SUMMARY

The student of Confucius, Zi Gong, said: “The Master’s personal displays of his principles and ordinary descriptions of them may be heard. His discourses about the man’s nature and the way of Heaven, cannot be heard.” In this sentence, two aspects of knowledge: ‘The Human Nature’ and ‘The Way of Heaven’ are involved. ‘The Way of Heaven’ is something with a ‘transcendent’ meaning while ‘Human Nature’ is something relevant to ‘morality’. These two aspects are metaphysical questions. How to grasp the transcendence of ‘The Way of Heaven’ and how to understand the ‘Human Nature’ and what are the relationship between them, are the significant topic in the study of Chinese philosophy. My dissertation, The doctrines of The Way of Heaven, Human Nature, and The mandate of Heaven in the teachings of Confucius and Mencius, is a piece of research work done along the same line.

There are three areas of discussion in this dissertation: Firstly, about the development of the thought of ‘The Way of Heaven’; secondary, an analysis of the relationship between the philosophy of ‘Human Nature’ and ‘The Way of Heaven’; thirdly, an explanation of the change of the meaning of ‘The Way of Heaven’ to ‘moral metaphysical’ in which we can observe the Chinese Religion trend to be more and more humanistic.

In Chapter Two and Chapter Three, the development of the meaning of ‘The Way of Heaven’ is discussed. Chapter Two explores the thought of ‘The Way of Heaven’ during the Dynasty Shang. The main characteristic of
the thoughts in this period is ancestor worship and God worship. Chapter Three explores the Confucian view of ‘The Way of Heaven’.

In Chapter Four, the relationship between ‘The Way of Heaven’, ‘Human Nature’ and ‘The Mandate of Heaven’ in the teachings of Mencius is discussed. In Mencius the three concept are linked up as one. Meng Zi believed that Human Nature, through the moral practice, can merge with the ‘The Way of Heaven’.


Chapter Six is a concluding chapter that summaries the finding of this dissertation. The main characteristic of the teaching of Confucianism is to uphold the value of mankind. This has allows the Chinese culture to develop towards the direction of stressing the importance of human nature.