CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are three questions that must often occur to all persons interested in the history of Chinese thought. First, what is the nature of Chinese philosophy, and what contribution has it to make to the world? Secondly, is it true, as is often said, that Chinese philosophy lacks system? And thirdly, is it true that there is no such thing as growth in Chinese philosophy?

The first of these questions can best be answered by briefly comparing Chinese with western philosophy. If we examine the problems studied by what, in China, during the Wei (A.D. 220-265) and Chin (265-420) dynasties, was called the ‘learning of the mystery’ (hsüan hsüeh 玄 學); by what during the Sung (A.D. 960-1279) and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties was called the ‘learning of the truth’ (tao hsüeh 道 學); and by what during the Ch’ing dynasty (1644-1912) was called the ‘learning of the principles’ (i li chih hsüeh 義 理之 學), we find that these problems resemble to a considerable degree those of western philosophy.

In the West, philosophy has been conveniently divided into such divisions as metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, logic, etc. . And likewise in China already in the fifth century B.C., we find reference being made to the discourse of Confucius on ‘human nature and the ways of Heaven’ (Lun Yü, V, 12). Thus already in this quotation there are mentioned two of the divisions of western philosophic thought: ‘human nature’ corresponds roughly to ethics, and the ‘ways of Heaven’ to metaphysics. As for the other divisions, such as logic and epistemology, they in China have been touched on only by the thinkers of the Period of the Philosophers (extending from Confucius to about 100 B.C.), and have been neglected by later Chinese thinkers (for example, those of the Sung and Ming periods). In one way, to be sure, this later philosophy can be said to have developed a methodology, when it discussed what it called ‘the method of conducting study.’ This method, however, was not primarily for the seeking of knowledge, but rather for self-cultivation; it was not for the search of truth, but for the search of good.

Chinese philosophy, then, as far as regards methodology in the western sense, holds a humble position when compared with the philosophy of the West or of India. This arises more from the fact that the Chinese have paid little attention to methodology, than
from their incapacity to develop it. Chinese philosophers for the most part have not regarded knowledge as something valuable in itself, and so have not sought knowledge for the sake of knowledge; and even in the case of knowledge of a practical sort that might have a direct bearing upon human happiness, Chinese philosophers have preferred to apply this knowledge to actual conduct that would lead directly to this happiness, rather than to hold what they considered to be empty discussions about it. For this reason the Chinese have not regarded the writing of books purely to establish doctrines, as in itself a goal of the highest importance. Most Chinese philosophic schools have taught the way of what is called the 'Inner Sage and Outer King.' The Inner Sage is a person who has established virtue in himself; the Outer King is one who has accomplished great deeds in the world. The highest ideal for a man is at once to possess the virtue of a Sage and the accomplishment of a ruler, and so become what is called a Sage-king, or what Plato would term the Philosopher-king.

In China, therefore, it was only when a Sage had failed to gain the position of a ruler (or at least of an official), in which he might carry his principles into practice, that he turned to the writing of books as a means of establishing his doctrines; and hence this last course was looked upon by Chinese philosophers as one to be followed only when no other alternative offered. For this reason there are comparatively few works in Chinese philosophical literature written in a complete form and offering a unified presentation; the case has generally been that the philosopher himself, or his disciples, have simply grouped together a series of miscellaneous writings into an unconnected whole. Because of this fact, even though the doctrines of a Chinese philosopher may in themselves be quite justifiable, the arguments used to support them often fall short because they are too simple or disconnected.¹

Chinese philosophy, in short, has always laid stress upon what man is (i.e., his moral qualities), rather than what he has (i.e., his intellectual and material capacities). If a man is a Sage, he remains a Sage even if he is completely lacking in intellectual knowledge; if he is an evil man, he remains evil even though he may have boundless knowledge. The philosopher Wang Yang-ming (A.D. 1473-1529) has compared the Sage to pure gold, holding that a man need only have a pure quality to be a Sage, regardless of the extent of his knowledge or his other abilities. These may differ among different persons, just as eight pounds differs from nine pounds of gold in weight.

¹ Another possible explanation for this fact is that in ancient times, before the invention of paper, writings were made in China by being scratched out on strips of bamboo. Because of the clumsiness of the material, these writings were naturally made as brief and concise as possible. And so by the time of the invention of paper, supposedly in A.D. 105, this style of writing had become a habit, a fact which helps to account for the extreme ellipticity of the Chinese classical written language.
whereas the quality of the gold remains in both cases the same. The quality of gold pertains to the 'what it is' aspect of things, whereas its amount pertains to the side of 'what it has.' Chinese thinkers stress 'what it is,' and not 'what it has,' and so have not greatly emphasized pure knowledge. This is one reason why China has had only the beginnings of science, and has lacked a properly developed system of science.¹

Epistemology has likewise not formed an important part of Chinese philosophy, not only because Chinese philosophy has not cared to pursue knowledge purely for its own sake, but also because it does not demarcate clearly the distinction between the individual and the universe. A very important feature of modern western history has been the consciousness by the ego of itself. Once it has consciousness of itself, the world immediately becomes separated into two: the ego and the non-ego, or what is subjective and what is objective. From this division arises the problem of how the subjective ego can have knowledge of the objective non-ego, and from this arises the great emphasis which western philosophy has laid upon epistemology. In Chinese thought, however, there has been no clear consciousness by the ego of itself, and so there has been equally little attention paid to the division between the ego and the non-ego; therefore epistemology has likewise not become a major problem.²

Logic is a requirement for dialectic discussion, and hence since most schools of Chinese philosophy have not striven greatly to establish arguments to support their doctrines, there have been few men, aside from those of the School of Names, who have been interested in examining the processes and methods of thinking; and this school, unfortunately, had but a fleeting existence. Hence logic, like epistemology, has failed to be developed in China.

Chinese philosophy also, because of its special stress on human affairs, has not put equal emphasis on metaphysics. In all of the divisions of philosophy which have we mentioned, western philosophy has made great developments, whereas this has not been the case with all of them in China. Chinese philosophy, on the other hand, because of its emphasis upon the way of the 'Inner Sage,' has delved deeply into the methods of self-cultivation, that is, what it calls 'the method of conducting study.' And in this respect China truly has a great contribution to offer.

¹ Cf. my 'Why China has no science,' in the International Journal of Ethics, Vol. 32, No. 3.

² It is true that certain schools of Buddhism have in China delved quite deeply into the problem of the ego and the non-ego. These schools represent primarily Indian rather than Chinese thought, however, and hence have failed, in their original form at least, to become an integral part of the main current of Chinese thought, which has continued for the most part to pay little attention to the problems arising from the recognition of the distinction between ego and non-ego.—Tr.
The above already partially answers the second of our three questions: Is it true that Chinese philosophy lacks system? As far as the presentation of ideas is concerned, it is certainly true that there are comparatively few Chinese philosophical works that display unity and orderly sequence; therefore it is commonly said that Chinese philosophy lacks system. Nevertheless, what is called system may be divided into two categories, the formal and the real, which have no necessary connection with one another. It may be admitted that Chinese philosophy lacks formal system; but if one were to say that it therefore lacks any real system, meaning that there is no organic unity of ideas to be found in Chinese philosophy, it would be equivalent to saying that Chinese philosophy is not philosophy, and that China has no philosophy. The earlier Greek philosophy also lacked formal system. Thus Socrates wrote no books himself, Plato used the dialogue form in his writings, and it was not until Aristotle that a clear and ordered exposition was given on every problem. Hence if we judge from the point of view of formal presentation, Aristotle’s philosophy is comparatively systematic, yet in so far as the actual content of the philosophy is concerned, Plato’s philosophy is equally systematic. According to what has just been said, philosophy in order to be philosophy, must have real system, and although Chinese philosophy, formally speaking, is less systematic than of the West, in its actual content it has just as much system as does western philosophy. This being so, the important duty of the historian of philosophy is to find within a philosophy that lacks formal system, its underlying real system.

This search for the real system underlying any philosophy leads us to the third of our questions: Is it true that there is no such thing as progressive growth in Chinese philosophy? When we study history, we see that social organization tends to move from the less complex to the more complex, and knowledge from the less distinct to the more distinct. Men of later times base themselves on the experience of earlier men, and thus can utilize all that has happened before them. For this reason the movement of history is one of progress, a tendency which we can also perceive at work when we come to examine Chinese philosophy. The problems and scope of Chinese philosophy from the Han dynasty onward are not so numerous and comprehensive as those of the philosophy that preceded it, and yet the later philosophy is certainly more clearly expounded than the earlier one. Those who have not studied the question carefully, upon seeing how Confucius discusses the ideas of the ancient semi-mythical Emperors, Yao and Shun; how later philosophers, such as Tung Chung-shu (179?-104? B.C.), Chu Hsi (A.D. 1130-1200), and Wang Yang-ming (1473-1529), discuss those of Confucius; and how even in modern times Tai Tung-yüan (1723-1777) and K’ang Yu-wei (1858-1927) have continued to discuss Confucius, may
INTRODUCTION

conclude that the ancients have contributed all and the moderns nothing. Actually, however, when we think that such men as Tung Chung-shu and Wang Yang-ming are not merely commentators, and that their philosophic works represent their own philosophy and not that preceding them, the progressive growth of Chinese philosophy becomes apparent.

Some persons say that the ideas of such men as Tung Chung-shu and Wang Yang-ming are already to be found in germ in earlier Confucian writings. Hence, they reason, since these ideas are merely further developments made by these men, how can they be accepted as forming a philosophy of their own? What new contribution can they make? Even granted, however, that the philosophies of these two men are mere developments of earlier thought, we cannot regard them lightly. For development means progress. When the child grows into the mature man, the adult merely develops the capacities already inherent in the child; and when the chicken’s egg becomes the chicken, the chicken merely develops the capacities already inherent in the egg. Yet how can we, on the basis of this fact, conclude that the child is therefore the adult, and the chicken egg is the chicken? One might point out that, using Aristotle’s terminology, a great difference exists between potentiality and actuality. Movement from such potentiality toward actuality constitutes progress. If we wish to see the progressive growth of Chinese philosophy, we must first relegate the material of each period to that period, and the doctrines of each man to that man. Once this has been done, the true aspect of the philosophy of each school becomes evident, and the growth of Chinese philosophy also becomes manifest.

Former scholars of Chinese civilization have either not known how to separate genuine ancient writings from forgeries, or when they did, they have considered such forgeries to lack any value. This, too, has been one cause for the apparent lack of growth in Chinese philosophy. We historians of Chinese philosophy maintain that such a distinction between false and genuine writings must be made, because only after this has been done can the true aspect of the thought of each period be made evident. If we are merely studying philosophy, and not the history of philosophy, we need only trouble ourselves about whether or not the doctrines appearing in a certain work are valuable in themselves, and need not bother about discovering to what man and period they actually belong. The mere fact that a book is a forgery, does not, in such a case, destroy that book’s value, provided that the ideas it expresses have value in themselves. Nor does the mere genuineness of a book make that book valuable, if what it says is in itself of no value.

Even from the viewpoint of the historian of philosophy, however, a forgery may have value. For though it cannot be used to
represent the thought of the period to which it has been falsely attributed, yet it remains as the thought of the period when it was actually produced, and so can be utilized as material for the philosophic history of that period. The chapter in the *Lieh-tzu*, for example, which supposedly describes the doctrines of Yang Chu (who lived probably in the fourth century B.C.), does not, as a matter of fact, represent his true doctrines; and yet it remains a systematic exposition of a much later current of thought existing during the Wei (A.D. 220-265) and Chin (265-420) dynasties, thus becoming excellent material for the study of the philosophy of these dynasties. Therefore to say that this chapter is a forgery does not destroy its value, but merely necessitates moving its period to a later time. And the necessity for thus shifting it consists only in the desire to make written history accord with actual history, that is, to gain the truth.
CHAPTER II

A GENERAL SURVEY OF THE PERIOD OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

1—BEGINNINGS OF THE PERIOD

It was not until the Chou dynasty (1122?-256 B.C.) that the civilization of China assumed a definite pattern. Confucius has said: "Chou had the advantage of surveying the two preceding dynasties. How replete is its culture! I follow Chou" (Lun Yu, III, 14). In his mind, the Chou literature and institutions could, indeed, serve to "transmit the spirit of the Sages of the past, and open the way to scholars to come." Confucius, in fact, as we know from the Lun Yu, strove his entire life to perpetuate the achievements of King Wen and the Duke of Chou, two of the Chou dynasty founders.

While material is not lacking from which we may study the culture, literature and institutions of the early Chou, yet up to the time of Confucius (551-479 B.C.) there appears to have been no one who composed any sort of literary work in a private capacity, that is to say, who wrote books under his own name expressing his own opinions, in contradistinction to authorship of historical works or other writings directly connected with official position. The historian, Chang Hsueh-ch'eng (1738-1801) points this out as follows:

"During the early period there were no instances of the (private) writing of books. The officials and teachers preserved the literary records, and the historians made record of the passage of events. The purpose of written words was already sufficiently fulfilled if by their means the various officials might govern, and the common people be kept under surveillance. . . . . . . It was only when the times were out of joint that teachers and scholars set up their (own private) teachings, and it was in so doing that our Master (i.e., Confucius) was superior to (the legendary Emperors) Yao and Shun."

Save for the tendency in this quotation to idealize the past, these words seem close to the truth. China's ancient period was essentially

1 Cf. ch. 4, sect. 2, pp. 54 f.
2 The books traditionally ascribed to non-official writers living prior to Confucius are all later forgeries, and the Tao Te Ching, supposedly written by Lao Tzü before the time of Confucius, is also much later. Cf. ch. 8, sect. 1, pp. 170-172.
one of aristocratic rule, in which those who held political power were, at the same time, the possessors of material wealth and held a monopoly on education. In other words, the political and economic hierarchy, and the hierarchy of learning, coincided, so that between officials and scholars there was no real distinction. This ruling nobility, occupied as it was with political matters, had little time left for the writing of books; while because it held the political authority, it could directly express its ideals, when these existed, in concrete action, out of which could later be formulated the texts used in government instruction. There was, then, no real need for literary writings (i.e., those unconnected with the government administration). Such writing was regarded as something to be done only when there remained no other alternative of action. This is an attitude that has been characteristic of many of the philosophic schools of China.

Philosophy, however, if it is to be the systematic manifestation of thought, must necessarily find expression in the writings of private individuals. Prior to Confucius there were no such writings, and we, to-day, cannot know whether or not any kind of systematic philosophy actually did exist. Although Confucius himself did not compose any literary works, there was a period during his life when he neither held office nor engaged in any other activity, but devoted himself exclusively to the exposition of his teachings. To-day, there is nothing exceptional in such conduct, but at that early time it was truly an unheard of precedent. Confucius, furthermore, according to what his disciples have recorded of him, was the first to develop a true system of thought. In these respects, then, he certainly occupies a pioneer's position in the history of Chinese philosophy, and hence the fact that later generations have honored him as The Teacher, although perhaps not entirely justified, was also not wholly unreasonable. Confucius is, therefore, the first individual to be studied in this history of Chinese philosophy, because prior to him there existed, in all probability, no system of thought worthy of being called philosophy.

2—CAUSES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY DURING THE PERIOD

Among the subdivisions in the history of Chinese philosophy, that of the Period of the Philosophers occupies a primary position, whether it be in the number of its schools, the variety of problems discussed by these, its broad scope, penetrating interest of investigations, or dynamic richness of its manifestations. Special causes must

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1 What have been considered as the writings of private individuals prior to the Warring States period (403-221 B.C.) need not necessarily have been written by these individuals themselves. Cf. sect. 5, pp. 19-20.
have existed to give it such unique qualities, and these will be taken up later.'

In Chinese history, the age extending from the Ch’un Ch’iu period (722-481 B.C.) down to the beginning of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.—A.D. 220) is one of general emancipation, in which political institutions, social organization, and economic structure all undergo fundamental changes. The early Chou dynasty had been a time of rule by a feudal aristocracy, under which each of the feudal states was either a fief created by the Royal House of Chou, or a state that had already existed before the Chou. The ministers and great officers within these states were also all members of the ruling houses, and held their offices in hereditary perpetuity, whereas the common people were denied all share in the political power. The Tso Chuan, under the year 535 B.C., states: "As the days have their divisions in periods of ten each, so men have their ten ranks. It is by these that inferiors serve their superiors, and that superiors perform their duties to the spirits. Therefore the king has the ruler (of each feudal state) as his subject; the rulers have the great prefects as their subjects; the prefects have their officers; the officers have their subalterns; the subalterns have their multitude of petty officers; the petty officers have their assistants; the assistants have their employees; the employees have their menials. For the menials there are helpers, for the horses there are grooms, and for the cattle there are cowherds. And thus there is provision for all things" (p. 616). With a government thus maintained by a feudal aristocracy holding hereditary offices and fiefs, it was inevitable that the social organization should also be based on an elaborately graded hierarchy.

The outstanding characteristic of the Warring States period (403-221 B.C.), however, was the gradual collapse of the feudal system, resulting in marked changes in the earlier rigid social system. This phenomenon was marked, on the one hand, by the rise during the Warring States period of many men, of comparatively lowly origin, to positions of great political importance; while on the other

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1 Dr. Hu Shih, in discussing the trends of the period prior to Lao Tzü and Confucius, comes to the conclusion that at that time "the government was especially dark and unenlightened, society was especially disordered, poverty and wealth were especially unequally distributed, and the life of the people was extremely bitter. With the existence of such conditions, it was natural that these should have produced reactions of thought of many kinds." Cf. his Chung-kuo Che-hsien Shih Ta-kung, p. 42. But there has hardly been a dynasty in China’s history when such conditions have not to some extent been present. Hence while not without bearing upon the appearance of the ancient philosophy, they cannot, in themselves, be held sufficiently to account for its unique qualities. Liang Ch’i-ch’ao (1873-1929) has already pointed this out, but the factors which he in his turn holds to be of special importance, also existed during later ages, and so are likewise insufficient explanations in themselves. Cf. Liang Jen-kang Hsih-shu Chiang-yen Chi, pp. 11 and 16 of the first collection.

2 A detailed history, written probably during the third century B.C., which covers the same period as, and greatly elaborates upon, the brief chronicles found in the Ch’un Ch’iu history from which the Ch’un Ch’iu period derives its name.—Tr.
it was marked by the fall from power of many of the former ruling families. This movement reached a climax in 221 B.C., when Ch’in Shih-huang succeeded in unifying all China under the rule of the House of Ch’in, and dealt feudalism a decisive blow by relegating the royal families of all states except that of Ch’in to the level of the common people.

During the several years of civil warfare following the death of Ch’in Shih-huang in 210, it is true, several of the members of the former ruling families succeeded in raising armies and returning to power. And when unification was once more effected through the founding of the Han dynasty in 206, the first Han ruler, despite the fact that he was of plebeian origin, allowed feudalism to be revived by granting fiefs to his meritorious ministers and to members of his own family, as well as by allowing several of the former nobles to retain their rank. The feudalism thus revived was only a shadow of its former self, however, and especially after a revolt of several nobles occurring in 154 B.C., it was greatly circumscribed by restrictive measures, among them one that all governing officials should be directly appointed by the Emperor. The final blow was dealt by the gradual establishment of the examination system under Emperor Wu-ti (140-87 B.C.), so that after that time feudalism almost ceased to exist.

We can find evidence of the breakdown of feudalism beginning already during the Ch’un Ch’iu period. Thus it is recorded that Ning Ch’i, a mere carter, while feeding his oxen, attracted the attention of Duke Huan of Ch’i (685-643) and so obtained office, and that Po-li Hsi, while a prisoner of war, was ransomed by Duke Mu of Ch’in (659-621) for the price of five ram skins, and so became the latter’s counsellor. At the same time there was a corresponding decline of the aristocracy. The Tso Chuan, for example, under the year 539 B.C., makes the statement: “The Luan, the Ch’i, the Hsü, the Yuän, the Hu, the Hsü, the Ch’ing and the Po (all descendants of great families of the Chin state) are reduced to the position of menials” (p. 589). Confucius himself originally belonged to the nobility of the state of Sung, but because of poverty entered office and was “once a keeper of stores,” and “once in charge of the public fields,” both lowly offices. All this indicates how the nobles were gradually losing their positions and becoming a part of the common people. Institutions that had been based upon a graded hierarchy likewise gradually fell into oblivion, so that by the time of the founding of the Han dynasty, it was possible for a man of the common people to become Emperor.

Intimately connected with feudalism was the economic system known as the ‘well-field’, or ching t’ien 井田 system. According to this, all 國 was divided into large squares, each subdivided into

1 Cf. Mencius, Vb, 5.
nine smaller squares. Each of the eight outer of these nine squares was cultivated by one family for its own use, while the produce of the ninth central square, cultivated in common by the eight families and called the ‘public field,’ went to the support of the overlord.' Under this system all land was ultimately the possession of the ruler. Thus the Shih Ching (Book of Odes) says: 'Under the whole heaven, every spot is the sovereign's ground; to the borders of the land, every individual is the sovereign's subject' (II, vi, Ode 1, 2). The Tso Chuan also states, under the year 535: 'The dominion of the Son of Heaven extends everywhere. The feudal lords have their own defined boundaries. Such is the ancient rule. Within the state and the kingdom, what ground is here which is not the ruler's? What individual of all whom the ground supports is there who is not the ruler's subject?' (p. 616).

Such terms as 'king's land' and 'king's subject' were in later times regarded merely as political concepts, but during the ancient feudal period they had economic meaning as well. The graded ranks of society which have been described above, were likewise not merely political and social, but also economic. In short, under the feudal system of ancient China, the Emperor (Son of Heaven), feudal lords, and ministers and great officers, were all overlords of the people, not only politically but also economically, and so when the Royal House of Chou invested the male branches of its family with land grants, those so invested acted both as political rulers and as economic landholders. These feudal lords, in their turn, divided this land among their relatives, and these relatives again among the common people for cultivation. The common people could not themselves own land, and so were mere agricultural serfs of their political and economic overlords. Consequently we find that the records of government of that time, as found in the Tso Chuan and Kuo Yu, describe no more than the activities of a few noble families. As for the common people, they were required to labor for their lords in time of peace, while in time of war they had to be ready to sacrifice their lives. The relationship of serf to overlord is described by the historian Hsia Tseng-yu (died 1924), in his discussion of the question of the ching t'ien system:

"The truth of the matter probably is that the land was exclusively the possession of the nobles, and that the peasants were all attached to this land as serfs, this forming the basis of the distinction between the ordinary people and those who belonged to the Hundred Names (i.e., who bore a recognized family name, in contradistinction to the

1 The word ching \# or 'well,' as used here, represents the square fields, into which the land was divided under this system.—Tr.

2 'Sayings of the States,' a collection of historical conversations which cover about the same period as does the Tso Chuan, but are grouped geographically according to states, rather than chronologically.—Tr.
nameless serfs). Such a condition lasted until Lord Shang, of the state of Ch’ин, abolished it. This act marked one phase of social progress.”

The histories tell us that Shang Yang “destroyed the ching t’ien system, and opened up the paths and furrows between the fields...... The (ancient) imperial regulations thereupon disappeared, there was no limit upon encroachments, and among the common people there were wealthy men who accumulated millions (of coins).” This suffices to indicate how the agricultural serfs, following their emancipation, seized power and came into control of large land areas. The decay of the so-called ching t’ien system was undoubtedly one of the main tendencies of that age, and Shang Yang, by making especial use of political power, did no more than give it a conscious and exemplary impetus.

Another of the tendencies of the time was the changing status of the merchant class, which gradually rose till it acquired great power. Thus the Ch’ien Han Shu (History of the Former Han Dynasty) says:

“With the decline of the House of Chou, the rites (li 禘) and laws fell into decay. ...... This falling away (from the old standards) reached the point where, among the officials and common people, there were none who did not set the (old) regulations aside and spurn what is fundamental (i.e., agriculture). The peasants became few and the merchants numerous. Of grain there was an insufficiency, and of (commercial) goods a superfluity...... Thereupon the merchants circulated goods difficult to obtain (i.e., rare and expensive luxuries); the artisans produced objects of no real utility; and the scholars instituted conduct subversive to morality, in their pursuit for immediate benefits and search for worldly wealth. ...... The grounds and groves of the rich underwent elaborate adornment, and their dogs and horses had a superabundance of meat and grain. ...... While among the common people, though all were (theoretically) of equal rank, some by the power of their wealth could become the masters of others” (ch. 91, p. 3).

Looked at from the economic point of view, it is evident that the collapse of feudalism was brought about through this continual increase of economic power of the former agricultural serfs and of the merchants, with the result that ‘the imperial regulations disappeared,’ and ‘the rites and laws fell into decay.’ The rise of the merchant class may be illustrated by such men as Hsien Kao, who, while a mere merchant, successfully protected the state of Cheng

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1 Shang Yang (died 338 B.C.), the famous legalist statesman who introduced many new economic measures into Ch’in. For his ideas, see ch. 13, sect. 3, p. 319.—Tr.

2 Cf. his Chung-kuo Li-shih (A History of China), I, 258.

3 Ch’ien Han Shu, ch. 24, pt. i, p. 7.
from the surprise attack of the state of Ch’in;* and Lü Pu-wei, who, from the position of a great trader, became minister of the Ch’in state.† These are examples of ‘capitalists’ who became directly involved in the political affairs of their day. Summing up, we may say that the breakdown of the system of hereditary revenues, and of the ching t’ien organization; the emancipation of the common people; and the amassing of private fortunes, were the outstanding changes in the economic structure during the ancient period.‡

These great changes began during the Ch’un Ch’iu period, and came to an end about the middle of the Han dynasty. During these several centuries the novelty of the conditions which the Chinese were called upon to face, and the scope of the freedom obtained from former restrictions, stand, with the sole exception of present-day conditions, unparalleled in China’s history. Even in world history, in fact, excepting again the present era, they are at least fully comparable to similar phenomena elsewhere.

During this gradual collapse of the old institutions of an entire society, it is natural that there should have been a tendency among conservatives, seeing that “the spirit of the age is not that of antiquity, and men’s hearts daily decline,” to arise as upholders of these ancient institutions. Confucius was a man of this sort. Before these institutions had been shaken, the mere fact of their antiquity was sufficient to awaken in men’s hearts a feeling of reverence. But once that they were actually in danger, their preservers, if they wished to gain a genuine following among the rulers and men of their time, were

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* When the Ch’in army was marching to attack Cheng in 627 B.C., he frightened it away by meeting it with twelve oxen which he presented on behalf of the Cheng ruler, thus indicating that the intended surprise attack was already known to Cheng. Cf. Mem. hist., II, 39.—Tr.

† While a merchant, Lü Pu-wei attached himself to one of the Ch’in princes, and became guardian of the latter’s son when the prince died. This son, who is said actually to have been Lü’s own son, later became the famed Ch’in Shih-huang-ti, China’s first unifier. Lü himself, after being regent, eventually became involved in a court intrigue, and died 235 B.C.—Tr.

‡ The Tso Chuen, under the year 526 B.C., records an interesting story:

Hsüan Tzū had a ring of jade, the mate of which belonged to a merchant of Cheng, and he begged it from the Earl of Cheng. Tzū Ch’ān (Prime Minister of Cheng) refused it, . . . saying: "Our former ruler, Duke Huan (806-771), came with (some) merchants from Chou. Thus they were associated in cultivating the land, together clearing and opening up this territory, and cutting down its tangled southernwood and orchard. They dwelt in it together, and made a covenant of mutual faith, to last through all generations, which said: ‘If you (the merchants) do not revolt against me, I will not forcibly interfere in your trade, nor will I demand or seize anything from you. If you derive profit from selling precious objects, I will take no notice of it.’ Through this attested covenant, (our rulers and the descendants of the merchants) have preserved their mutual relations down to the present day. But now Your Excellency, having come to us on a friendly mission, has told our state forcibly to despoil this merchant. Such would be teaching us to violate a covenant. Would it not be improper?” (p. 664).

The terms of this covenant, so solemnly recorded, strike us to-day as remarkable, and indicate the humble position of the merchants in early China, when their oppression by the nobility was an ordinary occurrence.
obliged to supply reasons for upholding the past and its institutions. Confucius had already begun this sort of work; the later Confucians continued it; and in this rests one of their great contributions.

The general tendency of the time was such, however, that these ancient institutions continued to disintegrate despite the attempts of the Confucians to uphold them. From the age of Confucius onward, there arose men who criticized or opposed these institutions; who wished to revise them; who wished to establish new institutions in their place; or who were opposed to all institutions whatsoever. The age was one of transition, during which the institutions of the past had lost their authority, and those of the new age had not yet been definitely formulated. It was inevitable, then, that it should be one of uncertainty and divergence. Thus when the Confucians had advanced their arguments for the preservation of the past, other philosophers, holding divergent views, were forced, if they wished to gain a following, to explain in their turn the reasons why they considered their own doctrines superior. The Confucian philosopher, Hsiün Tzŭ, refers to this situation when he says about the doctrines of twelve opposing philosophers: "What they support (all) seems reasonable; their teachings are (all) plausible" (Hsiün-tzŭ, pp. 78, 79).

In this way men became accustomed to emphasis being laid upon logical presentation, a fact which resulted in the rise of the School of Dialecticians, with its discussions on such subjects as 'the hard and the white, similarity and difference,' and its purely logical interest. Thus we see that the beginnings of rationalism coincide with the beginnings of philosophizing.

A number of quotations from contemporary literature allude to the prevailing intellectual anarchy of the time. The Menčius states: "Sage-kings cease to arise, the feudal lords give rein to their lusts, and unemployed scholars indulge in unreasonable discussions" (IIIb, 9).

The Chuang-tzŭ (ch. 33) says similarly:

"The world is in great confusion, the virtuous and the sage are obscured, morality and virtue have lost their unity, and there are many in the world who have seized a single aspect of the whole for their self enjoyment. . . . Everyone in the world does what he wishes and is a rule unto himself" (p. 439).

And the I-wen Chih (catalogue of the Imperial Han library, forming Chapter XXX of the Ch'ien Han Shu) states:

"The various philosophers belonged to ten schools, but there are only nine worthy of notice. They all began when royal control was lessening and the feudal nobles were becoming more powerful and differed widely in what they preferred and disliked. Just so the differing practices of the nine schools swarmed forth and had a common development. Each school picked a single point which was exalted as the good and was discussed so as to win the favor of the feudal lords" (Aids, p. 64).
THE PERIOD OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

All this serves to indicate the breakdown of the institutions and organization of that time, because of which 'morality and virtue lost their unity,' 'the feudal lords . . . . differed widely in what they preferred and disliked,' and 'everyone in the world did what he wished and was a rule unto himself.' The philosophy of the Chou dynasty arose out of the freedom of thought and speech of that time, which was itself brought about by the fact that it was also an age of transition and of liberation from former restrictions.

3—THE CLOSE OF THE PERIOD

The end of the Warring States period, which took place in 221 B.C., when Ch'in unified China, is usually regarded as also marking the close of the ancient period of Chinese philosophy. Because Ch'in Shih-huang (in 213 B.C.), ordered the Burning of the Books, and forbade the storage throughout the empire of 'books of poetry, books of history, and the teachings of the various philosophers,' many people consider the Ch'in dynasty as a barbaric time, in which the learning of the past was completely destroyed. Actually, however, Ch'in Shih-huang "merely burned the books which existed among the people, but did not burn those in the official archives. He merely prohibited private teaching, so that (people) would turn toward (the official class of) 'scholars of wide learning' for instruction." 2 Ch'in Shih-huang's aim, in short, and that of his Prime Minister, Li Ssu, the man who had first suggested the Burning of the Books, was more to create a standardization of thought, than completely to wipe out the learning of their time. 3 This is indicated by the fact that the 'scholars of wide learning' 4 whom Ch'in Shih-huang established, included men belonging to all schools of thought. 5

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1 What the I-wen Chih says here about the feudal nobles, that they "differed widely in what they preferred and disliked," is, itself, one cause for the flowering of thought that took place during the Warring States period (403-221 B.C.). This becomes evident when we compare this attitude with that of later Emperors, great officials and rich merchants, toward literature and scholarship. Why there should have been this difference between the early and later attitudes, however, cannot be understood without taking into consideration the political, social and economic background of the Ch' ii Ch' u and Warring States periods. The mere support, by rulers and society, of literary activities, is, in itself, not an exclusive characteristic of either of these two periods, and hence need not be dwelt upon.

2 Ts'ui Shih (1851-1924), Shih-chi T'an-yüan, chüan 3. Cf. also Cheng Ch'iao (1104-1162), T'ung-chih hsiao-ch'ou Lüeh, and K'ang Yu-wei (1858-1927), Hsin-hsüeh Wei-ching K'ao.

3 Present historians are still undecided as to the exact scope and purpose of this Burning of the Books. But even if Ch'in Shih-huang and Li Ssu really did intend to destroy all learning of their time, 'so as to make ignorant the common people,' as the traditional account states, the fact that only a few years elapsed between the Burning of the Books in 213, and the establishment of the Han dynasty in 206, would have made such an attempt unsuccessful.

4 Po shih 士, an official title given to the scholars.—Tr.

5 Cf. Wang Kuo-wei (1877-1927), Han Wei Po-shih K'ao, chüan 4 of the Kuan T'ang Chi Lin.
No doubt the regulations made to ensure absolute conformity did cause thought and speech to lose their former freedom, while literary activities received a similar check. Nevertheless the fall of the Ch’in dynasty, occurring soon after the book burning, in 207 B.C., means that the influence could not have been very profound. The philosophic schools again flourished, as a result, during the early part of the Han dynasty, and there are many records in the histories of that time of both rulers and officials who showed the greatest catholicity of thought. We need only cite as an example the Prince of Huai-nan (died 122 B.C.), who induced his entourage to write a book (now known under his name as the Huai-nan-tzu), in which the doctrines of most of the philosophic schools are indiscriminately accepted.

Liu Hsin (died A.D. 23), the noted compiler of the catalogue of the Han Imperial library, also states in a letter: “Under Wen-ti (179-157), the many books in the empire (which, if not destroyed, had been placed in hiding after Ch’in Shih-huang’s order for their destruction), largely reappeared. All the teachings of the philosophers which had been handed down, were placed in the places of official teaching, and ‘scholars of wide learning’ were appointed to teach them.” From this statement we may see that the ‘scholars of wide learning’ of Wen-ti’s time, like those of Ch’in Shih-huang, included followers of most, if not all, the philosophic schools.

Furthermore, as regards Confucianism, we find that certain important Confucian texts, such as the Li Chi (Book of Rites), and the Appendices to the I Ching (Book of Changes), contain sections not written by Confuciansists until the early years of the Han dynasty; while it is also not until the beginning of the Han that the study of the Kung-yang Chuan becomes important. Confucianism thus does not reach full maturity until the beginning of the Han dynasty. A memorial written by the prominent Confucianist, Tung Chung-shu (179?-104? B.C.), gives us some idea of the character of the time. The memorial (presented probably 136 B.C.), reads:

“The principle of unification in the Ch’un Ch’iu is a permanent warp passing through the universe, and an expression of what is proper extending from the past to the present. But the teachers of to-day have diverse standards (tao 道), men have diverse doctrines,

1 The Yen T’ieh Lun (ch. 8) states: “It is but recently that the princes of Huai-nan and Heng-shan, encouraging literary studies, invited wandering scholars from the four corners of the empire. The Confuciansists and Mohists from east of the mountains all congregated between the Chiang and Huai rivers, expounding, arguing, compiling and epitomizing, producing books by the score” (p. 51). From this, it may be seen that, in the time of the Prince of Huai-nan (died 122 B.C.), the Mohist school (cf. below, ch. 5) was still in existence.

2 Cf. his biography in the Shih Han Shu (ch. 36).

*R* A commentary on the Ch’un Ch’iu much studied at that time, until, owing to the influence of Liu Hsin, it was replaced in popular estimation by the Tso Chuan.—Ta.
and each of the philosophic schools has its own particular position, and differs in the ideas which it teaches. Hence it is that the rulers possess nothing whereby they may effect general unification, the government statutes having often been changed; while the ruled know not what to cling to. I, your ignorant servitor, hold that all not within the field of the Six Disciplines or the arts of Confucius, should be cut short and not allowed to progress further. Evil and licentious talk should be put a stop to. Only after this, can there be a general unification, and can the laws be made distinct, so that the people may know what they are to follow" (Ch'ien Han Shu, ch. 56. pp. 20-21). Again he says:

"Among the things paramount for the upbringing of scholars, none is more important than a university (s'ai hsüeh 太學). A university is intimately related to (the fostering of) virtuous scholars, and is the foundation of education. . . . . Your servant desires Your Majesty to erect a university and appoint illustrious teachers for it, for the upbringing of the empire's scholars" (ibid., p. 13).

The Ch'ien Han Shu goes on to tell us that "from the beginning of Wu-ti's reign (140-87 B.C.), when the Marquis Wei Ch'i and Wu An had been appointed as prime ministers, Confucianism began to flourish. With Tung Chung-shu's memorial, Confucius was elevated, and the other schools of philosophy were degraded. The establishment of officials for education, and the provincial and prefectural (degrees of) mao ts'ai 曹材 and hsiao lien 孝廉, all began with Tung Chung-shu" (ibid.). From this time onward, if one wished to gain official position, one had to be an advocate of Confucianism, and this Confucianism furthermore had to be of a sort conforming to that decided upon by the government. Thus 'the empire's outstanding men were all caught in a single snare,' and the atmosphere of complete freedom of speech and thought, which had been such an outstanding characteristic from the Ch'un Ch'iu time onward, now completely disappeared.

With the putting into practice of Tung Chung-shu's suggestion, the Period of the Philosophers came to an end, and that of the Study of the Classics commenced. With him also the school of the Yin-yang 陰陽 (the male and female principles of Chinese cosmology), and the Five Elements or Powers (earth, wood, metal, fire and water), was combined with Confucianism and systematized. After this time Confucius changed from the status of a man to that of a divine being, and the Confucianist school changed into the Confucianist religion. It was not until the appearance of the so-called 'Old Text' school of scholarship, that the position of Confucius gradually

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1 The Ch'ung Ch'iu, I Ching, and books of poetry, history, rites, and the music.—Tr.
2 For more about Tung Chung-shu and the rise of Confucianism, see pp. 403 f.
reverted to that of a human being, and the Confucianist religion became once more the Confucianist school.  

4—THE CLOSE OF THE ANCIENT PERIOD OF TRANSITION

The political measures taken by Wu-ti and Tung Chung-shu to make all thought conform to a single standard, were the same in purpose as those of Ch'in Shih-huang and Li Ssū. How is it, then, that the one group succeeded where the other failed? There are many causes for this, but one certainly worthy of mention is the fact that the great political, social and economic changes, beginning during the Ch'un Ch'iu period, had by the middle of the Han dynasty gradually ceased. And when the characteristic elements of these movements disappeared, the distinctive features of the literary activity of the time also lost the basis for their existence.

It has been said above that these changes all arose out of the disintegration of the old culture and institutions. As this disintegration became more pronounced, contemporary thought became more independent. But after Ch'in conquered the other six states, and in 221 B.C. unified China, the former nobles, except those belonging directly to the House of Ch'in, were all reduced to the level of the common people, and superficially, one might say that the changes taking place from the Ch'un Ch'iu time onward had here come to a conclusion. In reality, however, the dispossessed descendants of these nobles still held a measure of influence, so that when Ch'in Shih-huang died, the aristocratic class again arose, and during the wars preceding the founding of the Han dynasty, the six former states once more raised their old rulers to power. This second recrudescence of the nobility was but a sunset glow, however, coming at the end of the feudal regime, so that when the Han founder pushed his way up from the common people, he was finally able to overthrow all opponents and gain an undivided allegiance. And although he, like his predecessors, gave fiefs to his relatives and meritorious ministers, these fiefs from this time on had only political and not economic significance.

By the middle of the Han, the new political and social order had already gradually become stabilized, and in the sphere of economics the people had become accustomed to the changed conditions arising from the natural economic tendencies of the time. The Ch'ien Han Shu says: "Among the common people, though all

1 The question of the 'Old Text' and 'New Text' schools of classical interpretation, which, from its rise, about the time of the birth of Christ, down to the present day, has been one of the most hotly debated in Chinese scholarship, is too complicated to be discussed here. Suffice it to say, that the divinity of Confucius, and the authenticity of miraculous deeds attributed to him, has been one of the points of contention between the two schools, and that in this respect, at least, the Old Text school has been more rational and less superstitious than the New Text school. Cf. Vol. II of the Chinese edition of the present work, ch. 4, sect. 1.—Tr.
were (theoretically) of equal rank, some by the power of their wealth could become the masters of others, while even should they become slaves, they were without resentment” (ch. 91, p. 3). This quotation indicates how, by that time, the people were already amenable to the new economic situation. Although the Han dynasty’s policy was one favoring agriculture and restricting commerce, it did not result in any radical changes being made in the social and economic order. The period of transition that had begun during the Ch’un Ch’iu time now reached its close, and with it, its characteristic wealth of thought also disappeared. From the Han dynasty down to the present day, China’s political and economic institutions and social organization—excepting for the remarkable socialistic innovations forcibly introduced by Wang Mang, who usurped the throne from A.D. 6 to 23—underwent no fundamental modifications; and, therefore, the unique qualities of thought that had characterized the Period of the Philosophers did not reappear.

5—The Forms of the Early Literature

If we wish to study the development of Chinese philosophy, we must first determine the period and authorship of its texts. In this respect the ancient period presents special difficulties. Among the works formerly supposed to belong to the Ch’un Ch’iu and Warring States epochs, for example, critical scholarship has now determined that the Lieh-tzu must in all probability be assigned rather to the Wei (A.D. 220-265) or Chin (265-420) dynasties, and, as such, may be used to exemplify the thought of that time, rather than of the Chou period. On the other hand, there are works generally recognized as being authentic, such as the Mo-tzu and Chuang-tzu, which may justifiably be assigned to the ancient period. And yet it is very difficult to determine how much of the thought they contain actually represents the philosophy of Mo Tzu and Chuang Tzu themselves, the men after whom they are named. As regards this point, a clear understanding of the inherent characteristics of the ancient texts is necessary.

The historian, Chang Hsüeh-ch’eng, has pointed out that the Kuan-tzu, for example, mentions events occurring after the death of Kuan Chung (noted statesman who died 645 B.C., to whom the work is attributed), while the Han-fei-tzu (attributed to Han Fei, a Legalist writer who died 233 B.C.), contains a speech made by Li Ssu disapproving of Han Fei’s policy. It is, therefore, evident that these and other works contain sections that could not have been written by their

1 To many who read these lines, such innovations as those of the statesman Wang An-shih (1021-1086), and China’s early use of paper money, will probably come to mind to prove the contrary. These innovations cannot be compared in their lasting effect, however, with such radical changes as the abolition of feudalism and rise of the examination system in the Han dynasty, or with the beginnings of industrialism to-day.—Tr.
supposed authors, but were probably composed by later followers of the same school. Chang suggests that the primary purpose of a writer of ancient times, was to expound the doctrines of his school, so that the question of who was the actual author of the writing, was considered as relatively unimportant. And for this reason the writings of any school were the collective work of that school, rather than the work of any one individual.¹

This theory is probably correct. The conception of authorship was evidently not wholly clear in early China, so that when we find a book named after a certain man of the Warring States period, or earlier, this does not necessarily mean that the book was originally actually written by that man himself. What part of it was the addition of his followers, and what part was by the original author, was not at that time looked upon as requiring any distinction, and hence to-day cannot for the most part be distinguished any longer.²

The books now generally attributed to various Chou dynasty writers should, therefore, be regarded as the products of their schools, rather than of the men themselves. Much has already been done in the critical analysis of such works, so that, for example, we recognize to-day that such portions as the ‘Canon’ and ‘Exposition of Canon’ of the Mo-tzu (chs. 40-41 and 42-43 respectively), were probably not written by Mo Tzu himself. In the case of such sections as the ‘Will of Heaven’ (chs. 26-28) and ‘Agreement with the Superior’ (chs. 11-13) of the same book, however, no one dares to decide which parts of them came first and which were later additions. In treating the philosophy of the ancient period, therefore, the present work will simply try to indicate that, during this period, there existed certain schools of philosophy and systems of thought; but it will not attempt to determine absolutely whether these systems are always actually representative of the individuals by whom they were founded, or have been affected by later modifications.

The philosophy of this latter Chou period, includes chiefly what have long been known as the doctrines of the various philosophers

² This has already been frequently noted by Chinese scholars. In all probability what have been handed down to us as pre-Ch'in works, have all passed through the revisions made by the Han scholars. Such books as the Mo-tzu and Chuang-tzu, for example, probably did not exist prior to the Ch'in dynasty in the form in which they have come down to us to-day. What existed during the pre-Ch'in period were simply disconnected chapters, and the Han scholars, in arranging this literature, made a selection of all chapters belonging to a certain school, compiled these into one book, and gave this the name of the founder of the school, intending thereby to indicate that the book in question was a product of that school. Besides writings of this type, however, there also exist one or two works that do go back in their present form to the pre-Ch'in period, and have existed as complete books since their beginning. An example of this is the Lü-shih Ch'un Ch'iu, a compilation made under the auspices of Ch'in's Prime Minister, Lü Pu-wéi (died 235 B.C.). After its completion, we are told, Lü Pu-wéi had it hung up on the gate of the city wall so as to show off his own cleverness, a fact from which we may infer that the writing of a full-length book was at that time a rare achievement.
(chu tsü 諸子), and, therefore, its age may be fittingly designated as the Period of the Philosophers. These philosophers have been classified by Ssü-ma T’an (died 110 B.C.), the father of Ssü-ma Ch’ien (compiler of the Shih Chi, China’s first great general history), as belonging to six schools: that of the Yín-yang 陰陽, that of the literati or Confucians (ju 儒), the Mohists (mo 墨), that of Names (ming 名), the Legalists (fa 法), and the Taoists (tāo te 道德).

To these six schools, Liu Hsin has added those of Agriculture (nung 农), Diplomatists (tsung-heng 縱横), Miscellaneous (tsa 雜), and Story-tellers (hsiao-shuo 小說), thus bringing the total up to ten. Some of these schools have no conceivable relationship with philosophy, however, and so in the following pages I shall select only those having philosophical interest, and describe their doctrines in their chronological appearance.

1 In Shih Chi or ‘Historical Records’ (ch. 130). Cf. translation in Aids, pp. 51 f.
2 Ibid., pp. 61 f.
CHAPTER III

PHILOSOPHICAL AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT
PRIOR TO CONFUCIUS

As I pointed out in the preceding chapter, there was in China probably no one before Confucius (551-479 B.C.) who had written any books in a private rather than official capacity. Hence we are dependent upon statements found in the Shih Ching (Book of Odes),
Shu Ching (Book of History), Tso Chuan and Kuo Yu, to show us the religious and philosophical thought of the period prior to, and including the time of, Confucius, and to give a general picture of the state of human knowledge in China at that period.

1—Divine Beings

In the time of primitive man the belief was general, not only in China but in other parts of the world, that natural phenomena and human affairs are all under a divine and supernatural control. The Kuo Yu gives an example:

"King Chao (of Ch’u, reigned 515-489) asked Kuan I Fu, saying: ‘What is meant when the Book of Chou says that Chung and Li succeeded in bringing about that there would no longer be communication between Heaven and Earth? If such had not been done, would it have been possible for people to ascend to Heaven?’"

"The reply was: ‘This is not the meaning. In ancient times people and divine beings did not intermingle. Among the people there were those who were refined and without wiles. They were, moreover, capable of being equable, respectful, sincere and upright. Their knowledge, both in its upper and lower ranges, was capable of conforming to righteousness. Their wisdom could illumine what was distant with its all-pervading brilliance. Their perspicacity could illumine everything. When there were people of this sort, the illustrious spirits (shen 神) would descend in them. If men, such

1 A group of three hundred and five court and popular poems, collected from the various feudal states of China, which form one of China’s earliest literary remains.—Tr.

2 A collection of speeches, prayers, etc., given on various historical occasions. Many of these are later forgeries, but a few go back to the first millennium or earlier B.C.—Tr.

3 This question has reference to a statement made in the Shu Ching, in the section entitled ‘The Marquis of Lu on Punishments,’ which supposedly dates from the reign of King Mu of Chou (1001-947). Cf. p. 257, where Legge translates: "Then he commissioned Chung and Li to make an end to the communications between earth and heaven; and the descents (of spirits) ceased."—Tr.
people were then called sorcerers (hsi 現), and if women, they were called witches (wu 妖). It was through such persons that the regulation of the dwelling places of the spirits, their positions (at the sacrifices), and their order of precedence were effected; it was through them that their sacrifices, sacrificial vessels and seasonal clothing were arranged. . . .

""Thereupon there were officials for Heaven, Earth, spirits, people, and the various creatures, who were called the Five Officials. They had charge over the orderly arrangement of things, so that they should not be mutually confused. This made it possible for the people to be true to themselves and sincere to others, and for the spirits to have illustrious virtue. The people, having their duties differentiated from those of the spirits, were respectful and not unduly familiar. Therefore the spirits conferred prosperous harvest upon them and the people offered things up out of gratitude. Natural calamities did not arrive, and there was an inexhaustible supply of what would be useful.

""But with the decline which came under (the legendary Emperor) Shao Hao, the nine Li (tribes) threw virtue into disorder. People and spirits became confusedly mingled, and things could no longer be properly distinguished. Ordinary people then performed the sacrifices, and each family had its own witches, who were utterly lacking in the necessary qualifications. The people exhausted themselves in the sacrifices, without coming to know the happiness (that should result from sacrifice properly performed). Sacrifices were offered up without any order, and people and spirits occupied identical positions. The people disregarded their solemn oaths, and were without a sense of awe. The spirits followed the customs of the people, and were impure in their practice. Prosperous harvest was no longer conferred, and there was nothing to offer for the sacrifices. Natural calamities occurred repeatedly, until there was no one who could complete his natural span of life.

""When (the legendary Emperor) Chuan Hsü received (the throne), he commanded Nan Cheng Chung to hold the office of Heaven so as to assemble the spirits there, and Huo Cheng Li to hold the office of Earth so as to assemble the spirits there. They brought about a return of the old standards, and there were no longer any mutual encroachments or over familiarity (between men and spirits). And this is what is meant by the cutting short of the communication between Heaven and Earth. ""(Ch'û Yû, II, 1).

What is said here shows in a general way the forms of superstition of the early Chinese. From the fact that sorcerers and witches were considered necessary to regulate the dwelling places, positions at the sacrifices, and order of precedence of the spirits, we may see how

1 These are the Chung and Li mentioned above.—Tr.
numerous these spirits were. The fact that the spirits were supposed to be able to bestow happiness, receive sacrifices, and to enter into human beings, shows that they were regarded as anthropomorphic beings. And the statements that "people and spirits were confusedly mingled," "people and spirits held the same position," and "the spirits followed the customs of the people," show us that the actions of these spirits were looked upon as being quite indistinguishable from those of human beings. The Chinese of that time were superstitious and ignorant; they had religious ideas but no philosophy; so that the religion and spirits which they believed in were exactly like those of the Greeks. With the coming of the Hsia and Shang dynasties, when the concept of 'Heaven' (T'ien 天) and 'God' (T'i 帝) arose, a monotheistic belief seems gradually to have gained influence, but at the same time there was no weakening of the old polytheism.

Thus the Tso Chuan and Kuo Yü, although frequently referring to a Heaven, also continue to speak often about the spirits. For example, in the time of King Li of the Chou dynasty (878-842), someone is reported by the Kuo Yü as having said:

"He who is king over men must direct what is beneficial and distribute it to those above and below; he must bring it about that among spirits, men and creatures, there are none who do not attain their apogee" (Chou Yü, I, 4).

The Tso Chuan, under the year 706 B.C., records a speech:

"What is meant by morality (on the part of a ruler), is to show loyalty toward the people and sincerity toward the spirits. When the ruler thinks of benefiting the people, that is loyalty. When the priest is truthful in his words, that is sincerity" (p. 48). Again, under the year 684:

"When there is but small kindness, which does not reach to all, the people will not follow you. . . . When there is but small sincerity, which is not perfect, the spirits will not give you happiness" (p. 86).

And the Kuo Yü records a speech made apropos of the descent of a divine being which occurred in Hsin in 662:

"When a state is about to flourish, its ruler is equable, perspicacious, sincere and upright. He is refined, pure, kind and in harmonious equilibrium. His virtue is sufficient to make his sacrifice manifest, and his kindness is sufficient to unify the people. The spirits enjoy his offerings, and the people listen to him. People and spirits are without resentment. Therefore illustrious spirits descend in it (his state), to survey his virtuous government, and scatter happiness to all alike.

"But when a state is about to perish, its ruler is covetous, reckless, perverted and depraved. He is licentious, lazy, rude and careless. . . . . People and spirits feel hatred (toward the ruler), and have nothing to cling to. Therefore the spirits then also go (to such a country), to watch his dissoluteness and send
down calamity. ... Looking at the affair from this angle, is not this the spirit of Tan Chu?" (Chou Yu, I, 12).

Likewise in the Tso Chuan under the year 655:

"The spirits, regardless who is the man, accept only virtue. ... Thus without virtue, the people will not be harmonious and the spirits will not accept the offerings. If the state of Chin seize Yü, and with illustrious virtue present fragrant offerings, will the spirits indeed reject them?" (p. 146).

In the Kuo Yü, under the year 647, it is said that the ruler should:

"Pacify the multitude of spirits and put in harmony the myriad of people. Therefore the Ode (III, i, Ode 6, 6,) says: 'He conformed to the example of his ancestors, and the spirits had no occasion for complaint.'" (Chin Yü, IV, 22).

The same work reports King Hsiang of Chou as having said in the year 634 B.C.:

"Of old, when the early kings of my family held the empire, they marked out a territory of one thousand li for their own imperial domain, so as thereby to offer sacrifices to the Supreme Emperor (Shang Ti 上帝), and to the various spirits of the mountains and rivers" (Chou Yü, II, 2).

The same idea is expressed in the Tso Chuan under the year 569: "The ruler is the host of the spirits and the hope of the people" (p. 466). Again under the year 541: "... Might this not refer to Chao Meng? ... He has cast himself off from both spirits and men. The spirits are incensed against him and the people revolt. How can he last long?" (p. 578).

These quotations indicate how numerous the ancient Chinese considered the spirits to be. Spirits and men are named in the same breath, and the primary duty of the ruler is said to be "pacifying the multitude of spirits and putting in harmony the myriad of people," for if this is not done, "the spirits will be incensed against him and the people will revolt," with the result that he will be unable to maintain his position for long. Moreover, the fact that King Hsiang of Chou speaks of the 'Supreme Emperor' (Shang Ti, i.e., God) at the same time with, but as a being distinct from, the various spirits, indicates that Shang Ti was not himself included in their number. Again, the suggestion that the spirit which descended in Hsin might be that of Tan Chu, indicates that some spirits, at least, were supposed to have once been human beings.

Not only do the Tso Chuan and Kuo Yü contain abundant references to spirits, but the Mo-tzu, in its section 'On Ghosts' (ch. 31), gives a number of ancient legends about them. Later, however, this belief in spirits diminished. Confucius, for example, said that

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1 Tan Chu was the son of the legendary Emperor Yao, and because of his unworthy conduct, was deprived of the succession, which passed on to the next Sage, Shun.—Tr.
“One should respect the spirits, but keep them at a distance” (Lun Yu, VI, 20). He “sacrificed (to his ancestors) as if they were present, and sacrificed to the spirits as if they were present” (ibid., III, 12). Again he is recorded as saying: “When you are still unable to do your duty to men, how can you do your duty to the spirits?” (ibid., XI, 11). Thus Confucius already adopted a skeptical attitude toward spirits, and believed that even if they did exist, it was better not to discuss them. And Mo Tzu, who came after Confucius and who was a believer in spirits, lamented that in his time men’s disbelief in spirits had led the world into grave disorder, thus necessitating him to spend much effort attempting to prove their existence.

2—DIVINATION AND MAGIC

The belief was common among the ancient Chinese that a close mutual influence existed between things in the physical universe and human affairs; therefore all sorts of divination methods were used, through which, by observing noteworthy natural phenomena, future misfortune or prosperity could be predicted. Thus the I-wen Chih, the catalogue of the Imperial Han dynasty library, now found in the Ch’ien Han Shu (ch. 30), says:

“The arts of divination (shu shu 術 數) were all supervised by the historian-diviners, Hsi and Ho, of the Ming T’ang palace.¹ This post of historian has long since fallen into disuse, and the books pertaining to it cannot be complete. Nevertheless, there are still some of these books extant, whereas the men themselves no longer exist. The I (Book of Changes) says: ‘If there be not the proper men, the Way should not be emptily pursued without them’ (p. 399). During the Ch’un Ch’iu period, the state of Lu had Tzu Shen, Cheng had Pei Tsao, Chin had Pu Yen, and Sung had Tzu Wei. During the period of the Six States (i.e., Warring States), the state of Chu had Kan Kung and Wei had Shih Shen Fu. The Han dynasty has had T’ang Tu. These are all men who have obtained a general (knowledge of these magic arts). . . . When arranged, the arts of divination fall into six classes” (ch. 30, p. 50).

Of these six classes, the first is astrology, of which the I-wen Chih says:

“ Astrology (t’ien wen 天 文) is used to arrange in order the twenty-eight ‘mansions’² and note the progressions of the five planets and of the sun and the moon, so as to record thereby the manifestations of fortune and misfortune. It is in this way that the Sage-king conducts government. The I says: ‘Looking at the signs in the heavens, one thereby ascertains the changes of the seasons’ (p. 231)” (p. 43).

¹ The Ming T’ang 明 堂 was the palace in which the Emperor offered sacrifices and gave audience to princes. Hsi and Ho seem to have been two brothers who, according to the traditional account, had charge of the calendar under Emperor Yao.—Tr.

² Hsü 鬲, i.e., the twenty-eight Chinese constellations.—Tr.
The second is connected with the almanac, of which the I-wen Chih says:

"Almanacs (li p'u 历 谱) serve to arrange the positions of the four seasons in order, to adjust the times of the equinoxes and solstices, and to note the concordance of the periods of the sun, moon, and five planets, so as thereby to examine into the actualities of cold and heat, life and death. Therefore the Sage-king must keep the almanac in proper order, so as to define the clothing and color regulations of the Three Systems. Furthermore, by his investigations, he knows the times of the conjunctions of the five planets and the sun and moon, while through his arts, the miseries of calamities and the happinesses of prosperity all appear manifest. These are the arts through which the Sage comes to know the decrees (of Heaven)" (p. 44).

The third is connected with the Five Elements (wu hsing 五行), which are earth, wood, metal, fire and water:

"The Five Elements are the corporeal essences of the Five Constant Virtues." The Shu (Book of History) says: 'The first category is called the Five Elements. The second is called reverent practice of the five functions' (p. 140). This means that the five functions should be used in consonance with the Five Elements. If one's personal appearance, speech, vision, hearing and thought lose their proper order, the Five Elements will fall into confusion and changes will arise in the five planets. For these all proceed from the numbers connected with the almanac, and are divisions of one thing (i.e., of the movements of the Five Elements). Their laws all arise from the revolutions of the Five Powers (i.e., Elements), and if they are extended to their farthest stretch, there is nothing (in the universe) which they will not reach" (p. 46).

The fourth method is that connected with the stalks of the divination plant, and with the tortoise shell. The first of these was the milfoil: its stalks were manipulated to give various diagrams which could be interpreted by means of the I Ching (Book of Changes). In the tortoise shell method, a hole was partly bored through the shell, so that the application of heat would form cracks which could be interpreted as an answer to the question asked. The I-wen Chih says of these two divination methods:

"The divination plant (shih 託) and the tortoise shell (kuei 龟) are used by the Sages. The Shu says: 'When you have doubts

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1 San T'ung 三统. This was an idea promulgated by Tung Chung-shu of the Former Han dynasty, who declared that the Hsia dynasty had assumed black as its ruling color, the Shang dynasty had assumed white, and the Chou red, and that these colors and their accompanying clothing would recur in succeeding dynasties in endless succession. Cf. the chapter on him in Vol. II of the Chinese edition of this work.—Tr.

2 Wu ch'ang 五常. These are the Confucian virtues of benevolence, righteousness, propriety in demeanor, wisdom and good faith (jen 仁, i 义, li 理, shih 聿 and hsin 善).—Tr.

3 These are personal appearance, speech, vision, hearing and thought.—Tr.
about any great matter, consult the tortoise shell and divination stalks' (p 146). And the I says: 'For making certain of good and bad fortune, and accomplishing things requiring strenuous effort, there is nothing better than the divination plant and tortoise shell. Therefore, when the Superior Man is about to do something or carry out some action, he asks, making his enquiry in words. They receive his order, and the answer comes as the echo's response. Be the subject remote or near, mysterious or deep, he forthwith knows what will be the coming result. If these were not the most exquisite things under Heaven, would they be concerned in such an operation as this?' (p. 369)" "(p. 47).

The fifth consists of miscellaneous divinations:

"Miscellaneous divinations (tsa chan 雜占) serve to keep records of the phenomena of various things and to observe the manifestations of good and evil. The I says: 'By making divinations about affairs, one may know the future' (pp. 464-465). These various methods of divination are not all of one kind, but that of the dream is most important. Therefore, the Chou dynasty had officials for this form, and the Shih (Book of Odes) has records of dreams about bears, serpents, and assembled fish and banners, clear signs of (the coming of) a great man, whereby one may examine good and bad fortune. These are all collated with the tortoise shell and divination plant" (p. 48).

The sixth is the system of forms:

"The system of forms (hsiing 形) deals with general statements about the influencing forces in the entire nine provinces, in order to erect a walled city, its outer wall, a house or a hut. In this system of forms, the measurement and number of the bones of men and of the six domestic animals (the horse, ox, pig, sheep, dog and fowl); also the containing capacities of vessels; are examined, so as to find out whether their sound and matter are noble or mean, and are of good or evil omen. This is like the pitch-pipes, each of which, according to whether it is long or short, produces its own special sound. This is not because of the existence of divine beings, but is the natural result of their own measurement. Thus form and matter are like the head and tail (of an animal). There are some things which have form but are without matter; and some which have matter but no form. These are fine and abstruse differences" (pp. 49-50).

The most frequently recorded of these six kinds of divination in the Tso Chuan are those of the divination plant, tortoise shell and the miscellaneous group. The first two are often mentioned, while the miscellaneous class would include all the divinations of dreams which the Tso Chuan records. The 'system of forms' is also referred to in the Tso Chuan when it speaks of one Shu Fu, Historian of the Interior of Chou, who was able to read human physiognomy.'

1 Tso Chuan, p. 267.
Likewise, Hsün Tzu has a chapter, ‘Against Physiognomy,’ in which he says: “Among the ancients there was Ku-pu Tzu-ch'ing, who examined men’s figures and features, and told their good or bad fortune, while, at the present time, there is T'ang Chü of Liang. And the common people praise them” (Hsün-tzu, p. 67).

The remaining three methods, those connected with astrology, the almanac and the Five Elements, are likewise all mentioned in the Tso Chuan. For example, under the year 534 B.C., when the state of Ch'u had annihilated the state of Ch'en:

“The Marquis of Chin asked the historian Chao: ‘Is Ch'en now going to disappear?’ The answer was: ‘Not yet. . . . The House of Ch'en is a branch of the descendants of Chuan Hsü (one of the earliest legendary Emperors). When the year star (i.e., Jupiter, which completes one circuit around the sun every nineteen years) was in the constellation of Shun Huo, (Chuan Hsü’s dynasty) was thereby extinguished, and Ch'en will go the same way. At present it is in the Hsi Shui constellation, at the ford of the Milky Way, and (Ch'en) will once again arise’” (p. 623).

Under the year 533 B.C.:

“In summer, in the fourth month, there was a fire in Ch'en. Pei Tsao of Cheng said: ‘In five years the state of Ch'en will be re-established; and after fifty-two years of re-establishment it will finally perish. . . . Ch'en belongs to the element water. Fire is antagonistic to water, and is under the control of the state of Ch'u. Now the Fire planet (i.e., Mercury) has appeared and kindled this fire in Ch'en, (indicating) the expulsion of Ch'u and re-establishment of Ch'en. Antagonistic elements come to their completion under the number five, and therefore I say it will be five years. The year star (Jupiter) must come five times to the constellation Shun Huo, after which Ch'en will finally perish, and Ch'u will succeed in keeping it in its possession. This is the Way of Heaven, and therefore I say fifty-two years’” (p. 626).

In 532:

“In spring, in the king’s first month, a (strange) star appeared in the constellation of Wu Nu. Pei Tsao of Cheng said to Tzu Ch' an: ‘In the seventh month, on the cyclical day wu-tzu, the ruler of Chin will die’” (p. 628).

In 527:

“In spring, when there was about to be a great sacrifice in the temple of Duke Wu, orders had been given to all the officers to fast. Tzu Shen said: ‘I fear some misfortune will happen on the day of the great sacrifice, for I have seen a red and black halo which is inauspicious for it; it is a vapour of death. Will it take effect on the officer in charge of the affair?’” (pp. 658-659).

1 Cf. also under the years 525, 524 and 510 (pp. 668, 670, 740).
Some of the methods described in the foregoing quotations are obviously astrological, whereas others are combinations of methods based on the almanac and on the Five Elements. In all of them we find stress laid upon the mutual influence supposed to exist between the 'Way of Heaven' and human affairs. In later times the Yin-yang and Five Elements school further elaborated these ideas, which were to exert a profound influence upon the succeeding period of Chinese philosophy.

3—Heaven and God

Besides the multitude of ordinary spirits, a Heaven (T’ien 天) or God (Ti 帝) was supposed to exist, to both of which the Shu Ching (Book of History) makes reference in its section, 'The Speech of T’ang':

"The sovereign of Hsia has many crimes and Heaven (T’ien) has commanded me to destroy him.... Fearing the Supreme God (Shang Ti 上 帝), I dare not but punish him.... and carry out the punishment appointed by Heaven (T’ien)" (p. 85).

Here in a speech of less than one hundred and fifty characters, we find Heaven and God referred to three times. Similarly in the Shih Ching (Book of Odes):

"Heaven commissioned the swallow to descend and give birth to (the father of our) Shang.... Of old, God (Ti) appointed the warlike T’ang (founder of the Shang dynasty) to appoint the princes of each quarter.... He received the appointment without any uncertainty in it.... That Yin (i.e., Shang) should have received the Appointment (of Heaven) was entirely right...." (IV, iii, Ode 3).

Within the less than one hundred and fifty characters of this ode of eulogy, we find five references to Heaven, God, and to the receiving of Heaven’s Appointment (ming 名). Again, in the Kuo Yu:

"The Duke of Kuo dreamed that while he was in his ancestral temple, there appeared a supernatural being with a human face, white hair, and tiger’s claws grasping a halberd, who stood on the roof ridge of the western corner. The Duke was frightened and started to run away, but the spirit said: ‘Do not run away. God (Ti) has commanded, saying that (the forces of) Chin have been ordered to enter your gate.’ The Duke bowed to the ground. On awakening, he summoned the historian Yin to divine the matter. The latter said to him: ‘According to what Your Lordship says, this is Ju Shou (the spirit of the western quarter), who is Heaven’s divine executioner. For each of Heaven’s affairs there is its proper official’" (Chin Yu, II, 4).

In the Shih Ching, Shu Ching, Tso Chuan and Kuo Yu there are, then, frequent references to Heaven and God, among them many indicative of an anthropomorphic Shang Ti, so numerous that they cannot

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1 Cf. ch. 7, sect. 7, pp. 159-169.
all be quoted here. From the Kuo Yu quotation just given, however, we can form an idea of the relationship supposed to exist between T‘ien and the spirits. Shang Ti, a name which literally translated means ‘Supreme Emperor,’ seems to have been the highest and supreme authority, who presided over an elaborate hierarchy of spirits (shen 神), who were secondary to him and paid him allegiance. This was the religious belief of a large part of the common people of China, and had probably existed since early times.

As for Heaven or T‘ien, this word occurs in Chinese writings with five different meanings:

1. A material or physical T‘ien or sky, that is, the T‘ien often spoken of in apposition to earth, as in the common phrase which refers to the physical universe as ‘Heaven and Earth’ (T‘ien Ti 天地).

2. A ruling or presiding T‘ien, that is, one such as is meant in the phrase, ‘Imperial Heaven Supreme Emperor’ (Huang T‘ien Shang Ti 皇天上帝), in which anthropomorphic T‘ien and Ti are signified.

3. A fatalistic T‘ien, equivalent to the concept of Fate (ming 命), a term applied to all those events in human life over which man himself has no control. This is the T‘ien Mencius refers to when he says: “As to the accomplishment of a great deed, that is with T‘ien” (Mencius, Ib, 14).

4. A naturalistic T‘ien, that is, one equivalent to the English word Nature. This is the sort of T‘ien described in the ‘Discussion on T‘ien’ in the Hsün-tzu (ch. 17).

5. An ethical T‘ien, that is, one having a moral principle and which is the highest primordial principle of the universe. This is the sort of T‘ien which the Chung Yang (Doctrines of the Mean) refers to in its opening sentence when it says: “What T‘ien confers (on man) is called his nature.”

The references to T‘ien in the Shih Ching, Shu Ching, Tso Chuan and Kuo Yu, excluding those to the purely physical sky of type one, seem generally to designate the ruling or presiding anthropomorphic T‘ien of type two; which also seems to be the type of T‘ien spoken of by Confucius in the Lun Yu.

4—Beginnings of Enlightenment

During the Ch‘un Ch‘iu period there were also a few literati who were more enlightened, and who gradually came to lose their belief in supernatural spirits and in the so-called ‘Way of Heaven.’ The Tso Chuan records speeches by several such men, as for example under the year 662 B.C.:

“It is when a state is about to flourish that (its ruler) listens to his people; when it is about to perish, he listens to the spirits” (p. 120).
Under the year 524:
"The Way of Heaven is distant, while that of man is near. We cannot reach to the former; what means have we of knowing it?"
(p. 671).

And under the year 509:
"The state of Hsieh makes its appeal to men, while that of Sung makes its appeal to spirits. The offence of Sung is great"
(p. 744).

Though these statements do not absolutely deny the existence of a 'Way of Heaven' and of supernatural spirits, they already adopt the skeptical attitude expressed by Confucius that one "should respect the spirits, but keep them at a distance" (*Lun Yü*, VI, 20).

Even in early times there were also other attempts to explain the phenomena of the universe through the theory of the *yin* 陰 and the *yang* 阳, that is, the two forces which represent, respectively, female and male, darkness and light, soft and hard, inactivity and activity, etc., the interactions of which were generally supposed by later Chinese thinkers to produce universal phenomena.¹ An explanation of this sort appears in the *Kuo Yü*, for the year 780 B.C., when three river valleys belonging to the House of Chou suffered from an earthquake:

"Chou is about to perish. For the fluids (*ch'i* 氣) of Heaven and Earth do not, of themselves, lose their proper order, and if they transgress this order it is because the people have put them into confusion. When the *yang* is concealed and cannot come forth, and when the *yin* is repressed and cannot issue out, then there are earthquakes. At the present time these three rivers have suffered from an earthquake, which is because the *yang* has lost its proper place and has dominated the *yin*. The *yang* having lost its place and occupying that of *yin*, rivers and streams must necessarily be obstructed".²

(*Chou Yü*, I, 10).

Likewise in the *Tso Chuan* (under the year 644 B.C.) appears the record: "Six fish-hawks flew backwards past the capital of Sung, which was caused by the wind." An historian of Chou comments on this: "This is something pertaining to the *yin* and the *yang*, which are not the producers of good and bad fortune. It is from men themselves, that good and bad fortune are produced. . . ." (p. 171).

Again, the *Kuo Yü* records a speech under the year 494:
"The Way of Heaven is something which is filled yet not overflowing, flourishing yet not arrogant. It labors to the utmost and yet boasts not about its accomplishments. The Sage observes the proper time for his actions, which is called keeping the proper time. In the times when Heaven does not take the initiative, he (the Sage)

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¹ *Cf.* ch. 7, sect. 7, pp. 159 f.
² The *yang* has control over what is dry, whereas the *yin* is moist and so controls water.—Tr.
does not make a start for men. When human troubles do not arise, he does not begin them.

"It is only Earth which is able to embrace the ten thousand creatures so as to make them one, unfailing in its affairs. It gives birth to the ten thousand creatures, and bears and nourishes the birds and beasts, after which it accepts the fame (achieved by them) and combines their usefulness. Those that are beautiful and that are ugly are both brought to maturity through its nourishing and life-giving. And until the proper time has arrived, things cannot be forcibly produced. If affairs are not ready, they cannot forcibly be brought to completion.

"One must have that whereby one may know the eternal laws of Heaven and Earth, in order to enjoy Heaven and Earth’s complete usefulness. . . . One must make use of the regularities of the yin and the yang, and comply with the regularities of Heaven and Earth; be soft yet not yielding, strong yet not hard. . . . Heaven lets man have his course, and the Sage accords himself with Heaven. Man is his own propagator; Heaven and Earth give him form; the Sage lets him develop and completes him" (Yüeh Yü, II, 1).

The attempt to explain the phenomena of the universe through the yin-yang theory, though still primitive, is a step forward compared with explanations based on a T'ien, a Ti, and a multitude of spirits. The ‘heaven’ described in this last quotation is a naturalistic one bearing strong resemblance to that of Lao Tzü, and seems to be a forerunner of Taoist philosophy.

5—THE RISE OF RATIONALISM

Human institutions were also believed by the early Chinese to be controlled by a T’ien and a Ti. Thus the Shu Ching, in its section on ‘The Counsels of Kao Yao,’ says:

"Let him not have his various officers cumberers of their places. Men must act for the work of Heaven! From Heaven come the relationships with their several duties; we are charged with those five duties, and lo! we have the five courses of honorable conduct! From Heaven come the several ceremonies; from us come the observances of these five ceremonies, and lo! they appear in regular practice! . . . . . Heaven confers its decree on the virtuous, and there are the five habiliments and five decorations! Heaven punishes the guilty, and there are the five punishments to be severally used for that purpose!" (pp. 55-56). Again it says:

"Heaven having produced the people below, appointed for them rulers and teachers." And yet again:

"Imperial God (Ti) in a pure manner carried his enquiries among the people below. . . . He thercupon charged the three princes

1 Quoted in Mencius, Ib, 3.
to labor with compassionate anxiety on the people’s behalf. Po I presented his statutes to prevent the people from rendering themselves liable to punishment; Yü reduced to order the water and the land, and presided over the naming of the hills and rivers; Chi spread abroad a knowledge of agriculture for the extensive cultivation of the admirable grains. When the three princes had accomplished their work, it was abundantly well with the people” (p. 258).

Similarly the Shih Ching says:

“Heaven gave birth to the multitudes of people, so that they had faculties and laws” (III, iii, Ode 6, 1).

“Without consciousness, without knowing, be in accordance with the pattern of God” (III, i, Ode 7, 7).

By this ‘pattern of God’ (ti chih tse 帝之則) is meant the political and social regulations instituted by Shang Ti. The ancient Greeks similarly supposed that the institutions of their city-states had been created by divine beings, a belief probably general among early peoples.

With the coming of the Ch’üan Ch’iu period in China, however, or perhaps even before, there were men who tried to give a human interpretation to the laws and statutes, which they declared were established wholly by human beings for man’s own benefit. Thus the Kuo Yü, under a section that refers to Duke Huan of Cheng (806-771), records an historian as saying:

“Harmony (ho 和) results in the production of things, but identity (t’ung 同) does not. When the one equalizes the other there comes what is called harmony, so that then there can be a luxurious growth in which new things are produced. But if identity is added to identity, all that is new is finished.

“Therefore, the early kings mixed the element earth with the elements metal, wood, water and fire, so as to bring various things to completion. The five tastes were thereby harmonized so as to become blended in the mouth; the four limbs were strengthened to protect the body; the six pitch-pipes were harmonized so as to make sound for the ear; the seven ‘bodies’ were put into proper adjustment so as to regulate the mind; the eight ‘rules’ were regulated so as to make man complete; the nine ‘laws’ were established for the setting up of pure virtue; the ten ranks (of feudalistic society) were harmonized so as to lead the various organizations into orderliness; the thousand kinds of things were produced, the ten thousand roads were completed, the hundred thousand things were calculated, the hundred million creatures were estimated, and the billion sources of

1 i.e., seven orifices: the two eyes, two nostrils, two ears, and the mouth.—Tr.
2 Those regulating the head, stomach, feet, thighs, eyes, mouth, ears and hands.—Tr.
3 Those governing the nine internal organs: the heart, liver, spleen, kidneys, lungs, stomach, groin, intestines and gall.—Tr.
income were received, this being carried out to the last extreme, reaching an infinite number.  

"Thus, the kings, living on the lands of their nine provinces, received the billion sources of income for feeding the multitude of people. These being in orderly arrangement, they could make use of them, and there was harmony and happiness among them as if they were one. Such a condition is the ultimate of harmony.

"Thereupon the early kings married queens from different families, sought their riches from those of different regions, selected ministers and received expostulations from officials who could offer them different opinions, and held discussions about all sorts of things. They did so because they wanted harmony. If there is only one sound, it is not worth listening to. A thing entirely the same lacks decorativeness. If there is only one taste, there is no satisfaction. And if things are made of one material, there is no solidity"  

(Cheng Yü, 1).

When it is said that "when the one equalizes the other, there is what is called harmony," this means that if something salty, for example, is added to something sour, the resulting flavor will differ from its two constituents and be entirely new. What is salty is the 'other' of what is sour, and vice versa. This explains the opening words: "Harmony results in the production of things." But if what is salty is added to what is already salty, or, as the quotation says, "If identity is added to identity," then there can be no production of anything new.

In the same way, if there be only one kind of sound, there can be no music no matter how often the sound be repeated; and if only one color, no decorative pattern can be produced no matter how many times the color be applied. Everything must have its 'other' or contrast to act upon it, before there can be any process of production. By thus distinguishing between 'harmony' and 'identity,' the speaker explains why ceremonials, music and social institutions of all kinds must inevitably become ever more elaborate.

Later on, similar ideas were to be propounded by Yen Tzü (died 493 B.C.), a noted statesman of the state of Ch'i. Thus the Tso Chuan describes an incident under the year 522:

"After the Marquis of Ch'i had returned from his hunt, Yen Tzü was with him in the tower of Ch'uan, when Tzü Yü drove up to it at full speed. The Marquis said: 'It is only Chü (i.e., Tzü Yü) who is in harmony with me!' Yen Tzü replied: 'Chü merely identifies himself with you; how can he be considered to be in harmony with you?' 'Are harmony (ho) and identity (t'ung) different?' asked the Marquis.

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1 This passage is a good example of the Chinese fondness for classifying various things under numerical categories of fives, sixes, nines, etc., and of dealing with infinite quantities.—Tr.
“Yen Tzŭ said: ‘They are. Harmony may be illustrated by soup. You have the water and fire, vinegar, pickle, salt and plums, with which to cook fish. It is made to boil by the firewood, and then the cook mixes the ingredients, harmoniously equalizing the several flavors, so as to supply whatever is deficient and carry off whatever is in excess. Then the master eats it, and his mind is made equable. So it is in the relations of ruler and minister. When there is any impropriety in what the ruler approves of, the minister calls attention to that impropriety, so as to make what has been approved entirely correct. When there is anything proper in what the ruler has disapproved of, the minister brings forward that propriety, so as to remove occasion for the disapproval. In this way the government is kept in equilibrium, with no infringement of what is right, and there is no quarrelling with it in the minds of the people...’

“‘As the early kings established the doctrine of the five tastes, so they made the harmony of the five notes, to make their mind equable and to perfect their government. There is an analogy between sounds and flavors. There are the breath, the two kinds of dances, the three kinds (of songs), the materials from the four quarters, the five notes, the six pitch-pipes, the seven sounds, the winds of the eight directions, and the nine songs, which united form perfect (music).

“‘Then there are the clear and the thick, the small and the large, short and long, fast and slow, solemn and joyful, hard and soft, lingering and rapid, high and low, the commencement and ending, the close and diffuse, by which the parts are all blended together. The Superior Man listens to such music that his mind may be composed. His mind being composed, his qualities become harmonious....

“‘Now it is not so with Chü. Whatever you say yes to, he also says yes. Whatever you say no to, he also says no. If you were to try to give water a flavour with water, who would care to partake of the result? If lutes were to be confined to one note, who would be able to listen to them? Such is the insufficiency of mere identity’” (p. 684).

Another speech in the Tso Chuan, under the year 710 B.C., describes the rise of rites, music, government and laws:

“He who is a ruler of men makes it his object to manifest virtue and suppress what is wrong, that he may shed an enlightening influence on his officials, and is afraid lest he should fail in this. Therefore he seeks to display excellent virtue to show an example to his posterity. Thus his ancestral temple has a roof of thatch; the mats in his grand chariot are only of grass; the grand soups (used in his sacrifices) are without condiments; and the millets are not finely cleaned. All this is to show his frugality. His robe, cap, knee-covers and mace; his girdle, lower robe, buskins and shoes; the
crospiece of his cap, its stopper pendants, its fastening strings and its crown: all these show his observance of the statutory measures. His gem-mats and his scabbard, with its ornaments above and below; his belt, with its descending ends; the streamers of his flags and the ornaments at his horses' breasts: these show his attention to the regular degrees (of rank). The flames, the dragons, the axes and the symbol of distinction (represented on his robes): these show the elegance of his taste. The five colors laid out in accordance with the appearance of nature: these show with what propriety his articles are made. The bells on his horses' foreheads, their bits, and those on the carriage pole and on his flags: these show his taste for harmony. His flags, on which are represented the sun, moon and stars: these show the brightness of his intelligence.

"Now when by virtue he is frugal and observant of the statutes, attentive to the degrees of high and low; his character stamped on his elegant robes and his carriage; sounded forth also and brightly displayed—when thus he presents himself for the enlightenment of his officials, they are struck with awe and dare not depart from the rules and laws" (p. 40).

The theory here is that the ruler's chief use of ceremonials is to awe his officials so that they will not transgress the laws.

Again, under the year 536, the Tso Chuan records a letter sent by Shu Hsiang to the famous statesman, Tzü Ch' an, apropos of the latter's promulgation of a law code in the state of Cheng:

"The early kings deliberated on all the circumstances (of each crime) to make their ruling on it, and did not make (general) laws of punishment, fearing lest this should give rise to a contentious spirit among the people. But still, as crimes could not be prevented they set up for them the barrier of righteousness, sought to rectify them with government, set before them the practice of propriety and the maintenance of good faith, and cherished them with benevolence. They also instituted emoluments and (official) positions to encourage their allegiance, and strictly laid down punishments and penalties to awe them from excesses. Fearing lest these things should be insufficient, they therefore inculcated them with sincerity, urged them on by their conduct, instructed them in what was most important, employed them in a spirit of harmony, came before them in a spirit of reverence, met exigencies with vigor, and gave their decisions with firmness. And in addition to this, they sought to have sage and wise persons in the highest positions, intelligent discriminating persons in all offices, true hearted and sincere elders, and gentle and kind teachers. In this way the people could be successfully dealt with, and miseries and disaster be prevented from arising.

"When the people know what the exact laws are, they do not stand in awe of their superiors. They also come to have a contentious spirit, and make their appeal to the written words (of the laws),
hoping peradventure to be successful in their argument. They can no longer be managed. When the government of the Hsia dynasty fell into disorder, the penal code of Yü was made; under the same circumstances of Shang, the penal code of T’ang; and in Chou, the code of the nine punishments. These three codes all originated in times of decay. And now in your administration of the state of Cheng, you have constructed dikes and ditches, you have established a government which has been much spoken against, and you have framed (a law code like that of) those three codes, casting in metal a record of the punishments it provides. Will it not indeed be difficult with this to keep the people in order?” (p. 609).

Despite its conservative tone, this letter supplies a human explanation for the existence of law codes.

Another speech is recorded in the Tso Chuan under the year 517:

"I have heard our late great officer, Tzü Ch’an, say: 'Ceremonials (li 禮) constitute the standard of Heaven, the principle of Earth, and the conduct of man. Heaven and Earth have their standards, and men take these for their pattern, imitating the brilliant bodies of Heaven and according with the natural diversities of Earth. (Heaven and Earth) produce the six atmospheric conditions and men make use of the Five Elements. These conditions produce the five tastes, make manifest the five colors, and make evident the five notes. When these are in excess, obscurity and confusion ensue, and the people lose their original natures.

"Therefore ceremonial were framed to reinforce (that nature). The six domestic animals, the five beasts (of the chase), and the three kinds of sacrificial victims, existed to maintain the five tastes. The nine forms of decoration, with their six colors and five methods of display, were made to maintain the five colors. The nine songs, the winds of the eight directions, the seven sounds, and the six pitch-pipes were made to maintain the five notes (The distinctions of) ruler and subject, superior and inferior, were formed to follow the pattern of Earth’s principle. Those of husband and wife, of the home and the outside world, were formed to regulate the two kinds of work (those inside and outside the home). There were instituted the relationships of father and son, elder and younger brother, aunt and sister, maternal uncles and aunts, father-in-law and connections of one’s children with other members of their mother’s family, and brothers-in-law: to resemble the bright luminaries of Heaven.

"The duties of government, requisitions of labor, and conduct of affairs were made to accord with the four seasons. Punishments and penalties, and the terrors of legal proceedings were instituted to make the people stand in awe, resembling the destructive forces of thunder and lightning. Mildness and gentleness, kindness and harmony, were made in imitation of the creating and nourishing action of Heaven. The people had feelings of love and hatred,
pleasure and anger, grief and joy, produced by the six atmospheric conditions.

"Therefore (the early kings) carefully imitated these relations and analogies, to regulate these six impulses. To grief there belong wailing and tears; to joy, songs and dancing; to pleasure, beneficence; to anger, fighting and struggling. Pleasure is born of love, and anger of hatred. Therefore (the early kings) were careful in their conduct and sincere in their commands, decreeing misery and happiness, rewards and punishments, to control life and death. Life is a good thing; death is an evil thing. The good thing brings joy; the evil thing gives grief. When there is no error (in the apportionment of) joy and grief, there results a state of harmony with the nature of Heaven and Earth, which consequently can endure long" (pp. 708-709).

The idea expressed here, as we see, is that the practical value of ceremonials and music, punishments and penalties, lies in preventing the people from falling into disorder, and that these have originated from man's capacity for imitating Heaven and Earth.

Human interpretations of the sacrificial rites were also offered by certain men during this period. The Kuo Yü gives an example:

"Sacrifice is that through which one can show one's filial piety and give peace to the people, pacify the country and make the people settled. It cannot be put an end to. For when the desires of the people are given free rein there comes a stoppage; with such a stoppage there comes a wasting away; and when this wasting away continues for long without any stimulus to it, life does not prosper, so that there is no obedience (to the commands on high). When life is not prosperous, the granting of feudal fiefs can no longer take place.

"This is why of old the early kings performed daily, monthly, seasonal and yearly sacrifice. The feudal lords omitted the daily sacrifices; the ministers and great officials omitted the monthly ones; and the lesser officials and common people omitted the seasonal ones. The Son of Heaven performed all-inclusive sacrifices to the various divinities and various classes of creatures. The feudal lords sacrificed to Heaven and Earth, and to the three luminaries, as well as to the mountains and rivers in their territories. The ministers and great officials performed sacrifices to the spirits of the house and to the ancestors. The lesser officers and common people did no more than sacrifice to their ancestors.

"Among the common people, men and women, according to days of good fortune, offer their sacrificial victims. They are reverent with the sacrificial grain contained in the vessels, show care in cleaning up, are prudent in the decorations of their clothing, and cautious in their wine offerings. They give guidance to their sons and blood relatives, follow the seasonal sacrifices, are pious in their ancestral worship, and conduct their words along harmonious paths.

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1 The sun, moon, and the stars considered as one group.—Tr.
so as to make illustrious their sacrifices to the early ancestors. They are reverent and solemn as if someone were overlooking them.

"Thereby local friends and relatives through marriage, elder and younger brothers and blood relations, are united. Thereby all sorts of abuses are stopped; the evils of slander are rooted out; those who are friends are united; relatives are drawn into a common bond; and both superiors and inferiors are put at rest, so as thus to extend and strengthen the family. It is through these sacrifices that those above teach the people proper respect, and those below make manifest their service to their superiors.

"When the Son of Heaven performs the great sacrifice and the suburban sacrifice, he must himself shoot the sacrificial victims, and his queen must herself pound the sacrificial grain. The feudal lords when they perform their ancestral sacrifices, must themselves shoot the ox, stab the sheep, and kill the pig, and their consorts must themselves pound the grain for the vessels. All the more, then, among those below, who would dare not be reverent and full of awe in serving the various spirits? . . . It is through the sacrifices that the unity of the people is strengthened, and why, then, should they abandon them?" (Ch'ü Yü, II, 2).

'Reverent and solemn as if someone were looking at them': that is, there need not be a supernatural being actually overlooking the ceremony at all. If sacrifice is performed with this knowledge, its only use would seem to be to serve as a pretext for bringing the local clan members and relatives together into one assembly; training them at the same time into a proper feeling of respect and reverence. Under such circumstances the real value of sacrifice lies in the fact that through it 'the unity of the people is strengthened.' Looked at from this viewpoint, sacrifice becomes the sort of thing which the Confucian philosopher, Hsüen Tzu, describes as: "Among superior men it is considered to be a human practice; among common people it is considered to be a serving of the spirits" (Hsüen-tzu, p. 245). Another speech in the Kuo Yü runs in similar strain:

"Sacrifices are the great institutions of a state, and institutions are what enable a government to be successful. Therefore the sacrifices are carefully regulated so as to serve as institutions for the state...

"The regulations drawn up by the Sage-kings governing sacrifice, provide that to those whose laws had permeated among the people, there should be offered sacrifice; to those who had died through their industriousness, there should be sacrifice; to those through whose efforts the country had been pacified, there should be sacrifice; to those who had warded off great natural calamities, there should be sacrifice; and to those who had resisted tribulations, there should be sacrifice. Those not in these classes were not put on the sacrificial records."
The account lists a large number of historical and legendary worthies who through their actions had merited a place at the sacrifices, and then continues:

"The great sacrifice, the suburban sacrifice (made to Heaven in winter and Earth in summer), the sacrifices to those ancestors who have done great deeds, and to those who have displayed remarkable virtue, and sacrifices performed to show gratitude: these five are the sacrifices on the statute books of the state. In addition are the spirits of the soil and grain, and of mountains and rivers, all of whom have accomplished outstanding deeds on behalf of the people. As to the sage and virtuous men of former times, it is through them that shining sincerity has been created. As to the three luminaries in Heaven, they are what the people look up to with reverence. As to the Five Elements on Earth, these are what induce life and propagation. As to the famous mountains, rivers and marshes of the nine provinces, it is from these that useful natural resources are derived. Anything not in the above classes is not put in the records to be sacrificed to" (Lü Yu, I, 9).

Here it is a feeling of gratitude that supplies the motive for sacrificing. Thus looked at, sacrifice becomes indeed a 'human practice,' rather than a 'serving of the spirits.'

With such human interpretations being given to social institutions, it is not surprising that the ruler likewise tended to become divested of that divine right which had formerly rendered him incapable in the eyes of the people of committing any wrong. The Kuo Yu gives an instance:

"The people of the state of Chin killed Duke Li (580-573), and the people of the frontier announced the news (to the state of Lu). Duke Ch’eng (590-573) was then at court. The Duke said: 'When a subject has killed his ruler, whose is the blame?' None of the great officials made reply, but Li Ko said: 'It is the fault of the ruler. For the awesome power of a ruler is great, and when this power to awe is lost to such an extent that he is killed by someone, his blame must be great. Moreover the ruler exists to shepherd his people and rectify their errors. If he, himself, pursues secret debauches and disregards the affairs of his people, the people will not be rectified when they are in error, so that the evil will become greater. If with evilness he supervises the people, he will fall and be unable to get up. And if he is unwilling to employ the virtuous exclusively, he will find himself unable to employ anyone. When such (a ruler) comes to his doom, there is no one to mourn for him, and of what good then is he?'" (Lü Yu, I, 15).

Also the Tso Chuan, under the year 510 B.C.:

"Chao Chien Tzu asked the historian Mo, saying: 'The head of the Chi family Tzu expelled his ruler, yet the people submitted to him, and the feudal lords assented to what he had done. His ruler has
died outside (of his state of Lu), and no one has incriminated him (i.e., the head of Chi).

"Mo replied: 'Things are produced in twos, in threes, in fives and in pairs. Hence Heaven has three luminaries, Earth has the Five Elements. The body has the left and right (sides), and everyone has his mate or double. Kings have their dukes, and princes have their ministers who are their assistants. Heaven produced the Chi family to be the assistant of the Marquis of Lu, and this has been the case for long. Is it not right that the people should submit in this case? The rulers of Lu have, one after another, followed their mistakes, and the heads of the Chi family have, one after another, diligently improved their position. The people have forgotten their ruler, so that, though he has died abroad, who pities him? The altars of the grain and soil are not always maintained (by the same ruler), and the positions of rulers and ministers are not ever unchanging; from of old it has been so. . . . The surnames of the sovereigns of the three (previous dynasties) are now borne by men among the common people; as you know'" (p. 741).

Certainly such approval of a minister murdering his ruler is a revolutionary idea for that time. Despite the occasional grandiloquence of the T'ou Ch'uan and Kuo Yu, and their literary elaborations, the fundamental ideas expressed in the speeches which have been quoted from them all undeniably show a human bent. In ancient Greece the Sophist Protagoras said that "Man is the measure of all things," which is an idea also implied in the foregoing quotations. The men who made these speeches, however, were all either hereditary historians, or were nobles active in government, and so, unlike the Greek Sophists, were not in a position to discuss and propagate their ideas. Hence for the important contributions to Chinese thought, we must continue to look to such men as Confucius, Mo Tzu and the other later philosophers.
CHAPTER IV

CONFUCIUS AND THE RISE OF CONFUCIANISM

More is known about the life of Confucius than of any other early Chinese philosopher, owing chiefly to the long chapter (ch. 47) devoted to him in the Shih Chi (Historical Records). According to this chapter, he was born in 551 B.C. in the state of Lu, somewhere near the present town of Chüfu in Shantung. His ancestors were of the Royal House of Sung (a state south-west of Lu in present Honan), but his great grandfather had moved to Lu, where the family became impoverished. Thus Confucius, like many of the travelling philosophers and politicians of succeeding centuries, came from a class of society which, while of noble origin, had fallen upon hard times. The name, Confucius, is a latinization of K'ung Fu Tzu 孔夫子, meaning Master K'ung; his given name is Ch'iu丘; and his cognomen Chung-ni仲尼.

Confucius is supposed to have lost his father, who had been a military officer of considerable prowess in Lu, when he was but three years old, and to have been brought up by his mother. When he was nineteen he married, and about the same time entered upon his official career in Lu, being first a keeper of grain stores and then in charge of the public lands. After passing through many experiences, the authenticity of which is doubtful—among them being a prolonged stay of several years in the neighboring state of Ch'i—he reached his highest position in 501 B.C. by becoming Prime Minister of Lu. So great was his success in this post, that the state of Ch'i, according to the Shih Chi, fearing his growing influence, sent a present of female dancers and musicians to the Lu ruler, who thereupon neglected the affairs of state. Full of disappointment, Confucius resigned his position and, accompanied by many of the disciples who had now gathered around him, set out in 497 upon wanderings which were to last for thirteen years. During this time, he travelled through many of the feudal states of China, staying now in one and then in another, and undergoing many hardships and dangers. At last he returned to his native state, where he spent the last three years of his life engaged in literary studies and in teaching his disciples. He died in 479 B.C., and was buried in the district of Chüfu, where his tomb is still to be seen.¹

¹ These two paragraphs do not occur in the original text, but have been added for the benefit of westerners who are not so familiar with the life of Confucius as is the Chinese reader.—Tr.
Besides the above general sketch, the Shih Chi supplies us with considerable detailed information concerning his activities as a teacher and his character:

"In the time of Confucius, the House of Chou had declined and the rites and music had fallen into neglect. The Shih (Book of Odes) and Shu (Book of History) had become defective. (Confucius) made researches into and transmitted the rites of the Three Dynasties (Hsia, Shang and Chou), and arranged in order the recitals in the Shu. Starting from the epoch of T'ang and Yü (i.e., the legendary Emperors Yao and Shun), and coming down to that of (Duke) Mu of Ch’in (659-621), he grouped and classified their events. . . . Observing the suppressions and additions (in the rites) made by Yin and Chou, he said: 'Even after one hundred generations they will still be known.' . . . 'Chou had the advantage of surveying the two preceding dynasties. How replete was its culture! I follow Chou.' Thus the records of the Shu and the Li Chi (Book of Rites) both come to us from Confucius.

"Once, when talking to the great music master of Lu, Confucius said: 'Music may be understood. The attack should be prompt and united, and as the piece proceeds, it should do so harmoniously, with clearness of tone and continuity of time, until its conclusion (III, 23). It was only after my return from Wei to Lu that the music was revised, and the secular and sacred pieces were properly discriminated' (IX, 14).

"In ancient times the Shih comprised more than three thousand pieces, but when it reached Confucius he threw out duplications, retaining those which could be used to exemplify the rites and justice. . . . Confucius played on the zither and sang the three hundred and five pieces (comprising the present Book of Odes). . . . It was from this time that the rites and music could be obtained and transmitted, wherewith to complete the Kingly Way, and to perfect the Six Disciplines."

"In his later years Confucius delighted in the I (Book of Changes), and arranged in order the T’uan, Hsi, Hsiang, Shuo Kua and Wen Yen." He read the I (so assiduously) that the thongs which bound it wore out three times, and said: 'Give me a few more years like this, and I will come to a perfect knowledge of the I.' Confucius took

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1 Cf. the Lun Yü (Confucian Analects) II, 23, and III, 14, which is a collection of sayings by Confucius as recorded by his disciples, and is the most reliable source concerning him. All the following quotations in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, are from the Lun Yü.—Tr.
2 These were the Books of Odes, History, Rites, Changes, Spring and Autumn Annals, and Music, which formed the basis of Confucian learning. On them see especially ch. 16. It is uncertain whether 'Music' was actually the name of a book, or was simply a subject of study.—Tr.
3 These, with their subdivisions, comprise the 'Ten Wings' or Appendices to the text of the I Ching proper. See ch. 15, sect. 1, pp. 379-382.—Tr.
4 Cf. Lun Yü, VII, 16, but there the text differs somewhat and presents special difficulties.—Tr.
the Shih, Shu, rites and music to teach to his disciples, who numbered about three thousand. Those who, in their own person, became conversant with the Six Disciplines, numbered seventy-two. . . .

"When he (Confucius) was in his native village, he bore himself with simplicity, as if he had no gifts of speech. But when in the ancestral temple or at court, he expressed himself readily and clearly, yet with a measure of reserve" (X, 1). 'At court, when conversing with the higher great officials, he spoke respectfully. When conversing with the lower great officials, he spoke out boldly' (X, 2). 'When he entered the palace gate, he appeared to stoop' (X, 4). 'When he hastened forward, it was with a respectful appearance' (X, 3). 'When the prince summoned him to receive a visitor, his expression seemed to change' (X, 3). 'When his prince commanded his presence, he did not wait for the carriage to be yoked, but went off on foot' (X, 13). 'Fish that had spoiled, or meat that had gone bad, or something improperly cut, he would not eat' (X, 8). 'He would not sit on his mat unless it was straight' (X, 9). 'When he dined by the side of a mourner, he never ate to repletion. On the same day that he had been mourning, he never sang' (VII, 9). 'Whenever he saw a person in mourning, or one who was blind, even though it were a young boy, he always changed countenance' (IX, 9; X, 16). (The Master said:) 'When walking in a party of three, my teachers are always present' (VII, 21). (Again:) 'Neglect in the cultivation of character; lack of thoroughness in study; inability to move toward recognized duty; and inability to correct my imperfections: these are what cause me solicitude' (VII, 3). 'When he had induced a person to sing, if the song were good he would have it repeated, joining in the melody himself' (VII, 31). 'The Master would not discuss prodigies, prowess, lawlessness, or supernatural beings' (VII, 20) . . .

"Then, utilizing the historical records, he composed the Ch'ün Ch'iu (Spring and Autumn Annals), going back to Duke Yin (of Lu, 722-712) and coming down to the fourteenth year of Duke Ai (481 B.C.). (In his history) he took the state of Lu as his basis, kept close to Chou, dealt with Yin as a time of the past, and circulated (the principles of) the Three Dynasties. His style was concise, but his meaning rich. Thus, when the rulers of Wu and Yüeh (improperly) style themselves Kings, the Ch'ün Ch'iu reproves them by giving them (their proper title of) Viscount. And at the meeting of Chien-t'u (in 632), when the Chou Emperor had actually been ordered to attend (by Duke Wen of Chin), the Ch'ün Ch'iu avoids mentioning this fact by saying: 'The celestial King went hunting at Ho-yang.' (Confucius) offered examples of this sort to serve as rules for his own age. And if later on there be kings who will arise and bring out the meaning of the censures and abasements, so that the meaning of the Ch'ün Ch'iu becomes generally known, at that time rebellious subjects and criminals in the world
will become seized with terror” ¹ (Mém. hist., V, 390-398, 400-403, 406-412, 420-422).

Such is the concept of Confucius that has held sway in China for the last two thousand years; yet a study of this biography, to-day, reveals many points which cannot possibly be in accordance with facts. It nevertheless remains noteworthy that Ssū-ma Ch’ien (145-c. 86 B.C.), the author of the Shih Chi, still regarded Confucius as a human person at a time when many men were already coming to look upon him as a divine being. Where he bases himself on the Lun Yu, his statements are for the most part trustworthy. What remains an open question, however, is the relation of Confucius to the Books of Changes, Odes, History, Rites, and Spring and Autumn Annals, and to the Music, which comprise the so-called Six Disciplines. This problem will be discussed in the following section.

1—The Position of Confucius in Chinese History

It has long been maintained by the New Text school of classical study that the Six Disciplines were composed by Confucius himself, whereas the Old Text school has maintained that he was merely their transmitter, so that both schools have at least agreed in saying that Confucius was closely connected with them. My own opinion on this subject is that they could not possibly have been originated by Confucius himself, because they were almost certainly already in existence during the Ch’ü Ch’ü period, that is, prior to his time.

Much evidence has already been brought forward by past and present-day scholars to prove this point, and I, myself, have also discussed the matter elsewhere,² and hence need not take it up in detail here. Though Confucius could not have composed the Six Disciplines himself, however, he did use them to teach his disciples, which is probably why later ages have supposed, not entirely without reason, that Confucius had a special connection with them.

Yet even this use of the Six Disciplines for teaching need not necessarily have commenced with Confucius, for the Kuo Yu informs us concerning a crown prince of Ch’ü, son of King Chuang of Ch’ü (613-591), that the prince was given instruction in such works as the ‘Odes,’ ‘Rites,’ ‘Music,’ ‘Spring and Autumn,’ and ‘Old Records.’ Both the Kuo Yu and Tso Chuan record numerous conversations between important personages, in which the ‘Odes’ and ‘History’ are frequently mentioned; while the ‘Rites’ (Li) were used in diplomatic relations, and the ‘Changes’ (I) in divination. This

¹ Mencius, IIIb, 9, has a sentence similar to these last words. Down to the present day, most Chinese have clung to this ‘praise and censure’ theory of the Ch’in Ch’ü, and many commentators have been written to explain the esoteric meanings to be found beneath its concise phrases.—Tr.
³ Cf. Ch’u Yu, I, 1.
indicates that an education of this sort was acquired by a portion, at least, of the nobility of that time. Confucius was the first man, however, to use the Six Disciplines for teaching the common people. This point will be taken up in detail later.

Here I need only say that in his method of teaching, Confucius differed from the philosophic schools which followed him, inasmuch as these all emphasized the fact that they taught doctrines originating in their own school. Chapter XXXIII of the Chuang-tzu (p. 442), for example, tells us that the disciples of the Mohist school all intoned the ‘Mohist Canons.’ Confucius, on the other hand, was an educationalist. His aim in teaching was to nurture and develop a person so that he might become someone who would be useful to his state, rather than to produce a scholar belonging to any one philosophic school. Hence he taught his pupils to read and study a wide variety of books and subjects, so that we find a disciple saying of him: “He has broadened me by culture and restrained me by the usages of good conduct” (IX, 10). Likewise the Chuang-tzu (ch. 33) says with reference to the Confucians: “The Shih describes aims; the Shu describes events; the Li (Rites) directs conduct; the Yüeh (Music) secures harmony. The I (Book of Changes) shows the principles of the yin and the yang. The Ch’ün Ch’iu shows distinctions and duties” (p. 439). These were the six works which were the subjects of study of the Confucian school.

Because of such catholicity, the accomplishments of the disciples of Confucius were also not all of one pattern. Thus the Lun Yü says: “Noted for moral character were . . . . (here and below follow names of disciples); for gifts of speech, . . . . ; for administrative ability, . . . . ; and for literature and learning, . . . .” (XI, 2). Again, the Lun Yü tells us that there was one disciple who “might be appointed to the administration of revenues”; another who “might be appointed as Controller”; and another who “might be appointed (at court) to converse with the guests,” all alike being able to manage affairs in “a state of a thousand chariots” (V, 7). This indicates that Confucius, in teaching his disciples, wholeheartedly wished them to become ‘men,’ in the full sense of the term, rather than sectarian scholars belonging to any one particular school.

While teaching, Confucius no doubt would sometimes make selections from the existing literature, or expand upon it according to the occasion, as will be described in the following section. If we allow such selections and explanations, made upon the spur of the moment, to represent the process traditionally spoken of as ‘expunging and rectifying the Six Classics,’ then there is no reason to doubt this tradition; but on the other hand there is nothing remarkable in expunging and rectifying of such a sort. Because of conservatism, however, the later Confucians continued to use the Six Disciplines for teaching, unlike other schools of thought
which taught only new doctrines originated by their own particular schools; and for this reason these Six Disciplines have come to be considered as the exclusive property of the Confucians, and even as having been composed by Confucius himself, while this 'expunging and rectifying' (if ever there really was such), has assumed an exaggerated importance.

The I-wen Chih chapter of the Ch'ien Han Shu says of the various philosophic schools that they sprang from the heritage of the Six Disciplines, a view which seems to be shared by the account of them given in Chuang-tzu (ch. 33). Such a theory is not wholly unjustified; for as has just been said, the Six Disciplines were originally a literature common to all, and it was only when each of the schools came to expound its own particular doctrines, that they came to be more definitely associated with the Confucians. It would be incorrect to say for this reason, however, that the ideas of each of the schools are therefore already all to be found in the Six Disciplines.

There exists no special word in Chinese meaning 'Confucian' or 'Confucianist,' members of the Confucian school having always been called ju 儒, a word which may be translated as 'literati.' Concerning this term, the Shuo-wen Chieh-tzu, one of the earliest Chinese dictionaries, appearing about A.D. 100, says: 'The word ju means 'yielding' (jou 柔). It is a term applied to scholars versed in the arts.' And the Lun Yü says: 'The Master speaking to Tzü Hsing said, 'Be you a ju of the nobler type, not a ju of the inferior type' (VI, 11). This would indicate that ju was originally a term applied in general to all persons who possessed education and were versed in the arts, so that in the time of Confucius it was still possible to speak in a general way of ju or scholars of the nobler type (chün tzü 君子) and inferior type (hsiao jen 小人), whereas later on, the use of the term was restricted exclusively to the Confucian school.

Confucius was, in short, primarily an educationalist. "A transmitter and not a creator, a believer in and lover of antiquity" (VII, 1). "Striving unwearingly (in study) and teaching others without flagging" (VII, 33). These are Confucius's own words about himself.

Thus looked at, Confucius would be nothing more than an old pedant; yet in Chinese history he has been placed in a most exalted position. I would therefore maintain that:

(1) Confucius was the first man in China to make teaching his profession, and thus popularize culture and education. It was he who opened the way for the many travelling scholars and philosophers of succeeding centuries. It was also he who inaugurated, or at least developed, that class of gentleman in ancient China who was neither farmer, artisan, merchant nor actual official, but was professional teacher and potential official.

(2) The activities of Confucius were similar in many ways to those of the Greek Sophists.
(3) The activities of Confucius and his influence in Chinese history, have been similar to that of Socrates in the West.

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I have already mentioned the Kuo Yü passage which states that even before the time of Confucius, such works as the ‘Odes,’ ‘Rites,’ ‘Music,’ ‘Spring and Autumn’ and ‘Old Records’ were included in the educational curriculum of one of the crown princes of Ch’u. Yet it is evident that such a thorough education must have been inaccessible to the common people of the Ch’un Ch’iu period, and furthermore, was denied even to many of the nobility. The Tso Chuan, for example, under the year 540 B.C., states of Hán Hsüan Tzü, a hereditary minister of the state of Chin, that it was only after he came on a diplomatic mission to the state of Lu, one of the most cultured regions in China, that he ‘examined the books of the Grand Historian’ and saw ‘the symbols of the I’ and ‘the Ch’ün Ch‘iu of Lu’ (p. 583). Again, under the year 544, it is stated of a member of the Royal House of Wu that he had to come to Lu before he could hear the odes and music of the various states (p. 549). We may infer from this that at that time such works as the ‘Book of Changes,’ ‘Spring and Autumn Annals,’ ‘Music’ and ‘Odes’ were literary possessions highly prized.

Confucius, on the other hand, held as his aim that ‘in teaching there should be no class distinctions’ (XV, 38). He said that ‘from him who has brought his simple present of dried meat, seeking to enter my school, I have never withheld instruction’ (VII, 7). The acceptance of large numbers of students in this way, and the taking in of everyone who would pay for tuition, without personal questions about them or their families; the giving of equal instruction in each subject, and the teaching of how to read every kind of literary treasure, truly constituted a great step toward emancipation. Thus, even though the use of the Six Disciplines for teaching purposes may not have commenced with Confucius, it was certainly he who originated their use for general teaching and for bringing culture to large masses of people.

I maintain this statement because in none of the more reliable ancient writings have I heard of men before Confucius who gave instruction to large numbers of students, nor of anyone saying that ‘in teaching there should be no class distinctions.’

According to the K‘ung-tzü Chia-yü (Family Sayings of Confucius), a work which purports to contain the words of Confucius, but which was compiled many centuries after his death, there is said to have been contemporary with him a certain Shao Cheng Mao ‘whose dwelling place could assemble followers and form cliques; whose conversations were sufficient to elicit admiration and bewilder the multitude; and whose power of resistance was sufficient to overthrow the truth and establish his own individual ideas’ (sect. 2).
This man’s success was such that “the disciples of Confucius three times filled (the school of Confucius), and three times left it empty. It was only Yen Yüan who did not go away.”' Again, the Chuang-tzu (ch. 5) says: “In the state of Lu there was a man, named Wang Tai, who had had his toes cut off. His disciples were as numerous as those of Confucius” (p. 56). The story in the K'ung-tzu Chia-yü, however, which also says that Confucius had Shao Cheng Mao executed, has already been discredited by earlier scholars, and we are even uncertain whether this man ever actually existed or not. Likewise the contents of the Chuang-tzu are ‘nine-tenths fantastic tales,’ so that the statement that Wang T’ai ‘divided with Confucius the state of Lu in half’ is even less credible. Hence Confucius remains as the first to carry on extensive instruction, and is probably primarily responsible for inaugurating the movement which led many later philosophic schools to compete with one another in attracting followers.

Confucius, furthermore, spent many years in the company of his disciples, travelling unceasingly from one feudal state to another and talking with their rulers. This, too, was a form of activity unheard of before him, whereas afterward it became a common practice.

I have also said that I have never heard of anyone prior to Confucius who, being neither farmer, artisan, merchant nor official, made teaching his sole means of livelihood. Excluding those members of the nobility who earned their bread by holding official posts, there are frequent references to other men who rose to importance from very humble positions, yet in every case they supported themselves, when not in office, by engaging in agriculture, manual labor or trade. Mencius tells us, for example:

“Shun (one of the legendary Emperors) rose from among his channelled fields. Fu Yüeh was called to office from the midst of his building frames; Kao Kai from his fish and salt; Kuan I Wu from the hands of his jailer; Sun-shu Ao from (his retreat by) the seashore; and Po-li Hsi from the market place” (Mencius, VIb, 15).

Though Mencius is not always reliable, there is, in fact, no record of anyone prior to Confucius who did not hold office, and who at the same time did not engage in some other kind of materially productive work. Confucius himself, according to Mencius, held office during his early years because he was poor. “He was once a keeper of stores,” and “once in charge of the public fields,” both lowly offices (Mencius, Vb, 5). But as soon as he had reached the position of “following behind the great officers of state” (Lun Yu, XI, 7), and when there were many students coming to him, he devoted himself wholly to the exposition of his doctrines. Moreover, not only did he himself not engage in activities materially productive, but he did not wish to teach his disciples how to do so. For example, we are told that

1 Cf. Hsin Lun (chüan 4, Hsin Yin sect.), by Liu Hsieh (sixth century A.D.), in Han Wei Ts'ung-shu, p. 8.
CONFUCIUS AND THE RISE OF CONFUCIANISM

when a disciple "requested to be taught agriculture," and "requested to be taught gardening," Confucius said: "What a little-minded man is Fan Hsü!" (XIII, 4). And of another engaged in commerce, Confucius said disparagingly: "Tz'ū is not content with his lot, yet his goods increase abundantly. Nevertheless in his judgments he often hits the mark." (XI, 18). It was because of this refusal to engage in materially productive enterprises, that Confucius was particularly criticized by his contemporaries. An instance occurs in the Lun Yü, which describes how an old man who was once met on the road, carrying a basket on his staff, said of Confucius: "His four limbs know not toil, and he cannot distinguish the five grains" (XVIII, 7). The Shih Chi's biography of Confucius also records a noted statesman of the time as saying:

"The literati (ju) are sophists and cannot be taken as model or norm. Arrogant and following only their own opinions, they cannot be made subordinates. They attach great importance to the mourning rites, give themselves over to grief, and ruin great fortunes in funerals, a practice which cannot become common usage. Sophists who travel from place to place begging for loans, they are incapable of directing a state" (Mem. hist., V, 307-308).

The Chuang-tzü likewise records a fierce diatribe on Confucius:

"You are a mere word-monger, who talks nonsense about Kings Wen and Wu (founders of the Chou dynasty).... You have many words, which only mislead. You do not sow and yet you are clothed. Your lips patter and your tongue wags, and you produce your own rights and wrongs, with which to mislead the rulers of the world and prevent scholars from reverting to the fundamentals of things. You make a deceiving show of filial piety and brotherly love, so that by good chance you may secure some fat fief or post of power" (p. 389).

While criticisms of this sort may never actually have been made by the persons to whom they are attributed, their existence during that time is at least very possible.

There were certain other men of education living in the Warring States period, who held no office but produced the food they ate through their own efforts. There was Hsü Hsing, for example, "whose disciples, amounting to several tens, all wore clothes of haircloth, and made sandals of hemp and wove mats for a living" (Mencius, IIIa, 4). And there was Ch'cn Chung Tzü, who earned a living by "himself weaving sandals of hemp, while his wife twisted hempen threads" (ibid., IIIb, 10). Mencius condemned such men, however, and it is recorded of Mencius himself that "he was followed by several tens of carriages, and attended by several hundred men, getting his food from one prince after another" (ibid., IIIb, 4). Since such conduct was regarded even by one of his disciples as 'excessive,' it is probable that other men of the time made even
sharper criticisms. On another occasion, too, Mencius gives an elaborate account of the proper etiquette to be followed by a ruler when he gives presents to a Confucian.¹

These passages give an insight into the characteristics of the Confucian school, through which there arose a class of ‘scholars’ (shih 學) who were neither farmers, artisans nor merchants, and who did not engage in any kind of productive activity, but depended entirely upon others for their support. This class seems to have been non-existent prior to Confucius, and when the word shih occurs in earlier texts, it usually refers either to someone who holds official position, or to a military officer. In this way it differs from the shih of later times, who were so called in apposition to the farmer, artisan and merchant classes.²

Such shih were capable of engaging in only two kinds of activity: that of holding governmental office and that of teaching. Even down to the present day, in fact, the graduates of any school in China, whether it be agricultural or technical, have usually had only two ways of livelihood: that of becoming an official or of being a professor. The Lun Yu means exactly this when it says: “The occupant of office, when his duties are finished, should betake himself to study; the student, when his studies are finished, should betake himself to office” (XIX, 13). Confucius was, if not the originator of this type of person, at least its great patron.

Such men were fiercely criticized by the Legalist school of later times. For example, the Legalist, Han Fei Tzu (died 233 B.C.) :

“There are those of varied and dialectical learning, such as Confucius and Mo Tzu. But Confucius and Mo Tzu did not sow or cultivate the land, and so what could the state obtain from them? There are those who practice filial piety and reduce their desires, as did Tseng and Shih. But Tseng and Shih would not go to war, and so of what profit were they to their country?” (Han-fei-tzu, chüan 18, p. 5). Again (ch. 49):

“The literati (jü), with their learning, throw the laws into confusion. The knights-errant (hsieh 俛), with their pugnaciousness, transgress the prohibitions. . . . Now if one pursues literary studies and practises the arts of conversation, one has none of the labor of cultivating the soil and has the actuality of possessing riches; one has none of the dangers of war and has the honor of noble position. Who, then, would not do this?” (chüan 19, pp. 3–4).

The second point which I made was that Confucius closely resembles the Greek Sophists in his activities. Both alike broke earlier

¹ Mencius, Vb, 6.
² The word shih, mentioned in the Kao Yu (Chi Yu, 1) in apposition to the farmer, artisan and merchant classes, seems to have reference there simply to a military shih. Cf. my article on Confucius, cited above, p. 46.
CONFLUCIUS AND THE RISE OF CONFUCIANISM

conventions by being the first to teach students on a large scale. The Sophists were dependent for livelihood upon the tuition fees which they thus received (one of the major criticisms levelled against them in their time), and Confucius likewise says: "From him who has brought his simple present of dried meat seeking to enter my school, I have never withheld instruction" (VII, 7). Such tuition was probably not received in any fixed amounts, but given to Confucius in the form of 'gifts.' While he was not wholly dependent on this tuition for his livelihood, and could also look to the state rulers for a certain amount of support, it was the very fact that his disciples were numerous which made this support from the state rulers forthcoming. Thus Confucius remains truly the first in China who made his living through teaching, but this fact should not in any way disparage him, since any sort of existence requires some means of support.

Another respect in which Confucius closely resembles the Sophists, is that though these were all men of wide learning and talents, and hence capable of giving instruction in all fields of study, yet their primary aim was to enable their students to lead lives of government activity. So it was with Confucius, who possessed an equally wide learning, and of whom someone said: "What a great man is Confucius! His learning is vast, yet in nothing does he acquire a reputation" (IX, 2). And on another occasion a great minister inquired of one of the disciples: "'Your master is surely a Sage? What varied acquirement he has!' Tzū Kung replied: 'Of a truth Heaven has lavishly endowed him to the point of being a Sage, and his acquirements are also many.'" (IX, 6).

Thus Confucius, like the Sophists, offered instruction in many subjects (in his case the Six Disciplines). Yet at the same time his primary emphasis was on government activity, so that 'in a state of a thousand chariots' his disciples might 'be appointed to the administration of its revenues,' or 'be appointed as Controller' (V, 7).

Once, when someone asked whether certain three disciples were suited for official employment, Confucius replied: "Yü is a man of decision... Tz'ū is a man of penetration... Ch'iu is a man of much proficiency... What difficulty would they find therein?" (VI, 6). In the same way it is customary for heads of schools even to-day to recommend their graduates for employment in various branches of the Chinese government.

* * *

Thirdly, I have stated that Confucius in many ways resembles Socrates. Socrates was considered by some of his contemporaries as a Sophist, though he differed from them inasmuch as he did not take tuition fees from his students and did not sell his knowledge. He had no interest in metaphysical problems, and accepted a traditional attitude toward supernatural beings; on these
questions Confucius held a similar viewpoint. Socrates regarded himself as a person who had been given a divine mission, and considered it his duty to bring enlightenment to the Greeks. So also with Confucius, who once exclaimed: "Heaven begat the virtue that is in me" (VII, 22). And again: "Since Heaven is not yet ready to destroy this cause of truth, what can the men of K'uang do to me?" (IX, 5).

Again Socrates, according to Aristotle, sought through inductive reasoning to frame universal definitions, from which standards might be made for human conduct. Confucius, likewise, expounded the doctrine of the Rectification of Names (cheng ming 正名), believing that once the meanings of names were made fixed, they would serve as standards for conduct. Confucius laid emphasis upon man's ethical nature, and Confucius also looked upon a man's 'complete virtue' (jen 仁) as of even greater importance than his capacity for government service. Therefore, although 'in a state of a thousand chariots' he granted his disciples the ability to be 'appointed to the administration of its revenues,' 'appointed as Controller,' or 'appointed (in court) to converse with the guests,' we are told that he refused to admit that they had 'complete virtue' (V,7). Socrates wrote no works himself, but his name was made use of by many of the men who followed him (as by Plato in the Dialogues). Likewise in the case of Confucius, so that the phrase, 'The Master said,' occurs with extreme frequency in books of all sorts since his day. After the death of Socrates, his school of thought was further developed by Plato and Aristotle, thus becoming the orthodoxy of western philosophy. And in the same way the school of Confucius was developed by Mencius and Hsün Tzu, and became the orthodoxy of Chinese philosophy. This general statement will be examined in detail later.

Viewed as the counterpart of Socrates in China, Confucius occupies a very exalted position. Add to this the fact that he was the first in China to popularize learning and culture, and that he was the prototype, or at least the developer, of the shih or scholar class, and his achievements perhaps even exceed those of Socrates.

2—ATTITUDE OF CONFUCIUS TOWARD TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND BELIEFS

It has already been stated that it was not until the Chou dynasty that Chinese civilization assumed a definite shape, and while the dynasty's literary records and institutions were probably not entirely the work of its founders, King Wen and the Duke of Chou, these two men were nevertheless the most important creators of Chou culture. The Lu state was ruled by the descendants of the Duke of Chou, and so the Chou culture remained more in evidence in this state than in the others. The Tso Chuan says under the year 506 B.C.: "The Duke of Chou helped the Imperial House to rule the empire, he being most dear to the sovereign. The Duke of Lu (descendant
of the Duke of Chou) received for his part a great carriage and a
grand flag... that thus the brilliant virtue of the Duke of Chou
might be made illustrious. (The Duke of Lu) had been given a very
wide stretch of territory, with priests, superintendents of the ancestral
temple, diviners, historians, all the appendages of state, the tablets
of historical records, the various officers, and the instruments of their
office” (p. 754).
The *Tso Chuan* also tells us concerning an envoy from Wu, that
it was when he visited Lu that “he observed the music of Chou”
(p. 549), and again that when Han Hsüan Tsü was visiting Lu, he
“examined the books of the Great Historian, and saw the symbols
of the I and the *Ch’u’un Ch’iu* of Lu, whereupon he said: ‘The cere-
monials of Chou are complete in Lu, and now I comprehend the virtue
of the Duke of Chou and how it was that the Chou became kings’
(p. 583). Culturally speaking, it is evident that Lu must have been
a miniature reflection of the ancestral Chou. Especially was this
the case when, after the first few centuries of its rule, the House of
Chou so declined in power that a raid of western barbarians
forced King P’ing (770-720) to move his capital from the west to the
east, where he established the Eastern Chou dynasty. On this occasion
many objects of cultural importance must have been lost, with the
result that Chou culture from that time on became centered in the
state of Lu.

During his entire lifetime Confucius clung to his love for study,
as evidenced by several statements:

“I am not one who has innate knowledge, but one who, loving
antiquity, is diligent in seeking it therein” (VII, 19).

“Even in a hamlet of ten houses there must be men as conscien-
tious and sincere as myself, but none as fond of learning as I am”
(V, 27).

“I can describe the civilization of the Hsia dynasty, but the
descendant state of Ch’i cannot render adequate corroboration. I
can describe the civilization of the Yin dynasty, but the descendant
state of Sung cannot render adequate corroboration. And all
because of the deficiency of their records and wise men. Were those
sufficient then I could corroborate my views” (III, 9).

Because he was a native of Lu, where the Chou civilization was
still much in evidence, Confucius had a deep knowledge and love
for this ancient culture, and once he exclaimed: “Chou had the
advantage of surveying the two preceding dynasties. How replete
was its culture! I follow Chou” (III, 14).

As a follower of Chou, the life aim of Confucius was to perpetuate
the achievements of King Wen and the Duke of Chou, so that on th
famous occasion when he was menaced at K’uang, he declared:

“Since King Wen is no longer alive, does not his culture (*wen*)
rest with me? If Heaven were going to destroy this culture, a later
mortal like me could not have gained such a close association with it. Since Heaven has not yet destroyed this culture, what can the men of K'uang do to me?" (IX, 5).

Describing his mission, he said: "If there were one willing to employ me, might I not create an Eastern Chou?" (XVII, 5). By an Eastern Chou he meant the revival in eastern China of the old Chou culture. On another occasion Confucius made a lament over his own degeneracy: "For long I have not dreamed as of yore that I saw the Duke of Chou" (VII, 5).

During the Han dynasty the Old Text school of classical scholarship maintained that it was the Duke of Chou who originated the Six Disciplines and that Confucius was only their transmitter, whereas the New Text school maintained that Confucius had composed the Ch'un Ch'iü to make himself in this way comparable to King Wen. While both views are probably wrong, Confucius does seem to have considered as his special duty the perpetuation of the achievements of King Wen and the Duke of Chou.

Because of this, Confucius has been mentioned by all later Confucians in conjunction with the Duke of Chou. Mencius says of someone: "Pleased with the doctrines of the Duke of Chou and Confucius, he came northward to the Middle Kingdom" (Mencius, IIIa, 4). And Hsün Tzü: "Confucius possessed the qualities of human-heartedness and wisdom, and was not prejudiced. Hence his scholarship and mastery over all teachings were sufficient to be those of the early kings. He possessed the whole of the Way (Tao 道); he brought it to people's notice, and he used it; he was not prejudiced in the carrying out of it. Hence his virtue was equal to that of the Duke of Chou, and his reputation was abreast of that of the Three Kings." (Hsiün-tzü, p. 265).

Likewise during the Han dynasty, as in the Huai-nan-tzü: "Confucius practised the ways of Kings Ch'eng (1115-1079) and K'ang (1078-1053), and transmitted the precepts of the Duke of Chou" (ch. 21, p. 8). And the Shih Chi: "Five hundred years after the death of the Duke of Chou there came Confucius" (ch. 130, p. 8).

Confucius was "a transmitter and not a creator, a believer in and lover of antiquity" (VII, 1). What he transmitted was the Chou civilization.

Because of his knowledge and love of Chou culture, Confucius could not restrain himself from laments when he observed its decay. Thus when he saw the eight rows of dancers performing in the temple of the usurping House of Chi, a rite reserved in normal times to persons of ducal rank, he remarked that this was something which "could not be endured" (III, 1). And when he saw "the chief of the

1 These were Yü, first ruler of the Hsia dynasty; T'ang, founder of Shang; and Kings Wen and Wu, counted as one.—Tr.
Chi family going to sacrifice on Mount T'ai," which was a royal prerogative, he exclaimed: "Alas! Is that not saying that Mount T'ai is not the equal of Lin Fang?" (III, 6). Confucius said of the noted statesman, Kuan Chung, who "used a stand for his inverted pledge-cup," also a noble prerogative, that "he did not understand etiquette" (III, 22). And on another occasion when the ruler of the neighboring state of Ch'i had been assassinated, Confucius bathed himself and went to court, where he petitioned the Duke of Lu, saying: "Ch'en Heng has slain his ruler. I beg you to punish him." (XIV, 22). Of his own conduct, it is said that from the time when he "followed behind the great officers of state, he could not go afoot" (XI, 7). Indeed, the descriptions of his habits of living, eating and drinking, as given in the Lun Yu (Bk. X), seem almost those of a nobleman. This does not necessarily mean that Confucius was fond of luxury, but that he felt that if he did not live in this way, he would not be in accord with the etiquette that the ancient Chou ceremonials required.

Toward the traditional beliefs of his time Confucius was also a conservative. There are several passages in the Lun Yu recording his views about Heaven (T'ien):

"Wang-sun Chia inquired: What is the meaning of the saying, 'It is better to pay court to the god of the hearth than to the god of the hall?' 'Not so,' said the Master. 'He who sins against Heaven has no place left where he may pray'" (III, 13).

"Once when the Master was seriously ill, Tzü Lu set the disciples to act as if they were a statesman's officers. During a remission of the attack Confucius observed: 'For what a long time has Yu been carrying on his impositions! In pretending to have retainers when I have none, whom do I deceive? Do I deceive Heaven?'" (IX, 11.)

"When Yen Yuan (the favorite disciple of Confucius) died, the Master exclaimed: 'Alas! Heaven has bereft me! Heaven has bereft me!'" (XI, 8).

"The Master said: 'I make no complaint against Heaven, nor blame men, for though my studies are lowly my mind soars aloft. And that which knows me, is it not Heaven?'" (XIV, 37).

These passages show that Heaven, for Confucius, meant a purposeful Supreme Being or 'ruling Heaven.'

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1 A disciple of Confucius, who was skilled in asking Confucius questions about the rites. See Lun Yu, III, 4.—Tr.
2 The words of Confucius: "What speech has Heaven? The four seasons run their round and all things flourish, yet what speech has Heaven?" (XVII, 19), have been used to prove that Confucius's Heaven was a spontaneous unpurposeful one. Yet really this passage simply means that Heaven 'rules through non-activity,' a Taoistic idea, rather than that Heaven itself is spontaneous. For if we once say of Heaven that it does not speak, we are implying that Heaven could speak if it wished, but deliberately does not do so. Otherwise such a statement would be meaningless. In the same way we would not say of a stone or a table that they do not speak, because these are objects which have always been incapable of speech. See also p. 31 for five possible interpretations of the word 'Heaven.'
The _Lun Yu_ also contains several passages which mention heavenly Fate or Will (ming 命):

“The Master said: ‘At fifteen I set my mind upon learning. At thirty I stood firm. At forty I was free from doubts. At fifty I understood the Will of Heaven...’” (II, 4).

“When Po Niu was ill the Master went to inquire about him. Having grasped his hand through the window he said: ‘We are losing him. Alas! It is Fate. That such a man should have such a disease! That such a man should have such a disease!’” (VI, 8).

“The Master said: ‘If my principles are going to prevail, it is through Fate. If my principles are going to fail, it is through Fate. What can Kung-po Liao do against Fate?’” (XIV, 38).

“Confucius said: ‘The Superior Man holds three things in awe. He holds the Will of Heaven in awe; he holds the great man in awe; and he holds the precepts of the Sages in awe’” (XVI, 8).

For Confucius, Heaven was a purposeful Supreme Being; hence Fate or ming was the purpose of that Supreme Being. As for himself, he believed that he had a holy mission which had been conferred on him by Heaven. Hence his words: “Since Heaven has not yet destroyed this culture, what can the men of K’uang do to me?” (IX, 5). This belief was one also shared by some of his contemporaries, among them an officer in charge of a small frontier town, who once said: “The world for long has been without principles. But now Heaven is going to use the Master as an arousing tocsin” (III, 24).

Toward spirits, however, Confucius had a more skeptical attitude. There are several passages in the _Lun Yu_ on the subject:

“He sacrificed (to the ancestors) as if they were present. He sacrificed to the spirits as if the spirits were present” (III, 12).

“The Master said: ‘To devote oneself earnestly to one’s duty to humanity, and, while respecting the spirits, to keep away from them, may be called wisdom’” (VI, 20).

“When Chi Lu asked his duty to the spirits, the Master replied: ‘When still unable to do your duty to men, how can you do your duty to the spirits?’ When he ventured to ask about death, Confucius answered: ‘Not yet understanding life, how can you understand death?’” (XI, 11).

Since ‘while respecting the spirits, to keep away from them’ constitutes wisdom, the reverse of this of course shows lack of wisdom. But if such is the case, why should spirits be respected at all? This question was answered by the later Confucianists, who formulated a systematic conception of sacrifices which will be discussed in detail in Chapter XIV. Here we need only stress the fact that Confucius introduced the word ‘wisdom’ on this problem, and displayed a rationalist attitude, making it probable that there were other superstitions of his time in which he also did not believe. Hence
the words: "The Master would not discuss prodigies, prowess, lawlessness or the supernatural" (VII, 20).

3—The Rectification of Names

For Confucius, 'a world without order (Tao)' was the result of the breakdown of the social institutions of his time, and his constant hope was that this condition might be remedied, so that he said:

"When good order prevails in the world, ceremonials, music and punitive expeditions proceed from the Emperor. When good order fails in the world, ceremonials, music and punitive expeditions proceed from the nobles. When they proceed from a noble, it is rare if his power be not lost within ten generations. When they proceed from a noble's minister, it is rare if his power be not lost within five generations. But when a minister's minister holds command in the kingdom, it is rare if his power be not lost within three generations. When there is good order in the world, its policy is not in the hands of ministers. And when there is good order in the empire, the people do not even discuss it" (XVI, 2).

"The revenue has departed from the Ducal House (of Lu) for five generations, and the government has devolved on ministers for four generations. Alas! That is why the descendants of the three Huan families (who originally ruled Lu) are so reduced!" (XVI, 3).

It was Confucius's belief that the degeneration of political and social states originates from the top. "When ceremonials, music and punitive expeditions proceed from the nobles," within ten generations there must be a further decline so that they then "proceed from a noble's minister." Given five generations of this condition, the result must be that "a minister's minister holds command in the kingdom," which is why, in the case of Lu, "the descendants of the three Huan families are so reduced." The consequence is that a revolution must take place among the people within three generations. Mencius similarly said: "If righteousness be put last, and profit be put first, they (the people) will not be satisfied unless they are snatching (everything)" (Mencius, Ia, 1).

Confucius believed that under these circumstances the only way to restore order would be so to arrange affairs that the Emperor would continue to be Emperor, the nobles to be nobles, the ministers to be ministers, and the common people common people. That is, the actual must in each case be made to correspond to the name. This theory Confucius called the Rectification of Names (cheng ming 正名), a doctrine which he recognized as being of the utmost importance:

"Tzü Lu said: 'The prince of Wei is awaiting you, Sir, to take control of his administration. What will you undertake first,
Sir? The Master replied: 'The one thing needed is the rectification of names'" (XIII, 3).

"When Duke Ching of Ch'i inquired of Confucius the principles of government, Confucius answered saying: 'Let the ruler be ruler, the minister minister; let the father be father, and the son son.' 'Excellent!' said the Duke. 'For truly if the ruler be not ruler, the minister not minister; if the father be not father, and the son not son, though grain exist, shall I be allowed to eat it?'" (XII, 11).

Every name possesses its own definition, which designates that which makes the thing to which the name is applied be that thing and no other. In other words, the name is that thing's essence or concept. What is pointed out by the definition of the name 'ruler,' for example, is that essence which makes a ruler a ruler. In the phrase: 'Let the ruler be ruler,' etc., the first word, 'ruler,' refers to ruler as a material actuality, while the second 'ruler' is the name and concept of the ideal ruler. Likewise for the other terms: minister, father and son. For if it is brought about that ruler, minister, father and son all act in real life in accordance with the definitions or concepts of these words, so that all carry out to the full their allotted duties, there will be no more disorder in the world. Confucius considered his time as a period when, on the contrary, 'the ruler is not ruler, the minister not minister; the father is not father, and the son not son.' To him this confusion was symbolized by one of the types of drinking goblets that was then in use:

"The cornered vessel (ku 軫) has no longer corners. What a 'cornered' vessel! What a 'cornered' vessel!" (VI, 23).

It was because the actualities of things no longer corresponded to their names, Confucius believed, that the world was suffering from disorder, and therefore the names must be rectified. Not only this, but this rectification must begin from the top, because it was at the top that the discrepancy between actualities and names had originated:

"When Chi K'ang Tzu (who had usurped the power in Lu) asked Confucius for the way to govern, Confucius replied: 'To govern (cheng 政) means to rectify (cheng 正). If you, Sir, will lead in the rectification, who will dare not to be rectified?"' (XII, 17).

"Chi K'ang Tzu being plagued with robbers, consulted Confucius, who answered him saying: 'If you, Sir, be free from the love of wealth, although you pay them they will not steal.'" (XII, 18).

"Chi K'ang Tzu asked the opinion of Confucius on government and said: 'How would it do to execute the lawless for the good of the law-abiding?' 'What need, Sir, is there of capital punishment in your administration?' responded Confucius. 'If your desire is for good, the people will be good. The moral character of the ruler is the wind; the moral character of those beneath him is the grass. When the grass has the wind upon it, it assuredly bends'" (XII, 19).
In other words, in a government through nobility, the mass of the people are uneducated, and hence the ruler’s personal conduct inevitably has a great shaping influence upon that of the common man.

It has been traditionally supposed that Confucius composed the Ch’un Ch’iu in order to carry his rectification of names into actual practice. Mencius, for example, says that Confucius ‘made’ (tso 作) the Ch’un Ch’iu, with the result that “rebellious ministers and villainous sons were struck with terror” (Mencius, IIIb, 9). Yet the Tso Chuan states under the year 607 b.c., at the time when Duke Ling of Chin was murdered:

“The Grand Historian (of Chin) wrote the entry, ‘Chao Tun has murdered his prince,’ and showed it to the court. Hsüan Tzu (i.e., Chao Tun) said that this was not true. (The historian) replied: ‘Sir, you are the highest minister. Flying from the state, you did not go beyond its frontiers. When you returned you did not punish the assassin. If it is not you (who are responsible), who is it?’... Confucius said of this: ‘Of old, Tung Hu was an excellent historian. In his writings he had the rule of not concealing (the truth)’” (pp. 290-291). Again, under the year 548, when Duke Chuang of Ch’i was murdered:

“The Grand Historian (of Ch’i) made a record of the fact which said: ‘Ts’ui Tzu has murdered his prince.’ Ts’ui Tzu thereupon had him executed. Two of his brothers did the same after him, and were also executed. A third wrote the same and was spared. The historian in the south, learning that the Grand Historian and his two brothers had died in this way, took his tablets and went (to record also that Ts’ui Tzu had murdered his prince). But learning on the way that the affair had already been recorded (by the third brother), he returned” (pp. 514-515).

These quotations indicate that during the Ch’un Ch’iu period the Grand Historians of at least two states, those of Chin and Ch’i, could by what they recorded cause ‘rebellious ministers and villainous sons to be struck with terror,’ so that it is not only of the Ch’un Ch’iu of Lu that this statement was true. Probably certain standard rules existed for the recording of events, which were followed by all the historians of this early period. Thus Mencius says:

“The Cheng 稱 of Chin, the Tao Wu 據 of Ch’u, and the Ch’un Ch’iu of Lu were books of the same character. Their subject was the affairs of (Dukes) Huan of Ch’i and Wen of Chin, and their style was historical. Confucius said: ‘Their righteous principles I ventured to take’” (Mencius, IVb, 21).

The phrase, ‘righteous principles,’ refers with as much force to the Cheng and Tao Wu as to the Ch’un Ch’iu, though it has been commonly interpreted as referring only to the latter, in consonance with the theory that Confucius had a special connection with the Ch’un Ch’iu. According to this passage, Confucius only ‘took’ (ch’ü 攫)
principles from works already written, but did not make them himself, a statement which seems close to the facts, even though Mencius elsewhere says that Confucius actually composed the Ch'un Ch'iu.\(^1\)

But it is also possible that because the Lu rulers were descen-
dants of the Duke of Chou, and their state was noted for its ceremonial and justice, the Ch'un Ch'iu of Lu, in comparison with similar histories in other states, was recognized as being especially accurate as regards 'principles.' Thus when Han Hsüan Tzü, as noted above, came to Lu on a diplomatic mission and saw there the books of the Grand Historian, he particularly noticed the 'Ch'un Ch'iu of Lu.' From this it would seem that the work possessed special qualities as compared with such histories as the Cheng of Chin and Tao Wu of Ch'u, because of which there were already persons before Confucius who had been using it for teaching purposes. Thus when the question arose as to what should be taught to the crown prince of Ch'u, son of King Chuang (613-591), the answer came:

"Teach him the Ch'un Ch'iu and by it encourage goodness and censure evil, so as to restrain and admonish his mind." (Kuo Yu, Ch'u Yu, I, 1).

From this we may see that the Ch'un Ch'iu had already in early times become a subject for instruction, so that its use in this way has no direct connection with Confucius.

Confucius did, no doubt, approve of the idea that the Ch'un Ch'iu should 'encourage goodness and censure evil,' punish rebellious ministers and villainous sons, and, as the Chuang-tzu (p. 439) says, serve to 'show distinctions and duties.' Nevertheless it would seem that the traditional account which says that Confucius actually composed the Ch'un Ch'iu himself, so as to carry out in this way his rectification of names, is erroneous, and that he probably did this simply by 'taking' principles from such works as the Ch'un Ch'iu, in the manner that Mencius relates.

4—Confucius as a Creator through Being a Transmitter

Confucius, according to his own words, was 'a transmitter and not a creator,' and we have seen how none of the works traditionally ascribed to him, even the Ch'un Ch'iu, could have come from his

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\(^1\) Liu Shih-p'ei (1884-1919), in his Tso An Chi (chüan 2), gives a detailed analysis of the word 諸, as used in the phrase in Menius, III, 9, which is usually translated as: "Confucius was afraid and made (諸) the Ch'un Ch'iu." This word 諸, he shows, may have one of two meanings: the usual one of 'make' or 'originate,' and another one of 'to practice.' He proves this by quotations from many early works showing that the word 諸 occurs in such phrases as 'to play (諸) music,' or 'to sing (諸) odes.' Similarly when Mencius says that "Confucius 爲 the Ch'un Ch'iu," he may have meant that he "lectured" or 'expounded' it. When doing so, Confucius would no doubt have emphasized the rectification of names by such means, which would explain the words: "Their principles I ventured to take." And if such a hypothesis is true, this would be the way in which, as Mencius says, Confucius caused "rebellious ministers and villainous sons to be struck with terror."
hand. I have suggested the alternative hypothesis that Confucius took the principles underlying the writing of the Ch’ün Ch’iu and of the other early histories, and drew from them the doctrine of the Rectification of Names, thus rationalizing the Ch’ün Ch’iu. The great contribution of Confucius to Chinese civilization, indeed, has been the rationalization he has given to its originally existing social institutions. The Lun Yü offers an example:

"Tsai Wo, asking about the three years’ mourning, suggested that one year was long enough. ‘If,’ said he, ‘a cultivated man be three years without exercising his manners, his manners will certainly degenerate, and if for three years he make no use of music, his music will certainly go to ruin. (In a year), the last year’s grain is finished and the new grain has been garnered; the fire-making friction sticks have been changed . . . a year would be enough.’"

"Would you, then, feel at ease in eating good rice and wearing fine clothes?" asked the Master. ‘I should,’ was the reply. ‘If you would feel at ease, then do so; but a cultivated man, when mourning, does not relish good food when he eats it, does not enjoy music when he hears it, and does not feel at ease when in a comfortable dwelling. Therefore he avoids those things. But now if you would feel at ease, then go and do them.’

"When Tsai Wo had gone out, the Master said: ‘The unfeelings of Tsai Yü! Only when a child is three years old does it leave its parents’ arms, and the three years’ mourning is the universal mourning everywhere. And Yü, . . . was not he the object of his parents’ affection for three years?’" (XVII, 21).

This serves as an example of how Confucius gives a rational basis to a social institution.

In the course of teaching the Six Disciplines, Confucius also sometimes gave to them a new significance. The doctrine of the Rectification of Names, as already described, he arrived at by a synthesis of the principles of writing in the Ch’ün Ch’iu and other old histories. He treated the Shih Ching (Book of Odes) in the same way. Thus apropos of the passage (Odes, I, v, 3): "As she artfully smiles, what dimples appear! Her bewitching eyes show their

1 This was for the death of a parent, and at that time, as now, actually meant twenty-five or twenty-seven months during which the son must put aside all duties, eat poor food, and wear sackcloth.—Ta.

2 Some say that it was Confucius who first established the custom of three years’ mourning. But the Tso Chuan, under the year 527, states: "The King in the space of one year has had two deaths, for each of which he should have mourned three years. . . . When a death that should be mourned for three years has occurred, even the nobles should complete the mourning for it: this is the etiquette. Even if it is the King who does not complete it and who holds feasts so soon, it is not the proper etiquette" (p. 660). This indicates that the three years of mourning had originally been a general custom, though by the time of Confucius those who practised it were already less numerous, so that even this King did not complete it. Confucius once more advocated it, and gave it a rational basis.
colors so clear," a disciple was made to understand that: "Then manners (li 禮) are secondary?" Confucius granted his approval to this, saying: "Now I can begin to discuss the Odes with him" (III, 8). Again:

"Though the Odes number three hundred, one phrase can cover them all, namely, 'with uncorrupted thoughts' " (II, 2).

"The odes can stimulate the mind, can train the observation, can encourage social intercourse, and can alleviate the vexations of life. From them one can learn how to fulfil one's more immediate duties to one's father, and the more remote duties to one's ruler. And in them one may become widely acquainted with the names of birds, beasts, plants and trees" (XVII, 9).

This shows how Confucius, when teaching, stressed the ethical significance of the Shih Ching, rather than mere drill in repetitive replies. He aimed at more than merely making his disciples men who "wherever they might be sent, would not disgrace their ruler's commission" (XIII, 20).

Again, concerning the Shu Ching (Book of History):

"Someone asked Confucius, saying: 'Why, Sir, are you not in the public service?' The Master answered: 'Does not the Shu say concerning filial piety: Filial piety and friendliness toward one's brethren can be displayed in the exercise of public service?" (p. 232). These qualities then are also public service. Why should only that idea of yours be considered as constituting public service?" (II, 21).

This is the germ of the concept that harmony within the family is the root of good government in the state, an idea later developed in the Ta Hsioh (Great Learning). It shows us that in his exposition of the Shu, as of the Shih, Confucius elaborated its moral precepts, and did not merely transmit its words and records.

Again, concerning the rites (li) and music: "Lin Fang asked what was the chief principle in ceremonial observances. The Master answered: 'A great question indeed! In ceremonial, it is better to be simple than lavish; and in the rites of mourning, heartfelt distress is better than observance of detail'" (III, 4).

"In the usages of ceremonial, it is harmoniousness which is of value. In the regulations of the ancient kings this was the admirable feature" (I, 12).

Confucius said: "'Ceremonials!' they say, 'Ceremonials!' Can mere gems and gowns be called ceremonial? 'Music!' they say, 'Music!' Can mere bells and drums be called music?" (XVII, 11). Again: "Music may be readily understood. The attack should be prompt and united, and as the piece proceeds it

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1 This phrase occurs in the Odes, IV, ii. Ode 1, 4.—Ta.
should do so harmoniously, with clearness of tone and continuity of time, until it reaches its conclusion" (III, 23).

This shows that already with Confucius, emphasis was laid upon the fundamental meaning and principles of ceremonial and music, rather than upon the mere expounding of their outer form and manner of presentation.

Confucius also said about the I Ching (Book of Changes): "The men of the south have a saying: 'A man without constancy will make neither a soothsayer nor a doctor.' How well put! (The I Ching says): 'If he be inconstant in his moral character, someone will bring disgrace upon him' (p. 126). The Master said: 'All because he did not calculate beforehand'" (XIII, 22).

The exact meaning of this passage is admittedly unclear, but it at least indicates that also in expounding the I Ching, Confucius was interested in the meaning contained in its phrases rather than in the mere use of the book for divination.

This is no longer to be simply 'a transmitter and not a creator.' It is in fact to be a creator through being a transmitter. It was such a spirit and attitude, as handed down to the later Confucians such as Mencius and Hsün Tzŭ, that enabled the Confucian school to forge a unified system of thought.

Thus the I Ching had existed long before Confucius, and was handed down by the Confucian school; but it is primarily its Appendices, written by Confucians, which make it important in the history of thought. The Chi'un Chi'u existed early, and was transmitted by the Confucians; but it is the Kung-yang Chuan, a commentary written on it by the Confucian school (together with other commentaries), which make it important. So with the Li Li (Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial). It, too, was an early work transmitted by the Confucianists; whereas the Li Chi (Book of Rites) was written by Confucianists who utilized material based on the I Li, and far surpasses the latter in importance in the history of thought.

The Old Text school is not far wrong, then, in maintaining that originally the Six Disciplines all formed part of the official literature, which Confucius merely transmitted but did not create. Yet the New Text school, too, has some reason for saying that Confucius was a creator rather than a transmitter; and there has been cause for later generations holding up Confucius not only as 'the most perfect Sage,' but as 'the first Teacher.' For the I Ching, deprived of its Appendices, is no more than a book of divination; the Chi'un Chi'u, without such commentaries as those of Kung-yang, is only a collection of dry-as-dust brief court records; and the I Li, separated from the Li Chi, is only a book of etiquette. In themselves these works could not possibly have possessed the influence which they have exercised during the last two thousand years. It is not the books themselves, but the writings based upon them, that have
been of outstanding influence in Chinese history from the Han dynasty down to the late Ch'ing or Manchu dynasty. When the New Text school speaks of Confucius as ‘the perfect Sage and first Teacher,’ however, we must remember that the Confucius it is thinking of is not the historical figure, but rather a legendary Confucius standing as the ideal representative of the Confucian school.

5—The Virtues of Uprightness, Human-Heartedness, Conscientiousness and Altruism

Confucius, as said above, when expounding ceremonials or good manners (li), emphasized the underlying reasons for their existence. The Lan Yu says:

"Tzü Hsia asked: 'What is the meaning of the passage,
As she artfully smiles,
What dimples appear!
Her bewitching eyes
Show their colors so clear.
Ground spotless and candid
For tracery splendid! (Odes, I, 5, 3)?'

"The painting comes after the groundwork,' replied the Master.
'Then manners (li) are secondary?' said Tzü Hsia. 'It is Shang who unfolds my meaning,' replied the Master. 'Now indeed, I can begin to discuss the Odes with him'" (III, 8).

Confucius here means that a man must have a nature of sincere genuineness before he may practise ceremonial and etiquette, just as a beautiful woman must first have a bewitching smile and lovely eyes, before she may make use of powder and rouge. If not, ceremonial observances or li will be a false and empty form, and as such are not only unworthy of being prized, but are actually cheapening. Therefore Confucius says:

"When a man is not virtuous (jen 仁), of what account are his ceremonial manners (li)? When a man is not virtuous, of what account is his music?" (III, 3).

If a man lacks inner virtue and genuineness of nature, though he practise the outer adornments of fine manners and music, they but add to his emptiness and artificiality. Confucius says again:

"The Superior Man (chün ts'âu 君子) takes righteousness (i 義) as his 'basic stuff' (chih 實); practises it with the rules of correct usage (li); brings it forth with modesty; and renders it complete with sincerity: such is the Superior Man" (XV, 17).

The idea here is that proper manners or li, and the 'basic stuff' which is a man's genuine nature, must operate in mutual co-ordination.

Confucius laid emphasis on the importance of man's possessing the quality of genuineness or truth, and hated all emptiness and false-
ness. He esteemed the ‘basic stuff’ and its accompanying quality of straightforwardness or uprightness (chih 诚), concerning which the Lun Yü contains many passages. Thus Confucius says:

“Man’s life is to be upright (chih). If one makes crooked this life, one is lucky to escape (disaster)” (IV, 17).

To have uprightness or chih, a man must neither deceive himself nor deceive others. He must give true outward expression to what his mind likes and dislikes, as is shown in another passage:

“The Duke of She observed to Confucius: ‘In my part of the country there is a man so upright (chih) that when his father appropriated a sheep he bore witness to it.’ Confucius said: ‘The upright people in my part of the country are different from that, for a father will screen his son, and a son his father. In that there lies uprightness’” (XIII, 18).

Uprightness or chih is what comes from within. It is the direct expression of one’s heart. When a father has appropriated someone’s sheep, the son ordinarily would certainly not wish the fact to become known. This is simply human nature. But in the above story the son bore witness to the fact that his father had appropriated a sheep. In this case the son either wished to get the name of uprightness through sacrificing his father, or lacked feeling toward his father. Hence this could not be true uprightness.

Again in the Lun Yü: “The Master said: ‘Who says Wei-sheng Kao is upright (chih)? Someone begged vinegar of him, whereupon he begged it of a neighbor who gave it him’” (V, 23).

The man who is upright acts according to his own feelings, whereas the man who is crooked acts according to the feelings of others. When one’s own family has no vinegar, it is permissible to refuse another man’s request for it. But in the present case the request was granted solely because it was feared that the other person would not be pleased with a refusal. In so doing the giver failed to be able inwardly to set himself his own standard, while at the same time he could not avoid betraying himself in order to retain the good opinion of another. Pushed to the extreme, such a man becomes false and artificial, and hence an act of this kind cannot be called chih.

Confucius said: “Plausible speech, an ingratiating demeanor, and fulsome respect: Tso Ch’iu Ming was ashamed of them, and I, Ch’iu, am also ashamed of them” (V, 24). Confucius was ashamed of such conduct because it shows a lack of uprightness.

The Lun Yü says again: “Tzü Kung asked: ‘What would you say of the man who is liked by all his fellow-townsmen?’ The Master replied: ‘That is not sufficient.’ ‘Then what would you say of him who is hated by all his fellow-townsmen?’ The Master replied: ‘Nor is that sufficient. What is better is that the
good fellow-townsmen should like him, and the bad hate him.” (XIII, 24).

A man hated by all his fellow-townsmen would inevitably be one deficient in natural feelings. On the other hand the man liked by all his fellow-townsmen would be a man who tries to please everybody, striving thereby to make them pay court to his own goodness. This would also be empty falseness, and hence unacceptable.

While chih is a quality to be prized, there must still be a code of proper manners (li) to put it into practice. The Lun Yü says:

“The Master said: ‘Respectfulness uncontrolled by the rules of propriety (li) becomes laboured effort, caution uncontrolled becomes timidity, boldness uncontrolled becomes insubordination and uprightness (chih) uncontrolled becomes rudeness’” (VIII, 2).

Again he said: “Love of uprightness (chih) without a love to learn finds itself obscured by harmful candor” (XVII, 8). By learning, he here means the learning of correct manners or li. The meaning of the word li 亙 as used in ancient China was very wide, signifying then, in addition to its usual present-day definition of ‘politeness’ or ‘courtesy,’ the entire body of usages and customs, political and social institutions. Thus a noted statesman of the sixth century B.c. said of it: “The li constitute the warp of Heaven, the principle of Earth, and the conduct of the people.” And the Chuang-tzu (ch. 33) says: “The li direct conduct” (p. 439). In short, all the rules for everything pertaining to human conduct may be included under the term li.

Confucius, in his rôle of preserver of the li of the Chou civilization, not only imparted knowledge to his disciples, but also taught them the li with which to restrain themselves. This is what a disciple meant when he said: “He has broadened me by culture and restrained me by li” (IX, 10). But it was because Confucius at the same time laid stress on what is ‘at the foundation of li,’ that he also spoke on the quality chih. At such time he was emphasizing the independence and freedom of the individual, whereas when he discussed li, he was stressing the restraint placed by the rules of society upon the individual. The former were Confucius’s new ideas; the latter was the traditional mould formulated from ancient times. Confucius’s concept of the chün tzu 君子, a term originally applied to the feudal princes, but which in the Confucian sense came to be applied to the man possessing ‘princely’ moral qualities, that is, to the ‘Superior Man,’ is that of a person who, having a nature of genuineness, can by means of it carry the li into practice. Therefore he says:

“When the ‘basic stuff’ (chih 賢) exceeds training (wen 文), you have the rustic. When training exceeds the ‘basic stuff,’ you have

1 Cf. above, p. 38.
the clerk. It is only when the ‘basic stuff’ and training are proportionately blended that you have the Superior Man” (VI, 16).

“Since I cannot obtain men who pursue the due medium, to teach to, they must be the ambitious and the discreet. The ambitious push themselves forward and seize hold of things, whereas as to the discreet, there are things they will not do” (XIII, 21).

“Your good careful people of the villages are the thieves of virtue” (XVII, 13).

‘Basic stuff’ and training proportionately blended set man on the median way. Although the ambitious and the discreet do not conform in their conduct to such a medium, they at least display their true natures, and Confucius could therefore accept them for teaching. But as for the rustic type of moral goody-goody, these are false ‘Superior Men,’ and hence inferior to the lesser sort of person who is at least genuine and without pretence.1

It has been said above that the man who is not virtuous (jen 仁) is one who lacks a genuine nature. There are many passages in the Lun Yu which discuss this quality of jen or ‘perfect virtue.’ The word jen 仁, one of the most important in Confucian thought, is composed of the character meaning ‘man’ (jen 人), combined with the character for ‘two’ (erh 二). Thus it is a word embracing all those moral qualities which should govern one man in his relations with another. As such it may perhaps be best translated into English as ‘human-heartedness,’2 though it is often also equivalent to such words as ‘morality’ or ‘virtue.’ Briefly defined, it is the manifestation of the genuine nature, acting in accordance with propriety (li), and based upon sympathy for others.

Thus the Lun Yu: “The Master said: ‘Artful speech and ingratiating demeanor rarely accompany jen’” (I, 3). Again: “‘The firm of spirit, the resolute in character, the simple in manner, and the slow of speech are not far from jen’” (XIII, 27).

Those of artful speech and ingratiating demeanor try through pretence to be seductive to others, and do not display their true natures. Such qualities ‘rarely accompany jen,’ whereas the persons characterized in the second quotation have a simplicity and straightforwardness which show them to be of genuine nature, so that they ‘are not far from jen.’

The Lun Yu says again: “Once when Fan Ch’ih asked the meaning of jen, the Master replied: ‘It is to love your fellow

1 Some ideas in the above paragraphs, beginning with the quotation, ‘Man’s life is to be upright,’ etc., on p. 67, down to this point, have been suggested by Professor Ch’ien Mu and by the article by Homer H. Dubs, ‘The Conflict of Authority and Freedom in Ancient Chinese Ethics,’ in the Open Court Magazine, Vol. 40, No. 3.

2 This translation for jen has been suggested by Dr. Lucius C. Porter, professor of philosophy at Yenching University, Peiping. —Tr.
men.'" (XII, 22). Jen takes sympathy as its basis. Therefore it is love of others. Again:

"Hsien asked: . . . . 'If a man refrain from ambition, boasting, resentment and desire, it may, I suppose, be counted to him for jen?' The Master said: 'It may be counted as difficult, but whether for jen, I do not know.'" (XIV, 2).

The noted scholar Chiao Hsün (1763-1820) writes on this passage: "Mencius said of Kung Liu that he loved wealth, and of King T'ai that he loved feminine beauty, and that yet by allowing the common people also to gratify these feelings, they were able to maintain their ricks and granaries, while there were no dissatisfied women or unmarried men.' In his learning, Mencius succeeded in fully comprehending the doctrine of Confucius, and his idea in this statement is (the same as that expressed in the Lun Yü): 'Developing oneself one develops others, and maintaining oneself one maintains others.' (VI, 28). To insist on having no desires oneself, and at the same time to be indifferent to the desires of others, is to be nothing more than a 'dried-up gourd.' Therefore men who refrain from ambition, boasting, resentment and desire, are ascetics whom Confucius did not like. Such men are not equal to those who through their own desires come to know the desires of others, and who through their own dislike come to know the dislikes of others. To make analogies (in this way) is not difficult, and yet jen already consists in this. But if one cuts short one's own desires, one will be unable to comprehend the desires of others, and such is not to be considered jen.'"

Confucius said on one occasion: "A man's faults all conform to his type of mind. Observe his faults and you may know his virtues (jen)" (IV, 7). The manifestations of a man's true nature may go too far and become faults, but nevertheless they remain manifestations of truth, and so by observing them one may know the virtues as well.

The Lun Yü says again: "When Yen Yüan asked the meaning of jen, the Master replied: 'Jen is the denial of self and response to the right and proper (li). Deny yourself for one day and respond to the right and proper, and everybody will accord you jen. For has jen its source in one's self, or is it forsooth derived from others?' 'May I beg for the main features?' asked Yen Yüan. The Master answered: 'If not right and proper (li), do not look; if not right and proper, do not listen; if not right and proper, do not speak; if not right and proper, do not move.'" (XII, 1).

"Uprightness (chih) uncontrolled by the rules of good taste (li) becomes rudeness" (VIII, 2). Thus jen is the manifestation of

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1 Cf. Mencius, Ib, 5.—Tr.
2 Cf. his Lun-yü Pu-yü.
what is genuine in human nature, and which at the same time is in accordance with \( li \).

The Lun Yu says again: “When Chung Kung asked the meaning of \( jen \), the Master said: ‘When abroad, behave as if interviewing an honored guest; in directing the people, act as if officiating at a great sacrifice; do not do to others what you do not like yourself. Then neither in your state nor in your private home will there be any resentment against you.’ ‘Though I am not clever,’ replied Chung Kung, ‘permit me to carry out these precepts’” (XII, 2).

“Tzû Kung said: ‘Suppose there were one who conferred benefits far and wide upon the people, and who was able to succour the multitude, what might one say of him? Could this be called \( jen \)?’ ‘What has this to do with \( jen \)?’ asked the Master. ‘Must he not be a Sage? Even (the sage Emperors) Yao and Shun felt their deficiency therein. For the man of \( jen \) is one who desiring to maintain himself sustains others, and desiring to develop himself develops others. To be able from one’s own self to draw a parallel for the treatment of others: that may be called the way to practise \( jen \)” (VI, 28).

If the practice of \( jen \) consists in being ‘able from one’s own self to draw a parallel for the treatment of others,’ this means simply that it consists in putting oneself into the position of others. In the maxim, “Desiring to maintain oneself, one sustains others; desiring to develop oneself, one develops others,” there is the Confucian virtue of ‘conscientiousness to others’ or \( chung \).’ And in the maxim, “Do not do to others what you do not like yourself,” there is the Confucian virtue of \( shu \) or altruism. Genuinely to practise these virtues of \( chung \) and \( shu \) is genuinely to practise \( jen \). The Lun Yu states:

“The Master said: ‘Shen! My teaching contains one all pervading principle.’ ‘Yes,’ replied Tseng Tzû. When the Master had left the room the disciples asked: ‘What did he mean?’ Tseng Tzû replied: ‘Our Master’s teaching is conscientiousness (\( chung \)) and altruism (\( shu \)), and nothing else’” (IV, 15).

To say that the all pervading principle of Confucius is \( chung \) and \( shu \), is the same as saying that it is \( jen \). As simple as this is the

\[1\] The Confucian virtue of altruism or sympathy for others (\( shu \)), which is discussed immediately below, may be defined as: “Do not do to others what you do not like yourself” (XV, 23). But the meaning of \( chung \) is not very clearly defined in the Lun Yu, so that later it has come to be interpreted as meaning the ‘exhaustion of one’s self’ in the performance of one’s moral duties (\( chin \) (\( 齐 )\). But let us see how the term is used in the Lun Yu itself: “In planning for others have I failed in conscientiousness (\( chung \))? ” (I, 4); “In dealing with all men, be conscientious (\( chung \))” (XIII, 19); “A minister serves his prince with loyalty (\( chung \))” (III, 19); “Be filial and kind and they (the people) will be loyal (\( chung \))” (II, 20); “Can loyalty (\( chung \)) refrain from admonition?” (XIV, 8). In these passages \( chung \) seems to have a positive meaning of acting in behalf of others, whereas nowhere does the Lun Yu suggest \( chung \) as meaning the ‘exhaustion of one’s self,’ which would hence not seem to have been the meaning Confucius intended by the word.
method of practising *jen*, and so Confucius says: "Is *jen* indeed far off? I crave for *jen* and lo! *jen* is at hand" (VII, 29).

The idealistic philosophers of the Sung and Ming dynasties, followers of the school of Lu Chiu-yüan (A.D. 1139-1192) and Wang Yang-ming (1473-1529), maintain that all men originally possess an ‘intuitive knowledge’ (*liang chih* 章知), so that ‘throughout the streets everyone is a Sage.’ They therefore believe that men need only follow this ‘intuitive knowledge’ in their conduct, in order never to fall into error under any circumstances. Confucius never believed in such a doctrine, however. For him the true manifestations of man’s nature are not in themselves necessarily to be followed under all circumstances. This is why he stated emphatically that "*jen* is the denial of self and response to the right and proper (*li*)" (XII, 1).

Thus the *li* are imposed on man from outside. But besides this outer mould, we each still have within us something which we may take as a model for our conduct. If we "can find in our own selves a rule for the similar treatment of others"; if we do to others what we wish for ourselves, and "do not do to others what we do not like ourselves," then the outpourings of our nature will of themselves be in accord with what is proper. Hence while there still exist occasions on which one’s own natural uprightness (*chih*) cannot be followed, there is none upon which *jen* (which is one’s own natural uprightness conforming to what is proper) may not be acted on. This is why *jen* is the ‘all pervading’ principle of Confucius’s teaching, and the center of his philosophy.

For this reason the *Lun Yu* also frequently uses *jen* as the term for man’s virtue in its entirety, as when it says: "They sought *jen* and attained to *jen*. Why then should they repine?" (VII, 14). Again: "As to being a Sage or a man of *jen*, how can I presume to such a claim!" (VII, 33). And yet again: "Do not seek life at the expense of *jen*. Some even sacrifice their lives to complete their *jen*" (XV, 8). The *jen* in these passages means complete human virtue.¹

As *jen* is a name for virtue in its entirety, Confucius often used it to include all kinds of different individual virtues. Thus when Tsai Wo suggested that for the three-year mourning period one year would be enough, Confucius said that he lacked *jen* (XVII, 21), so that *jen* may include the virtue of filial piety. Later Mencius also said: "There has never been a man of *jen* who has neglected his parents" (Mencius, Ia, 1). The man of *jen*, in other words (that is,

¹ There is no doubt that in many cases the word *jen* in the *Lun Yu* contains both of the two meanings given above. In later ages, however, no distinction has been made between them, which is the reason for the many arguments about the word which have been raised in recent times.
the man who practises chung and shu), must necessarily be one who is filial.'

Again, we hear that "the Viscount of Wei withdrew from serving (Chou, the last tyrant ruler of the Shang or Yin dynasty); the Viscount of Chi became his slave; Pi Kan remonstrated with him and suffered death." Confucius said of these that "Yin had three men of jen" (XVIII, 1), so that jen may include loyalty (chung 忠). Confucius said of certain ancient worthies: "Not being wise, how could they be men of jen?" (V, 18), so that jen may include wisdom. "A man of jen must necessarily be courageous" (XIV, 5), so that jen includes courage. "When Yen Yüan asked the meaning of jen, the Master replied: 'Jen is the denial of self and response to the right and proper (li)'." (XII, 1), so that jen may include li. "Tz'u Chang asked Confucius the meaning of jen, whereupon Confucius replied: 'To be able wherever one goes to carry five things into practice constitutes jen.' On begging to know what they were, he was told: 'They are respect, magnanimity, sincerity, earnestness and kindness. With respect you will avoid insult; with magnanimity you will win over everyone; with sincerity men will trust you; with earnestness you will have achievement; and with kindness you will be well fitted to command others'" (XVII, 6). Thus jen may include sincerity and the other virtues just mentioned.

6—RIGHTEOUSNESS, UTILITARIANISM AND HUMAN NATURE

In the preceding section it has been shown that Confucius laid considerable emphasis upon giving free expression to man's nature. The true manifestations of a man's nature, he said, need only be blended with good form or li to reach the highest excellence (jen), which is hence something which it is possible for all of us to follow and practise.

The Lun Yu states:

"The Master was entirely free from four things: he had no preconceptions, no predeterminations, no obstinacy and no egoism" (IX, 4).

"The Master said: 'There are some with whom one can associate in study, but who are not yet able to make common advance toward the Way (Tao 道); there are others with whom one can make common advance toward the Way, but who are not yet able to take with you a like firm stand; and there are others with whom one can take such a firm stand, but with whom one cannot make emergency decisions'" (IX, 29).

1 The Lun Yu's reference to filial piety (hiaio 孝) as consisting in obedience, fostering the will of the parents, and occasional admonition, relates in particular to the method of carrying out filial piety, rather than to its general principle, and so the word is not discussed here, but will be taken up later. Cf. ch. 14, sect. 6, pp. 357-361.
"The men noted for withdrawal into private life were: (here follows a list of seven names). The Master observed: 'Neither abating their high purpose nor abasing themselves: were these not Po I and Shu Ch'i? As to Hui of Liu-hsia, and Shao Lien, while they abated their high purpose and abased themselves, what they said corresponded with reason, and what they did corresponded to what men were anxious for... and that is all. As to Yü Chung and Yi Yi, though in their seclusion they were immoderate in their utterances, yet they sustained their personal purity, and their self immolation was in accord with the emergency. But I am different from these. With me there is no inflexible may or may not." (XVIII, 8).

According to what has been said above, the standard for human conduct comes at least partly from within rather than from without; is living rather than dead; and is capable of modification rather than immovable. Therefore in following the tendencies of our nature, we may differ in our conduct according to time and place. This is what is meant by having 'no preconceptions, no predeterminations, no obstinacy and no egoism,' and by Confucius saying of himself: "With me there is no inflexible 'may' or 'may not.'" Those who hold to a fixed standard to guide them under all circumstances are those 'with whom one can take a firm stand, but with whom one cannot make emergency decisions.'

When the genuineness in man's nature expresses it self, it need only be kept in accordance with propriety (i) to be of the highest excellence. There is no need of asking whether the human conduct that follows will result in something profitable or not. As a matter of fact, all human conduct of this kind is either beneficial to society as a whole, or at least cannot be of no harm. Confucius, however, did not greatly stress this last point. For example, when a disciple said: "Solicitude on the decease of parents, and the pursuit of them (with sacrificial offerings) for long after, would cause an abundant restoration of the people's morals" (I, 9), Confucius might have used this as a utilitarian type of argument in favor of the three-year mourning period. Yet he preferred to say that if men did not follow the three-year mourning, their hearts would not be at rest; and he would not admit that any benefit thereby to be derived could supply a sufficient rational basis for this custom. Never did he lay emphasis on what would be the result of an action, either in his own life or otherwise. A disciple, arguing on his behalf, once said:

"The reason why the Superior Man tries to go into office is that he holds this to be right (i), even though he is well aware that his principles cannot prevail." (XVIII, 7).

It was because of his stress on the right or righteousness (i), regardless of material result, that someone once said of Confucius: "Is he not the one who knows he cannot succeed and keeps on trying to do so?" (XIV, 41). The same idea is expressed by Tung Chung-
CONFUCIUS AND THE RISE OF CONFUCIANISM

shu, the Han Confucianist: “Be correct in righteousness without considering the profitableness (of the result of action); be pure in one’s principles without considering whether they bring material return.” As to whether one’s principles really do prevail or not, this question concerns their ‘profitableness,’ their ‘material return,’ and so need not be considered. Hence the *Lun Yu* says: “The Master seldom spoke of what was profitable” (*li* 利)¹ (IX, 1). And Confucius himself says: “The Superior Man is informed in what is right (*i*). The inferior man is informed in what is profitable (*li*)” (IV, 16).

This stress on righteousness (*i*) for the sake of righteousness is one of the doctrines which connect Confucius with Mencius, and at the same time it constitutes the fundamental point of difference between these men and the Mohist school.²

From what has been said in the foregoing pages it may be seen that Confucius’s philosophy calls special attention to human psychology, with the result that psychology has been stressed by all the later Confucians also. Confucius himself says:

“In their original natures (*hsing* 性) men closely resemble each other. In their acquired practices (*hsi* 習) they grow wide apart” (XVII, 2).

Even though Confucius does not give an absolutely clear-cut answer to this problem of human nature, it is because of the importance he attached to human psychology that the question of whether man’s nature is good or evil was later to become the major problem of the Confucian school.

¹ This *li* 利, such an important term in Mohist philosophy, is a different word from the *li* 礼, meaning the rules of propriety, discussed on p. 68.—Tr.
² Many persons discussing this fact point out that when Confucius was discoursing on the method of governing a state, he said that “the people having grown numerous, . . . . one should enrich them,” and “having been enriched, . . . . . one should educate them” (XIII, 9). Likewise Mencius emphasizes the economic aspects in the life of the people when he discusses kingly government, so that, according to this argument, it is wrong to hold that the Confucian school did not actually speak about what is profitable. In maintaining the contrary, however, I only mean to say that in any given matter the Confucians would simply ask whether it was right or not, without necessarily inquiring as to what would be the material advantage. I do not mean to say that they refused altogether to talk about what would be profitable in the life of the people. Here is where the Confucian doctrine of righteousness rather than utilitarianism, clashes with the advocacy only of what is profitable in itself, as held by the Mohist school. *Cf.* chs. 5 and 6.
CHAPTER V

MO TZŪ AND THE EARLY MOHIST SCHOOL

1—Concerning the Study of Mo Tzū

Mo Tzū 墨子 is one of the most important figures in Chinese history, a man whose name was constantly linked with that of Confucius from the Warring States period down to the beginning of the Han dynasty. Yet Ssū-ma Ch’ien devotes but twenty-four words in his Shihs Chi to this remarkable man, whereas he treats the life of Confucius at length in the section of the Shihs Chi devoted to the lives of noble families, thus leading us to the conclusion that by about 100 B.C., when this history was written, the world of thought had already become dominantly Confucian. It has only been from the latter part of the Ch’ing dynasty (1644-1912) onward that interest in Mo Tzū’s philosophy has slowly revived, and that information gained through scholarly researches concerning him has gradually increased beyond the little given in the Shihs Chi. The latter account says only: “Mo Ti 墨翟 seems probably to have been a great officer in the state of Sung. He was skilful in maintaining military defenses, and taught economy of use. Some say that he was contemporary with Confucius, others that he was after him” (ch. 74, p. 6).

It has now been definitely established that Mo Tzū must have lived after Confucius. The noted textual critic, Sun I-jiang (1848-1908), has made a chronological table for Mo Tzū which begins in 468 and extends to 376 B.C. 1 The present-day scholar, Ch’ien Mu, on the other hand, has made a chronological table beginning with the year 479 (the year in which Confucius died), and coming down to 381 B.C. (the year in which Wu Ch’ii, a noted military general, died). 2 According to the Lu-shih Ch’un Chi’ün, the ‘Leader’ (Chü tzü 鋤子) of the Mohist school at the time of the death of Wu Ch’ii was Meng Sheng, 3 which means that Mo Tzū must already have died before this time. For this reason the earlier chronology of Professor Ch’ien would seem more nearly correct. The fact that the time

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1 Tì is here the personal name of Mo Tzū. The word Tzū 子 appearing in the names of many philosophers, such as Mo Tzū, Chuang Tzū, etc., is not a part of their name, but a courteous appellation, which may be translated as ‘Master Mo,’ ‘Master Chuang,’ etc.—Ts.

2 Cf. his Mo-tzū Hou-yü, chiüan 1.

3 Cf. his Mo-tzū, ch. 1, in the Kuo-hsüeh Hsiao-ts’un-shu.

4 See below, sect. 3, pp. 81-84.
MO TZU AND THE EARLY MOHIST SCHOOL

included within his table (479-381) covers almost one hundred years, does not mean that Mo Tzu necessarily lived to such an age, but only that his life probably fell within this period.

Some scholars hold Mo Tzu to have been a native of the state of Sung (in present Honan); others that he belonged to Lu. Of the two hypotheses, the latter, which is maintained by Sun I-jang, seems more probable. Concerning the origins of Mo Tzu’s doctrines, the Lü-shih Ch’ün Ch’iu (II, 4) has this to say: “Duke Hui of Lu (768-723) sent the minister Jang to the Son of Heaven to request the rules of proper etiquette for the (sacrifices made) in the suburbs and in the ancestral temple. King Huan sent the historian Chiao back. Duke Hui detained him, and his descendants remained in Lu. It was from these that Mo Tzu got his education” (p. 24). Also the I-wen Chih chapter in the Ch’ien Han Shu states: “The Mohist teaching began with the guardians of the temples” (Aids, p. 62). This statement seems to be derived, however, from that in the Lü-shih Ch’ün Ch’iu, and it is regrettable that there is no other corroborative evidence. The Hui-nan-tzu also states: “Confucius and Mo Ti practised the arts of the ancient Sages and were learned in all the discourses on the Six Disciplines” (ch. 9, p. 24). Again it says: “Mo Tzu studied the profession of the Confucians (ju) and received the arts of Confucius. But he considered that the rites (of the Confucian school) were troublesome and displeasing, its stress on elaborate funerals was wealth-consuming and impoverished the people, and its practice of lengthy mourning periods was injurious to the living and harmful to human affairs. Thereupon he turned his back on the Chou dynasty practices and made use of the methods of government of the Hsia dynasty” (ch. 21, p. 8).

In the work called after Mo Tzu, the Mo-tzu, there are many quotations from the Books of Odes and History. Confucius, through his extensive teaching, had set his stamp on the intellectual atmosphere of the time, so that it is but natural that Mo Tzu, being a native of Lu, and hence living in this atmosphere, should have been influenced by Confucius in his studies of the Shih and Shu. Confucius, furthermore, was, like Mo Tzu, an advocate of economy, as when he said: “To conduct the government of a state of a thousand chariots, there must be a proper respect for business and good faith, economy of expenditure, and love of the people” (Sun Yü, I, 5). Again: “In ceremonies, it is better to be economical than lavish” (III, 4). And yet again: “In Yü 2 I can find no room for criticism. Simple in his own food and drink, he was unsparing in his filial offerings to the spirits. Shabby in his (everyday) clothing, he was most scrupulous as to the elegance of his kneeling apron and sacrificial crown. Humble

2 The legendary first ruler of the Hsia dynasty, who by his prodigious labors is supposed finally to have saved China from a flood which ravaged it for nine years.—Tr.
as to the character of his palace, he spent his strength in the draining and ditching of the country. In Yü I find no room for criticism” (VIII, 21). Thus it would seem quite possible that Mo Tzü, in his emphasis on economy, belief in spirits, and honoring of the Emperor Yü, was simply elaborating certain aspects already found in Confucius’s own teachings.

The Mohist philosophy, according to such a theory, must, like Confucianism, have originated in Lu. Yet there are also certain scholars who hold that a connection exists between Mo Tzü’s philosophy and the state of Sung. Yü Cheng-hsieh (1775-1840), for example, quotes the Kuan-tzu (ch. 4), which says: “If the doctrine of universal love (one of the most prominent Mohist tenets) prevails, military leaders will not go to war.” Again Chapter LXV says: “We cannot prevent the other side from fighting us, they being trained soldiers, we being a mob of followers; they having good generals, we being without ability. The defeat must be one in which the army is overthrown and the general is killed.” These, Yü points out, are exactly the ideas of Duke Hsiang of Sung (650-637), who, because he refused to wound the enemy twice or to take grey-haired men as prisoners, was criticized in the Tso Chuan as follows: “If one wants not to wound a second time, would it not be better not to wound at all? If one spares the old men, would it not be better to make one’s submission?” (p. 183). These concepts of universal love and anti-militarism would thus seem to have been characteristic of the people of Sung. They are reflected in the Lü-shih Ch’un Ch’iu (XVIII, 1) when it says: “The idea in ceasing war springs out of a mind holding universal love toward the world” (p. 292). The Tso Chuan tells us that after the death of Duke Hsiang, his efforts toward peace were continued by other men of Sung, some of whom proposed a disarmament for all states. After advancing these examples, Yü concludes that “Mo Tzü was surely a great official of Sung,” and points out how Mo Tzü’s follower, Sung K’eng (who was of Sung), later also attempted to stop conflict by saying that war is unprofitable.

Yü goes on to quote from the Mo-tzu (ch. 48), in which Mo Tzü criticizes a Confucian by saying: “You are only following the Chou, and not the Hsia dynasty. Your antiquity does not go back far enough” (p. 233). From this Yü concludes that it was because Mo Tzü was a native of Sung (the rulers of which, unlike those of Lu, were not descended from the House of Chou), that he followed the Hsia customs, whereas the Confucians, being centered in Lu, followed those of Chou.

The people of Sung were, in fact, noted for their naive simplicity, and often appear as the heroes in stories in which Chou dynasty writers wish to describe simpletons. Thus the Chuang-tzu relates: “A man of Sung carried some ceremonial caps to the Yüeh state.

1 Cf. his Kuei-tzu Lei-kao, chüan 14.
But the men of Yüeh used to cut off their hair and paint their bodies, so that they had no use for such things" (p. 8). Mencius says: "There was a man of Sung who was grieved that his growing corn was not longer, and so he pulled it up" (Mencius, IIa, 2). And the Han-fei-tzu (ch. 49) gives the anecdote of a farmer of Sung, in whose field a rabbit once killed itself by running against the stem of a tree standing there, whereupon the man abandoned his plough and stood waiting at the tree in the hope that he would catch another rabbit. Of Mo Tzu himself the Chuang-tzu (ch. 33) says: "He would have men toil through life, with a bare funeral at death. Such teaching is too barren. . . . He considered self-suffering as the ideal" (pp. 441-442), which suggests some of the Sung characteristics just given. A possible explanation for the whole question is that Mo Tzu was originally a native of Lu, where he was influenced by Confucius in the several ways described above; that later he became an official in Sung, where he adopted the Sung ideals of universal love and anti-militarism; and that he thus combined the two influences to form the Mohist philosophy.

Another problem centers around Mo Tzu's name. Formerly it was said that Mo was his family or clan name, and Ti his personal name. A recent scholar, however, has suggested that Mo is not a clan name, but rather the name of the philosophic school founded by Mo Tzu.1 This argument is based upon the fact that in ancient China the word mo was used as the name for one of the punishments, that of branding, so that a person bearing such a designation would be one who had undergone the punishment of branding and had become a slave.2 Mo Tzu himself, by his emphasis on economy and opposition to music and to long mourning, shows himself diametrically opposed to the official and ruling class of his day; in his asceticism he lived a life similar to that of a common laborer. According to this theory, then, his disciples were designated by their contemporaries as 'men of Mo' to indicate that they were the followers of a criminal-slave. The Mo-tzu (ch. 47), for example, tells us that King Hui of Ch'iu 'sent Mu Ho to receive Mo Tzu. Mo Tzu talked to Mu Ho and Mu Ho was greatly pleased. He said to Mo Tzu: 'Your words are quite good. But our Lord is a great Lord in the empire, and may he not refuse to employ you because they indicate the practice of the humble man?'" (p. 223). It was because what Mo Tzu advocated was in fact 'the practice of the humble man' that it was referred to as the way of Mo, i.e., of a branded slave. If this hypothesis is true, however, it is conceivable that Mo Tzu may even have enjoyed having his school called by this name, in which case he would be like Antisthenes in Greece, who was called 'downright dog' (haptocyon), and was so pleased with

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1 Cf. Chiang Ch'üan, Lm Mo Tzu fei Hsing Mo, in Tu Tzu Chih Yen.
2 See Ch'ien Mu, op. cit., ch. 1.
this name that after his death the figure of a dog was cut out of stone to mark his tomb.¹

Because he was opposed to the aristocratic class, Mo Tzü was inevitably opposed to the Chou institutions which gave them support. The Confucians were always proclaiming themselves as the followers of Chou. Hence Mo Tzü, as their opponent, declared that he based his ideas on the Hsia culture. The Emperor Yü, for example, who was the legendary founder of the Hsia dynasty, was also noted for his extreme frugality and self-sacrifice.² Mo Tzü delighted in acclaiming these characteristics, not because they belonged to the Hsia dynasty, but because they fitted in with his own doctrines. Thus it is wrong to suppose that Mo Tzü advocated the Hsia institutions per se. Rather it was a case of his extolling them because, his philosophy being based on a democratic point of view, he could thus show his opposition to the Chou institutions, in which the power of the ruling class was lodged.

2.—THE CANONS AND THE MAJOR AND MINOR ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE Mo-tzü

There are six chapters in the Mo-tzü: the Canons or Ching 經 (chs. 40-41); Expositions of Canons or Ching Shuo 經說 (chs. 42-43); Major Illustrations or Ta Ch'i 大取 (ch. 44) and Minor Illustrations or Hsiao Ch'ü 小取 (ch. 45), which differ markedly from the other chapters in Mo-tzü, and are most probably the product of the later followers of the Mohist school. During the latter part of the Warring States period there were a great many travelling philosophers and politicians who went about from one state to another reciting their writings. The result of the rivalries of these men was the formulation by each philosophic school of its own orthodox 'canon.' Thus the Mohist school had its Mohist Canon (Mo Ching 墨經), the Hsün-tzü contains references to a Taoist Canon (Tao Ching 道經), and the Han-fei-tzü (chs. 30-35) has its canons of the Inner and Outer Discussions (Nei Wai Chu Shuo 內外儲說). During the earlier half of the Warring States period, however, when Mo Tzü was still alive, this type of writing had not yet come into existence.³

So far as we know to-day, the earliest work to have been composed by anybody, in a private rather than official capacity, is the Lun Yü, which is a record, of the most simple and abbreviated type, of Confucius's sayings. Later in the Chuang-tzü and the Mencius there is a distinct advance from disjointed conversations of this kind to records of conversations of considerable length, displaying a definite story-like structure. This was the first great development in

² Cf. the Lun Yü quotation above.
³ This view is upheld by Ku Chieh-kang. Cf. his Lun Shih Ching Ching-li chi Lao-tzü yü Tao-chü Shu (A Letter concerning the History of the Shih Ching, and the Connection of the Lao-tzü with the Taoist School), in Ku Shih Pien, I, sect. 1, p. 56.