concepts, with origins attributed to "Heaven." To bear such a title, one must possess both "virtue" and "achievement." As recorded in "*Shuo Ti Ci* (the Weishu related to the *Chunqiu*): "號者功之表," and "名，成也，功也，號也," a title is a symbol of achievement. The sounds of divine beings must be communicated to humans through natural phenomena. For example, "*Qian Tan Ba* (the Weishu related to the *Chunqiu*)" states: "宮桂鳴，下吐諸侯號," which is explained as: "桂，好木，植宮中，猶天子封有聲為諸侯也。今乃鳴，是以聲名于下土之祥也." This refers to auspicious sounds indicating divine approval.

Since "the heavenly title has no sound," literature notes: "天子馬行而鳴，天號無聲，故馬應之而鳴," and "有馬走入宮，大臣不從行，不忠。其有聲也，臣名于天下，主令不行，輕見敵." This implies that humans could not hear the divine sound directly, so it was conveyed through the sounds of earthly animals and plants. Prophecies often record that a horse entering the palace and neighing signals a warning of potential rebellion.

The internal meaning of "names and titles" in prophecies aligns with Mori Mitsuzaburo's idea that "names" and "things" were interrelated, rooted in primitive shamanistic beliefs and the notion that virtue leads to fame. This also provided examples of how mystical concepts were expressed in ancient Chinese thought and language (Table1).

The Concept of Silence and Cautious Speech

Given that the sounds produced by language possess a mystical energy, and this energy originated from divine beings, human speech was perceived as less reliable. From a contrary perspective, although humans were capable of producing many words, their speech lacked significant value and energy. The essence of divine sounds was inaudible to humans and must be conveyed through the calls of animals and plants in nature. For example, the chirping of the laurel tree and the neighing of the horse were manifestations of this mystical consciousness in language. The heavens use natural phenomena as mediums to show auspicious signs or warnings of disasters. For instance: "宮殿中有牛悲鳴，政教衰，諸侯并。牛者，兵之符也。" In this context, the cries of wild animals in prophecy texts can be considered a form of language.

The "*Hetu Yuban* (the Weishu related to the *River Chart*)" records that in the country of Yanbo, west of Kunlun, there was a deity named Wubuda, who is one zhang tall and nine chi wide, standing on a turtle and a snake, and can "understand the language of all birds and beasts in the world." Hence, divine beings can use the sounds of birds and beasts to spread their commands. From the human perspective, the natural world and its four seasons are perceived as "silent," "speechless," and "mute." "*Tong Gua Yan* (the Weishu related to the *I Ching*)" states: "天無言，以七耀垂文。地無言，以五云騰氣。四時無言，以寒暑變節。六甲無言，以孤虛定位。"

This indicates that natural phenomena subtly hint at impending disasters. For instance: "坤性體。一刑殺，二默塞，三沉厚。...默者充靜，充塞不動。" and "流沙出，不言，小人起擄。百川亂，不言，小人執政。" Since the essence of celestial deities is characterized by silence, "speechlessness," and "muteness," any change in celestial phenomena often results in human "verbal calamities." For example: "箕為天口，客星犯之，饑人肆毒。守其南，大臣受饑謗之誅。守其北，后妃受口舌之禍。" and "熒惑守卷舌，天下多亂謀，國君以口舌之害起寇。" Therefore, the use of language should be cautious, avoiding reckless speech.

This concept was further emphasized during the Eastern Jin dynasty. In the novel "*A New Account of the Tales of the World*," it is recorded that the calligrapher Wang Xizhi took his three sons to visit the then-Prime Minister Xie An. After they left, someone asked Xie An to evaluate which son was the best. Xie An quoted "*Commentary on the Appended Judgments*": "吉人之辭寡，躁人之辭多." "*Commentary on the Appended Judgments*" also states: "默而成之不言而信存乎德行." Confucius also said: "君子欲訥於言而敏於行." This implies that the use of language carries judgments of fortune and nobility. The Jin dynasty's Fu Xuan even included the warning "禍從口出" (disaster comes from the mouth) in his "Kou Ming."

The way of expression should also be indirect and euphemistic. Being too direct, known as "straight talk," can lead to the taboo of offending the divine, especially in communication with the gods, where caution is necessary. "*Gan Jing Fu* (the Weishu related to the *Chunqiu*)" records: "When the sun is about to be eclipsed and gradually turns blue-black, the emperor sends the three high officials to reflect on any mistakes and inform Heaven, saying: 'Your servant, the Emperor, humbly accepts the imperial warning, retreats to the proper place, reflects on his errors, corrects abandoned policies, and removes unnecessary prohibitions. He dares not speak directly and sends his ministers to convey the message.'" Here, when celestial anomalies occur, the ruler introspects and rectifies his governance but communicates with Heaven indirectly through his ministers using metaphors rather than speaking plainly.

"*Huainanzi*" also mentions: "If one speaks without understanding the changes of Heaven and the four seasons, he will not know what taboos to avoid." Chinese language philosophy does not consider "straight talk without taboos" to be good. There is a mystical awareness in Chinese language consciousness, which leads to a corresponding cultural consciousness in human affairs. For instance, "*The Book of Jin: Biography of Liu Bo*" records: "Your servant Liu Bo, having anticipated previous campaigns and reflecting on current affairs, dares to speak boldly and frankly because he knows his days are numbered." This passage speaks of the Eastern Jin general Liu Bo, who, knowing his life was nearing its end, boldly advised Emperor Xiaowu of Jin without fear

of taboo. From the manner of expression in Chinese, it can be observed that "straight talk" is considered taboo. Liu Bo's fearless admonition to the emperor was only permissible because he had nothing left to fear. Under such an influence, silence and cautious speech became societal norms.(Table 2)

However, upon closer examination, the threat posed by blunt speech in Chinese culture comes from celestial and natural phenomena. The concept of language use here possesses a mystical consciousness. The Chinese language relies on signs from the natural operation of heaven and earth, avoiding direct speech and often hinting indirectly, leading to verbal disputes and disasters in human affairs.

In Chinese, avoiding taboos can be divided into two forms: avoiding certain characters in writing and using euphemisms in speech. The former is exemplified in " *Daily Knowledge Record* ": "What was originally called 'Yuanlai,' a term commonly used in the Tang and Song dynasties, was later replaced by 'Yuan' because the original character was avoided. It is unclear why, but 'Yuan' means again. ... It was believed that during the Hongwu period, officials avoided using 'Yuan' due to its association with the Yuan dynasty, thus changing it to 'Yuan'." During the Ming dynasty, terms like "Yuán rěn," "Yuán lái," and "Yuán yóu" were changed to "Yuán" to avoid associations with the Mongol Yuan dynasty.

The latter involves using euphemisms, such as "chángmián" (eternal sleep) instead of "sǐ" (death), to avoid offending Han Gaozu Liu Bang, changing "Bāng" to "Guó," or changing "Zhuāngzi" to "Yánzi" to avoid Han Ming Emperor Liu Zhuang's name. In Sima Qian's "Records of the Grand Historian," the character "Tán" (談) does not appear due to a taboo associated with his father Sima Tan's name.

DISCUSSIONS

The above research results indicated that the linguistic thinking in Chinese for expressing mystical concepts had undergone long-term changes. The forms and evolution of these changes, as well as the objects of their transmission, can be understood from the following discussion:

Communication with Spirits in Ancient Times Through Blessings, Proclamations, and Folk Songs

In ancient times, before the creation of writing, the book " *Yuan Ming Bao* (the Weishu related to the *Chunqiu*)" states: "皇象元，逍遙術，無文字." People expressed their intentions through various actions and behaviors, thus: "言行王之德象合元矣。逍遙猶動行其德。術，未有文字之教." This served as a means of communication (education). Early blessings, prayers, and folk songs all contained a mystical awareness in their linguistic concepts, a phenomenon similar across various stages of human civilization's development.

5.1.1 Blessings and Proclamations

In " *Zhouli* (the Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial)," it mentions "夏祝" and "商祝," with Zheng Xuan noting: "夏祝，祝習夏禮者也。... 商祝，祝習商禮者也。商人教之，以敬於接神." This indicates communication with spirits through blessings (接神). " *Shuowen Jiezi* " explains "祝" as "祭主贊詞者。从示从人口。一曰从兌省。《易》曰：兌為口為巫." Xu Shen's explanation reveals that "祝" mainly involved oral communication, using spoken prayers to communicate with spirits. As language developed, this form of communication became formalized and recorded in writing.

In " *The Book of Documents: The Announcement at Luo*," the phrase "王命作冊逸祝冊" means "to read aloud a written proclamation to the gods." " *The Book of Documents: The Golden Ten* " states: "史乃冊祝曰," indicating that the historian recited blessings orally to inform the spirits. Qu Wanli explained "冊祝" as: "為作冊文以祝告於鬼神也." Additionally, these historians had specific roles. " *Zhouli: The Offices of Heaven* " mentions "女祝

"; " *Zhouli: The Offices of Spring* " mentions "大祝," "小祝," "喪祝," "甸祝," and "詛祝." Among them, "大祝" managed the words of six types of blessings to serve the spirits, pray for blessings, and seek eternal righteousness.

" *Zhouli* (he Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial)" also mentions "詛祝," which involves overseeing "盟、詛、類、造、攻、說、禴、禳之祝號." This primarily dealt with invoking curses on allied states that broke their promises, asking spirits to bring disasters upon them. During the Warring States period, when Qin attacked Chu, they inscribed curses on stone steles, invoking spirits to bring disaster upon Chu. The "Curse of Chu" is an example of a written curse. This demonstrates that both Chinese and Japanese early shamanistic blessings contained mystical beliefs about the spiritual efficacy of language.

Folk Songs and Proverbs

This mystical energy in language also appeared in folk songs. For example, the prayers in the " Book of Songs " " *The Major Court Hymns* " are hymns of blessings from the ancestors. The phrases in " *The Book of Songs: Major Court Hymns: Yunban,*" such as "旱既大甚," "后稷不克," "靡神不宗," and "昊天上帝," indicate prayers to the heavenly deities during a drought.

In the Song dynasty, Guo Maoqian compiled the " *Collection of Music Bureau Poems,*" which includes a category of "Miscellaneous Songs and Proverbs." Although these proverbs were not set to music, they contain many rhyming phrases derived from folk "徒歌" (walking songs). " *Erya* " defines "徒歌" as "謠." Why were prophetic sayings mixed in? From an anthropological perspective, " *Shuowen Jiezi*" includes the character "謠," but not "謠." The former is an ancient character, explained by Xu Shen as "徒歌. From 言、肉." Shiraishi Seiji (1910-2006) interpreted it as a prayer uttered when offering meat to the gods. The combination of prayer and ritual action imbued it with sanctity.

" *Weishu (Apocryphal Texts)*" highlights the tradition of rhymed prophetic sayings, derived from blessing songs. For instance, " *Kao Yi You* (the Weishu related to the *Chunqiu*)" states: "禱請山川詞云：方今大旱，野無生稼，寡人當死，百姓何依。不敢煩民請命，願撫萬民，以身塞無狀." " *Bian Zhong Bei* (the Weishu related to the *I Ching*)" records: "煌煌之耀，乾為之岡。合凝之類，坤握其方。雄雌喆吟，六節搖通。萬物孳甲，日營始東." This describes the creation of all things by Heaven and Earth in rhymed song form.

" *Zhonghou Kao He Ming*(the Weishu related to the *Shangshu*) " records a song: "帝乃載歌曰：日月有常，星辰有航，四時從經，萬幸允誠。於予論樂，配天之靈，遷於聖賢，莫不咸聽。龔乎鼓之，軒乎舞之，精華以竭，褰裳去之." This content includes communication with heavenly deities and the acquisition of divine energy.

The Continuation of Mystical Language Awareness in Prophetic Texts

In ancient times, the use of language was imbued with a strong sense of mysticism. These concepts were reflected in the expressions of language and sound, representing the cultural manifestations of primitive societies. In the "Blessings and Alliances" chapter of "Wen Xin Diao Long," it is mentioned: "In ancient times, Yi Ji began sacrificial offerings to the eight gods. His words were: 'Let the earth return to its dwelling, let the waters return to their ditches, let insects cease their activities, and let plants return to their marshes.' Thus, the ancient blessing texts are preserved here! When Shun offered sacrifices to the fields, he said: 'With this long hoe, I till the southern fields, the four seas all have produce. The will to benefit the people is evident in his words.'" This illustrates how, in ancient times, the words of Yi Ji and Shun were used to communicate with the gods and spirits, praying for the stabilization of the earth and the success of agriculture.

The "Blessings and Alliances" chapter also records: "The Yellow Emperor had texts to exorcise evil, and Dongfang Shuo had texts to curse ghosts, so later condemnations and curses focused on effective cursing." Such incantations were used to exorcise evil, cure illnesses, and combat malevolent entities. This mystical energy in language is also seen in the alliances and blessings of the feudal lords in "Zuo Zhuan," and in various sections of "Shi Jing," such as " *The Major Court Hymns* " with " *Alas* " and " *Heaven Has Accomplished Its Mandate* "; " *Major Court Hymns* " with " *Yunban* " and " *The Great Lord* "; " *Lesser Court Hymns* " with " *Who Is This Man* " and " *Heaven's Protection* "; and " *The Songs of the States* " with " *The Shaonan: Zouyu* " and " *The Wei Songs: Big Rat* ". However, the tradition of "blessing literature" gradually declined after the Spring and Autumn period. Zhang Shuguo identifies four reasons for this decline, primarily due to the diminishing veneration of ancestors, and the transformation of blessings into "praise" and curses into "denunciations" or "impeachments" (Zhang, 2005). This research further investigates the data and finds that this mystical awareness in language might have been preserved by scholars and commoners through the Han dynasty and resurfaced in the interpretation of prophetic texts. By analyzing the materials of prophetic texts, this research identifies the factors of this evolution:

Transition from "Standing Corpse" to "Image Setting," Maintaining the Mystical Energy

In ancient sacrificial rituals, "standing corpse" (立尸) involved using a living person to represent the deceased for the offerings. "Bai Hu Tong" states: "The reason for having a corpse in sacrifices is that ghosts and spirits are silent and invisible. They ascend the steps, gaze at the beams, and look down at the mats and offerings. The utensils remain, but the person is gone, leaving emptiness and sorrow. Thus, they place a corpse to receive the offerings, making it seem as though the spirits are eating and drinking happily, just as they did when alive. The 'Poetry' says: 'The spirits are fully intoxicated, and the corpse rises up.'" This practice was due to the spirits' invisible nature during sacrifices, where a similar-looking descendant would represent the spirit to partake in the offerings, making it seem as though the spirit was present.

Peng Meiling's research on the "ceremonial significance of the corpse sacrifice" in the "Yi Li" highlights five methods of "sympathetic response": "气类" (qi category), "齋戒" (fasting and purification), "衣服" (clothing), "飲食" (food and drink), and "言語" (speech). She concludes that the "Yi Li" corpse sacrifice emphasized: 1) Expressing "pursuing nourishment and continuing filial piety" through dining rituals; 2) Highly emotive interpretation, showing filial piety and affection; 3) Using symbolic items to convey the principles of sympathetic response, viewed through the concept of an "energy field" (Peng, 2020).

"Liji. Liyun" states: "Cultivate blessings and prayers to bring down the gods and ancestors." Zheng Xuan explains: "Blessings are the words of the host offering sacrifices to the gods; prayers are the words of the host for the benefit of the living." This interaction between the spirit and the host through blessing words conveys the energy and mystical consciousness embedded in the language.

From the perspective of the decline of "blessing literature," the ritual of "standing corpse" gradually disappeared from the Warring States to the Qin and Han dynasties due to the rise of humanistic thought. The Tang dynasty's Du You noted in "Tongdian. Lishi Yi" that such sacrificial forms no longer existed after the Han dynasty. The disappearance of this ritual led to the decline of blessing literature, but the mystical awareness in language persisted in Chinese. The Qing dynasty scholar Gu Yanwu mentioned in "Ri Zhi Lu" that during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, living persons were no longer used as spirit corpses; instead, "images" were set up as substitutes for the sacrificial object. This change meant that "shamans" and "blessing scribes" lost their roles as intermediaries between the spirits and the living, which might have contributed to the decline of blessing literature (according to Zhang Shuguo). However, the concept of language's mystical energy transitioned from spoken words to written symbols, which later appeared in prophetic texts.

Examining the aspect of "image setting," the creation of written symbols and their connection with spirits introduced the concept of symbolic imagery in Chinese thought. "Yi Wei Tong Gua Yan" records: "By adding trigrams, one can foresee precious omens and the coming of anomalies. By examining their symbols, one can communicate with the divine. The eight trigrams push the subtleties of seven and nine, recording patterns to

align with fate. The verification of their responses is like the reflection of human actions and words." This content indicates that the emergence of eight trigrams symbols continued the previous function of language in connecting with the divine, becoming a new medium for human behavior and language's mystical response.

"Blessing Officials" Degraded to "Shaman Blessers," from "Sages" to "Confucian Scholars" Who Inherited Their Techniques

With the rise of humanistic thought during the Spring and Autumn period, the literary tradition of blessing transformed from religious divinity to moral teachings. Blessing officials were once maintained by emperors, feudal lords, and ministers, but with the collapse of the aristocratic class at the end of the Spring and Autumn period, these shaman blessers lost their positions and became part of the common folk, evolving into "shaman blessers" (Zhang Shuguo, 2005). " *Shi Lei Mou* " states: "Secrets are hidden in texts," referring to secret books like the Luo Shu and the Five Classics, which could only be understood by sages. " *Qian Zao Du* " quotes Confucius discussing the "I Ching": "From my observations, the benevolent see it as texts of benevolence, the wise see it as texts of wisdom, and the sages see it as texts that connect with the divine." " *Yuan Ming Bao* " mentions that in ancient times, before the creation of writing, "techniques" served as the pre-writing teachings: "The essence of the emperor was free-spirited techniques without written characters, illustrating virtue. Actions and words aligned with the emperor's virtues. Techniques were pre-writing teachings, and those with great virtue were named accordingly." These "techniques" were actually the rituals and verbal prayers performed by blessing officials during sacrifices, carrying the mystical energy of language.

" *The Book of Han: Bibliographic Treatise: Preface to the Philosophers Section* " notes: "The Confucian school emerged from the office of the minister of education, assisting rulers in harmonizing yin and yang and promoting education. They focused on the Six Classics, emphasizing benevolence and righteousness, following the traditions of Yao and Shun, emulating the principles of Wen and Wu, and venerating Confucius to elevate their words to the highest path." This role of helping rulers and managing the populace through the principles of yin and yang was inherited from the techniques of blessing officials. " *Shuowen Jiezi* " defines "儒" (Confucian) as "柔" (gentle), indicating a scholar or practitioner of techniques, derived from the character "需" (to need).

These texts suggest that while blessing officials became shaman blessers among the common folk, the mystical energy of language persisted in society's linguistic consciousness. " *Critical Essays: The Disarming Chapter* " states: "Today, people believe in sacrifices, like Zhongxingzi. They do not cultivate their behavior but enrich their blessings, disrespect their superiors but fear ghosts; when calamity strikes, they blame it on spirits, and if spirits are not appeased, they hold elaborate rituals to ward off disasters, perpetuating the cycle." This shows that the role of shaman blessers in the Han dynasty continued the functions of ancient blessing officials. Confucian scholars, on the other hand, inherited the techniques through prophetic texts, using yin-yang principles and disaster narratives to connect with the divine, maintaining the mystical awareness in language.

The Concept of Sound Energy Persisting in "Music" and "Resonance"

Previously, we discussed how the decline of blessing literature marked a shift of mystical thought into prophetic texts. Now, we explore how this awareness persisted in the rituals of music and resonance. In the paper "Exploring the Ceremonial Significance of Corpse Sacrifice in the Yi Li Through Contemporary Studies," Peng Meiling notes under "verbal resonance": "In addition to the five types of resonance listed in this paper, 'musical resonance' should also be included. However, since this paper focuses on the corpse sacrifices of officials and scholars, which did not initially use music compared to the rituals of emperors and feudal lords, the aspect of music is not addressed here." (Peng Meiling, 2020) This indicates that sound energy, not limited to language, also includes the mystical energy of music.

Prophetic texts such as " *Qian Zao Du* " state: "The five tones, six pitches, and seven transformations originate from this. The great numbers of fifty are used to enact changes and communicate with spirits." This associates the ten celestial stems with the five tones and the twelve earthly branches with the six pitches, combining them with the hours to create a mystical awareness.

In " *Yili* (the Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial) " corpse sacrifices, the various rituals embody the concept of "one qi resonating with all." (Peng Meiling, 2020) This research finds that in prophetic texts, the understanding of "qi" follows a cosmic order. " *Qian Zao Du* " records: "The shapes and substances of qi are undivided, hence called Hunlun, meaning all things are mixed and undivided. It cannot be seen or heard, nor can it be traced, hence it is called Yi, meaning without fixed form." Here, "Hunlun" aligns with " *Huainanzhi*: The Spirit": "Resting in the corners of no bends, wandering in the fields of no fixed form." Both refer to "boundaries" or "limits." Zheng Xuan explains in the Weishu related to the *I Ching* : "This describes the ancient state of Taiyi, where sound and qi first existed, called Hunlun. Before there was sound and qi, how could there be form? Thus, it clarifies again." Zheng Xuan believed that "sound and qi" preceded "form and sign." The mystical energy of sound, capable of communicating with spirits and resonating with the natural universe, continued in the prophetic texts of the Han dynasty.

The Evolution of Language Worship in Chinese from "Oral" to "Written" Form

Oracle bone inscriptions are a well-documented application of written Chinese used to communicate with deities. These inscriptions reveal how, before the creation of written language, spoken prayers and blessings to the gods and spirits were the primary means of communication. This transition from "oral" to "written" form is evident in the texts of prophetic literature. For example, references such as "龜龍被文而見" (tortoise and dragon covered with text and seen) in " *Li Dou Wei Yi* (the Weishu related to the *Etiquette and Ceremonial*), " "鱗甲成字" (scales forming characters) in " *Hetu Ting Zuo Fu* (the Weishu related to the *River Chart*) " and " *Hetu Kuo Di Xiang* (the Weishu related to the *River Chart*), " and "龜書出文" (text appearing on tortoise shells) in " *The River Chart* " illustrate this developmental trajectory.

Prophetic literature clearly indicates the progression from spoken language to written language, emphasizing the mystical energy associated with this transition. The evolution of language in prophetic texts begins with the "blowing of pipes to divine names," a practice rooted in sound rather than written characters. Prophetic texts state: "When sages arise, they do not know names; they blow pipes to discern surnames. The Yellow Emperor used this method to establish surnames." These texts highlight the importance of oral language and songs, as noted: "The virtues of the former kings were in the people, who sang and created poems, transforming them into customs."

However, during the Warring States period, there emerged a perceived difference in value between "spoken language" and "written language" (Yuichi Asano, 2005). " *Critical Essays: The Chapter on Simple Burial* " records: "Nothing is clearer than effective results, no argument is settled without evidence. Empty words and false speech, even if they achieve Dao, are still not believed by people." Sima Qian's "Preface to the Records of the Grand Historian" discusses Confucius's reasoning for writing "Spring and Autumn Annals": "Confucius said: I would rather present it in clear actions and events than in empty words." This demonstrates the belief that written records were more reliable than oral statements. " *Kao Ling Yao* (the Weishu related to the *Shangshu*) " describes Confucius: "Qiu was born in troubled times, studying extensively and setting standards. He created the 'Spring and Autumn Annals' to clarify the Mandate of Heaven and recorded and edited rites and principles." Thus, the notion that written characters carry the Mandate of Heaven and the Way of Heaven became mainstream in Chinese culture. From these texts, we can trace the developmental path:

Ancient Rulers Without Writing but With Techniques

The Weishu related to the *Shangshu* and " *Yuan Shen Qi* (the Weishu related to the *Xiaojing*)" both state: "The Three Sovereigns had no written characters." Therefore, education and governance relied on "techniques" rather than writing. " *Chunqiu Yuan Ming Bao* " and the annotation of " *The Gongyang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals* " quoting "The Weishu related to the *Chunqiu* " record: "The essence of the emperor was free-spirited techniques without written characters, illustrating virtue." Thus, as mentioned earlier, the primary means of education and governance were songs and hymns. "The Weishu related to the *Rites*)" records: "Criminal law was stored and hidden, the world was taught through songs. At Mount Tai, achievements were

assessed through sacrifices. In Liangfu, stones were inscribed with records. Magnificent achievements and balanced governance were evident."

This demonstrates that symbols and inscriptions on stones were used as a form of pre-writing communication, laying the foundation for the development of written characters. The references to "刻石記號" (stone inscriptions) suggest the emergence of symbols and diagrams as precursors to written language.

Later Five Rulers Received Divine Signals to Create Images and Characters

Through the depiction of objects, primitive symbols such as hexagrams and diagrams gradually began to appear. " *Gou Ming Jue* (the Weishu related to the *Xiaoqing*) " states: "The Three Sovereigns had no writing, the Five Emperors created images." This indicates that using objects as symbols to draw hexagrams and talismans was recorded. The emergence of written characters relied on divine intervention through sacred animals or divinely inspired sages who created the writing. These can be divided into two categories: "Divine Objects" and "Divine Beings."

Mystical Symbols on Sacred Objects

The creation of written language in relation to divine objects is closely intertwined. " *Dou Wei Yi* (the Weishu related to the *Rites*) " records: "The ruler rode on water and ruled; rivers and seas displayed their symbols, and tortoises and dragons bore inscriptions." The symbols appearing on sacred objects such as tortoises and dragons served as references for creating written characters. " *Yuan Shen Qi* " also mentions: "The Luo River Tortoise shone with written symbols, and they were depicted in red and green, creating characters." Prophetic texts document symbols and diagrams appearing on sacred objects, such as: "The Emperor Xuan carried images, coordinated eternal cycles, connected heaven and earth harmoniously, and transformed the five elements. The River Dragon produced a diagram, the Luo Tortoise revealed a text, and red symbols formed characters to be imparted to Xuanyuan." This method of using sacred objects bearing symbols was often shown to ancient sages and emperors as a form of revelation. For example: "A yellow dragon emerged from the Luo River, approached Yao Shun, and its scales formed characters. Shun ordered it to be recorded, and once written, the dragon departed." The yellow dragon emerging from the river, with symbols on its scales, was observed and recorded by the emperor Shun. This exemplifies the evolution of human efforts to derive written symbols from natural phenomena, and these humans were often ancient sage kings.

Sacred Individuals Receiving Mystical Messages and Transforming Them into Characters

These ancient sage kings themselves exhibited extraordinary characteristics, different from ordinary people, capable of receiving divine revelations and conveying the intentions of the gods. In the historical development of language and writing, as recorded in prophetic texts, these "characters" cannot simply be regarded as written language. The Weishu related to the *I Ching* states: "There were ancient pre-characters, not yet separated from true and obscure." Fuxi's practice of imitating and drawing symbols is therefore described: "In ancient times, texts transformed into characters, qi transformed into the Yi (Changes), drawing hexagrams created symbols, and symbols established positions." This evolution of image symbols through the sage's drawing of hexagrams and the establishment of order is evident. It progressed to Cang Jie, who created characters by imitating the writings on the Luo Tortoise's body. Song Jun explained: "Cang Jie observed the tortoise and created writing, thus the responses of the River Luo and human intention were communicated." Cang Jie himself was also one of the ancient emperors. The characters received from heaven, carried by sacred animals, and created by divine beings, inherently contained mystical energy, influencing the linguistic and cultural thinking of later generations of Chinese.

For instance, " *Extensive Records of the Taiping Era* " records that during the Tang Dynasty, Di Renjie, as a surveillance censor, used written decrees to intimidate local deities worshipped by indigenous tribes, leading to the destruction of their temples. This worship of written symbols, combined with the unique structure of Chinese characters, led people to believe that these characters contained mystical messages that could be deciphered (Wang, 2017).

From the earlier mentioned mystical energy of "spoken language" in prophetic texts through songs and blessings, to the description of "written language" being carried by sacred animals and created by divine beings, it can be inferred that the evolution of the mystical concept of Chinese characters started with sound and developed into written symbols. This evolution shows that ancient Chinese mysticism originally resided in the ability of sound to communicate with the heavens, possessing both educational and transformative energy, gradually advancing towards the meaning and form of written characters, which eventually carried these mystical concepts, thus establishing the culture of Chinese characters.(Table 3)

Character Dissection, Character Divination, and Wordplay in Writing and Riddles

In prophetic texts, there is an interpretation of the structure of Chinese characters, influenced by the transition to clerical script (隸書). This involved dissecting and explaining the structure of clerical script characters in a way that did not align with the original principles of character formation. This practice was criticized by Xu Shen, who referred to it as creating "separate characters" with whimsical explanations, such as "a person with a horse head is considered long" and "a person holding ten is considered a fight." An example can be seen in "*Yuan Ming Bao*": "The earth, 易也, indicates that all things are borne, traded, and transformed, and respond to seasons. Thus, the characters '土' and '力' combined with '乙' form '地'. Song Jun annotates: '地' is formed by adding '土' and '力,' signifying the earth's transformative power in creating things; adding '一' represents serving Taiyi." This concept of character dissection, coupled with the belief in the mystical energy of characters, led to the development of the practice of "character divination" (測字) within the Chinese cultural sphere.

Since the Han dynasty, character-based prophecies have become a widely influential practice, with key figures such as Xie Shi during the reigns of Emperor Huizong and Emperor Gaozong of the Song dynasty playing significant roles in its development. Character divination reflects the Chinese people's veneration of Chinese characters, and this practice rapidly spread, becoming one of the most important and widespread forms of ancient Chinese divination (Guan Luo, 1994).

This form of textual divination, which originated in prophetic texts, clearly demonstrates the veneration of language within Chinese culture, with a focus on the characters themselves. The belief in the mystical power of characters led to various practices such as:

Character Dissection (拆字): Analyzing the components of a character to derive meanings or prophecies.

For example, splitting the character "地" (earth) into its components to understand its deeper meaning.

Character Divination (測字): Using characters to predict future events or gain insights, reflecting the belief that characters hold mystical power.

Wordplay in Writing and Riddles (戲書、字謎): Creating riddles and engaging in wordplay using characters, leveraging the unique structure and multiple meanings of Chinese characters.

These practices are deeply rooted in the cultural and mystical significance attributed to Chinese characters, showing a transition from oral language to written symbols that carry mystical and educational energy, eventually establishing a rich tradition of character-based divination and wordplay.

CONCLUSIONS

The mystical concepts and beliefs related to fortune in the Chinese language reflected the value judgments of Chinese people regarding the interactions between humans and nature, and interpersonal relationships. From the perspective of linguistic history, the mystical energy and religious consciousness in ancient Chinese initially existed predominantly through the use of sound. With the creation of written characters, there was a shift in form and thought.

The contents of Han dynasty prophetic texts (讖緯) inherited the thought and energy of sound and symbols from ancient blessings, prayers, and sacrificial songs. Initially, these texts expressed mystical awareness through rhythmic poetry and songs, ultimately evolving to use written symbols as the carriers of mystical consciousness. Examining the changes in the forms of language use reveals several key points:

From Sound to Symbols: The early mystical energy in language and religious consciousness was primarily expressed through sound. This evolved into written forms with the creation of characters, reflecting a shift from oral to written expression.

Influence of Shamanistic Beliefs: The mystical concepts and efficacy of language in ancient Chinese were influenced by primitive shamanistic beliefs, leading to the development of character-based divination and other practices that emphasize the mystical power of written symbols.

Transition to Written Worship: As Chinese culture evolved, there was a transition from the worship of spoken language to the worship of written language. This shift was driven by historical awareness, the importance of recording history, and the practical advantages of written communication in a vast and linguistically diverse country like China.

The Han dynasty prophetic texts preserved the mystical energy of sound and symbols from ancient times. Initially, they used rhythmic poetry to express mystical ideas, eventually adopting written symbols as the primary carriers of mystical consciousness. This shift reflects a broader cultural transition from oral to written forms of communication, deeply rooted in the historical and religious consciousness of Chinese society.

The evolution from oral to written language worship in Chinese culture highlights several factors:

Early Historical Awareness: The early development of historical consciousness in Chinese culture emphasized the importance of written records, making written characters crucial for documenting events and ideas.

Political and Cultural Exchanges: The vast geographical expanse of China, with significant dialectal differences, made written communication more convenient and effective for political and cultural exchanges.

Overall, the shift from sound to symbols in expressing mystical concepts in the Chinese language represents a significant evolution influenced by historical, cultural, and practical factors, leading to a deep-rooted reverence for written characters in Chinese society.

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Table 1

Literature	Examples of Chinese Expressions with Mystical Thinking Coding of Expressive Types
Qian Zao Du	Therefore, the qi of Qian and Kun merges in Xu and Hai, and the sound receives the rhythms of the two sons. The yang generates the state of Xiubai, carrying the "Bell," which is named the essence of Taiyi. The Yuan calendar has no name, pushing the earlier record to be called "Jia Yin." Simply using oral language to call and refer to the private names of objects
Kun Ling Tu	Virtue matches heaven and earth, it is proper and not private, and is called "Emperor." The Emperor is the title of heaven. Calling and referring to the common external titles of objects
Xuan Ji Qian	The Emperor is the title of heaven, "King" is the title given by humans. Heaven has five Emperors to establish names, humans have three Kings to establish proper measures.
Qian Zao Du	Differentiate the sages, record the rise and fall, the names of states and lands, the surnames assist in issuing symbols. Using both private names and common titles together to call and refer
Shi Lei Mou	All these are symbols of danger and destruction, or names, good words, titles, and party officials and states.

Table 2

Examples of Chinese Taboo Avoidance	Coding of Expression Forms
When the sun is about to eclipse, it gradually turns blue and black. The great generals and three dukes are cautiously dispatched to address the situation and inform the heavens: "Your Majesty's subject, so-and-so, respectfully accepts the imperial warning, withdraws to a proper place, reflects on mistakes, the sun's essence is obstructed, administrative duties are discarded, right affairs depart from wrong, releases strict prohibitions, does not dare to give a direct order, dispatches the subject with reverence to convey this."	Indirect oral expression

A Study of Mystical Thinking in Ancient Chinese Expressions: Focusing on "Chen Wei"

Originally said as "yuan lai," many people in Tang and Song dynasties used this term. Later generations replaced it with the character "yuan" (原), not knowing the reason. "Yuan" means "again."... Some believe that during the Hongwu period, a minister called an official of the Yuan dynasty, which was avoided, and thus the character was changed. Changing the original characters

Table 3 Examples of Chinese Expressions with Mysterious Thinking

Coding of Expression Methods

"At the end of the eighth day of the last month, examining the qi used in the classics and apocrypha, not setting up the Five Virtues, calculating the period and its sequence, using 'the sound of the pipes to divine the name,' and observing the position of Mars. "

Using sound and oral expression

"When a sage arose, their name was unknown. They used the sound of the pipes to determine the surname. Huangdi used the sound of the pipes to determine the surname. "

Using sound and oral expression

"The ruler ascends the waters and becomes king, with the image of rivers and seas, and the turtle and dragon reveal their patterns."

Using written symbols

"Emperor Xuanyuan held the image, matched it with the eternal mechanism, and connected the harmony of heaven and earth. The dragon map emerged from the Yellow River, the turtle book from the Luo River, with red patterns and characters, to be handed down to Xuanyuan."

Using written symbols