THE CONCEPT OF THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN IN THE POLITICAL THOUGHT OF WANG FU-CHIH 王夫之 (1619-92)

(including an annotated translation of part of his Sung lun 宋論)

by

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C O N T E N T S (Contd)

A B B R E V I A T I O N S

Source References

BSOAS	:	London School of Oriental and African Studies Bulletin
HJAS	:	Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
JAOS	:	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JAS	:	Journal of Asian Studies
JNCBRAS	:	Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
L.	:	Legge (James)
SPPY	:	Ssu-pu pei-yao

Other Abbreviations

N.	:	North/Northern, as indicated by context
S.	:	Southern

ERRATA

Page					
18	:	For	'Book of History'	read	'Book of Documents'
59	:	"	'Book of Rites'	"	'Record of Rites'
92	:	"	'Tso Chuan'	"	'Tso-chuan'
130	:	"	'The Odes'	"	'the Odes'
154	:	"	'Li Chi'	"	'Li-chi'
185	:	"	'Lin Mou-sheng'	"	'Lin Mousheng'
186	:	"	'Ch'un-ch'iu Fan Lu'	read	'Ch'un-ch'iu fan lu'
246, 257	:	"	'Müller, 1885'	read	'Legge, 1885'
Passim	:	"	'Chung Yung'	"	'Chung yung'
"	:	"	'Tao-te-ching'	"	'Tao te-ching'

PREFACE

The romanisation system used is Wade-Giles', excluding all diacritical marks except where these are necessary to distinguish 'u' from 'ü'. Place-names (distinguished by joined syllables) are rendered by the same system, except in the case of better-known variants. Similarly 'Ch'i-tan' is spelt 'Khitan', and 'Feng Yu-lan', 'Fung Yu-lan'. Dynastic titles are given separate syllables, but reign-names are hyphenated.

In quotations square brackets are not used unless they are in the original; in my own translations they indicate an expansion of the text for the sake of clarity. Italics in all cases are my own.

Where references to a particular text were gained at second-hand, I have omitted the text from the Bibliography. I have also omitted standard works of reference such as the *Chung-kuo jen-ming ta-tz'u-tien*, overt mention of which would be superfluous.

I have reluctantly placed the Notes at the end of this thesis, as they far outweigh the text in many parts of the Translation.

* * * *

My thanks are due to the Professors in whose Department I have studied: Esmond Wright, formerly Professor of Modern History at the University of Glasgow, Professor William Brock, his successor in office, and Professor E.L.G. Stones, who acted for a time *in loco* of the latter. I wish to record my gratitude to those who have directly assisted my research: Mr. Jack Gray, my Supervisor, who introduced me to Chinese studies and has been a continuing source of encouragement and help; Dr. Patrick Cavendish, for two years my teacher in Chinese; Dr. Mark Elvin of the Department of Economic History, without whose help, particularly in the matter of reading Japanese, I could not have broken the ground of *Sung lun*; Dr. William Dolby of the University of Edinburgh, who has given many hours of generous advice on points of translation; and also Mr. Anthony Hyder of the Library of the Oriental Institute at Oxford, with whom I read Chinese at an early stage of my work. Dr. C.I. McMorran of the University of Oxford kindly advised me on the subject of reading material. I must thank the Library Staff of Glasgow and other Universities for their help. I am indebted to Miss Lyn Traynor for her efficient services rendered at all stages of the typing of this thesis. To all others who have helped in various ways, and especially to my father, Mr. Hugh Black, I return my thanks.

INTRODUCTION

The ideas of Wang Fu-chih have been of increasing interest to students from the mid-nineteenth century down to the present day. The basic stimulus to research on his works has been from within China itself: a feeling of the need to assert the permanent value of the national heritage, or alternatively to justify the present by appeal to that heritage, and a recognition that much in the writings of Wang Fu-chih is relevant to present-day events and ideas. The lead given by Chinese scholars has been followed in the West in that such textbooks as deal at all with seventeenth century Chinese thought almost always include Wang Fu-chih in their list of notables.

The specific attraction of Wang Fu-chih to more recent thinkers is, broadly speaking, twofold. In the first place, his violent anti-barbarianism was obvious grist to the mill of the Chinese nationalism that had been created in the latter part of the nineteenth century under the force of collision with Western civilisation. The traditional assertion of cultural (ergo, ultimate) superiority, shaken by successive humiliations at the hands of the foreigner, had to give way at least in a measure to a new, Western-style, ethnically and politically-based nationalism, which back-fired on the Manchu regime. Since the new nationalism was tempered by varying degrees of attachment to the past, its exponents often sought to find purely indigenous precedents for its claims. Hence we have Chang Ping-lin's[1] tribute to Wang Fu-chih, whose anti-Manchu diatribes, although basically a cultural protest, were easily utilised by the later nationalists.

But Wang Fu-chih achieved fame for another reason also, and one of broader philosophical significance. He belonged to the period of Chinese history that saw the genesis of an intellectual movement which, it has been claimed, contained the germs of certain dominant characteristics of modern Chinese thought. The scientific temper of modern China, for example, has been ascribed affinity with the methods of the Ch'ing School of Empirical Research. Materialism, it is asserted by modern writers, not all of them communist, made great strides with the reaction of these seventeenth and eighteenth century thinkers against the "idealism" of the Sung and Ming schools of philosophy. The particular merits of Wang Fu-chih are that his logically argued empiricist approach invites the appellation of a "materialist system", that his views on historical change bear comparison, some would say with Hegelianism, others, with evolutionism - but all are agreed, with some sort of modern -ism. His realistic acceptance of many historical tendencies which later generations regarded as both "rational and real", but not so his contemporaries - for example, the bureaucratic Empire, or the usefulness of trade - has earned him qualified approval. He has been praised also for his instinctive grasp of certain principles known to modern science. In post-imperial China he has been systematically studied since about 1915, when there was set up an institute at Changsha for this purpose.[2]

In short, he is widely regarded as an "advanced" thinker, a man born before his time.

Without wishing to dispute the considerable amount of truth in some of these views, I would suggest that there needs to be a great deal more of serious research into Wang Fu-chih's writings, and beyond his writings into the centuries of thought which shaped his own thought. It is only too easy to select passages that fit into the ready-made categories of modern ideas, and neglect either to understand them precisely or place them in their whole context.

"The historian who is skilled in discriminating factors of material help to government ..... puts himself imaginatively in the contemporary circumstances of the past, as though he were himself personally encountering them." [3]

Such was Wang's ideal, not shared, unfortunately, by many of his modern exponents.

The difficulties in the way of such objectivity are, however, immense. A proper appreciation of Wang Fu-chih requires a thorough understanding of several aspects of Chinese civilisation. A knowledge of the historical background is an obvious prerequisite, and for a civilisation so self-consciously holistic as China's this includes the broad sweep of Chinese history prior to, and including, Wang Fu-chih's own time. Two types of history are involved: one is the history that was written by China herself, compounded of a variety of official and private compilations, but all, naturally enough, sharing a broadly similar set of aims and attitudes; besides this, there is the attempt to get behind the documents to the real mainsprings of Chinese history and Chinese thought.

Then there is the need for a more than casual acquaintance with Chinese philosophy: this is pronounced in the case of Wang Fu-chih because he was, for his age, an unusually subtle and systematic philosopher, interested in the logical relationship of events, and an eclectic moreover, to whom Buddhism and Taoism were not unworthy of study.

The other major hurdle, that of language, is formidable enough at any time to a student of the classical period, but is unusually so in the case of Wang Fu-chih, as is known to anyone who essays contact with his writings. Etienne Balazs, for example, refers to "the most serious difficulty of a hermetic vocabulary and a frequently sibylline style full of allusions, baffling all attempts at translation." [4] The translator

in De Bary, Sources of Chinese Tradition (on which in fact Balazs largely depends for the passages he cites) says of the Yellow Book ".....the text is full of cryptic expressions and recondite allusions, as well as censored passages. Because of difficulties in interpretation and reconstruction, the following translation is quite tentative and at some points represents only a rough paraphrase of the original."[5] Part of the reason for the obscurity of Wang's writings was no doubt the danger of expressing his anti-Manchu sentiments too clearly, but it is probable that the unusual depth and breadth of his scholarship encouraged him to indulge in that abstruseness which is the delight of scholars other than Wang Fu-chih. The upshot is that very little of his writings has been translated into Western languages. The brief selections in De Bary, Wing-tsit Chan, Carsun Chang and Fung Yu-lan and two chance passages in Williamson's book on Wang An-shih[6], which comprise almost all of the translation into English, are not so much as a drop in the bucket of his voluminous outpourings.

It should be sufficiently evident that there can be no superficial reading of this man's writings if we are to determine the measure and nature of his originality as a thinker. The study conducted in the following pages is a modest attempt to get down to grass-roots level and appreciate Wang Fu-chih as a representative of the seventeenth century and its preceding ages, rather than as a shadowy form reflected on to the screen of history by nineteenth and twentieth century glossarists. Hence, although the introductory part of this thesis perforce contains a number of general remarks, particularly on the conceptual background of seventeenth century philosophy, the core of the study is focused narrowly on a particular theme, and on a particular piece of writing.

The theme I have elected to study is that of T'ien-ming 天命, the Mandate of Heaven, which in political theory relates to the fundamental aspects of sovereignty: the primary qualifications and functions of rulership and the causes of dynastic changes. Since the concept of rulership is the nerve-centre of Confucian political theory (for only a ruler enlightened by Heaven can give the moral guidance necessary to lead the people into harmony), a key to the political ideas of any Confucian thinker is his attitude to rulership, and in this respect the T'ien-ming theme is as broad as one likes to make it. Moreover, a study of the way in which a ruler is conceived to be endowed with the Mandate soon reveals a whole complex of ideas, which in the case of Wang Fu-chih has necessitated a closer study of the philosophical background than was at first assumed necessary. For this reason I have included a chapter on the general concepts underlying Chinese thought in the period under discussion; it is useful to know when Wang Fu-chih is using the traditional ideas of the Book of Changes, for example, and when he is talking like Hegel.

The text which has been chosen for detailed study is the Sung lun, a semi-historical work dealing with the Sung dynasty in a highly interpretative fashion. The original plan of covering the whole book had to be abandoned partly because it is in any case a fairly lengthy text, and partly because such a wealth of philosophical and historical detail is distilled even in a short section, but mainly because of the unusual difficulty of the author's style. I have therefore selected for translation the passage which deals with the rise of the Sung dynasty, and which seems to contain Wang Fu-chih's most explicit discussion of the Mandate; other sources relating to the theme are drawn upon as required, in particular Tu T'ung-chien lun (Discussion on Reading the Comprehensive Mirror).

Even in this restricted area of investigation, lacunae are inevitable. One would especially wish to know more of the immediate historical background, in all its aspects, of the life of Wang Fu-chih, so that a firmer link might be forged between his ideas and his personal commitments in the social and political issues of his own day. Until much more extensive research takes us past the generalisations which are usually attached to him, however, we may remember that "no apology is required for an attempt to achieve an understanding of the ideas qua ideas." [7]

C H A P T E R O N E

WANG FU-CHIH: A BRIEF SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND TIMES

Wang Fu-chih (1619-92),[1] styled Erh-nung, and known to his disciples as Ch'uan-shan, was born into a scholarly family of Hengyang in the province of Hunan. His father, for many years a scholar at the Imperial Academy, was a follower of the orthodox school of Chu Hsi; he had an uncle renowned as a poet and an older brother who, like Wang Fu-chih himself, wrote voluminously. It was natural that the younger brother, reared in such an atmosphere and displaying talent from an early age, should sit the provincial examination for the chü-jen degree, which he passed summa cum laude in 1642 at the age of 23 (English reckoning). Apparently he refrained from paying the customary respects to certain gentlemen at the capital, in obedience to his father's advice that he should dedicate his life to his own principles rather than become entangled with a party which there would be no hope of quitting. He would have gone to Peking to sit for the chin-shih degree shortly afterwards, but was prevented by the activities of the rebel-leaders Li Tzu-ch'eng and Chang Hsien-chung in Hunan and Hupei.

From this time on the whole course of Wang's life was altered, as there succeeded each other the disasters of successful peasant rebellion, destruction of the Ming royal family, and complete victory of the Manchu invaders after a few years of

nerveless resistance from the remnants of the Ming.

Before discussing Wang's share in these events, it would be well to sketch the situation into which - or out of which - they erupted.

There are two ways of viewing the last years of the Ming dynasty. The historian may examine them for the objective causes of the disaster of 1644, or he may imaginatively reconstruct such a picture of these years as would tally with the subjective experience of the men who inhabited them, most of them without any inkling that the days of the Ming were numbered. These two sets of facts may be merged into a single account, but they are in themselves quite distinct, and both are necessary to an understanding of the work of the early Ch'ing scholars, which was largely fired by the desire to sift out the causes of the fall of the Ming and to contribute what they could towards an eventual national resurgence.

The actual dynastic changeover was the combined work of widespread popular rebellion and successful foreign invasion. This circumstance indicates that military and socio-economic factors were at least partly to blame for the fall of the Ming. The military weakness of the government was such that it did not need the highly organised Manchu offensive to bring about the fall of the capital: this had already been accomplished by the Chinese rebel Li Tzu-ch'eng. The popular risings, one of which he led, were the outcome of accumulated social and economic hardship, the most noteworthy aspect of which was perhaps the exceedingly corrupt administration of the fiscal system, which told heavily both on the ordinary peasantry and on the townspeople (whose numbers, though still small in comparison with the total population, had increased significantly during the last century of the Ming). The added

burden of natural disasters such as the famine in Shensi in 1628, given the government's inability to cope, made banditry the only recourse for many.

Both the internal and external dangers had been apparent for years before the actual crisis, and the government may be justly indicted for its long-term failure even to attempt to handle a situation that was not basically irremediable: there was nothing fundamentally wrong with the Chinese economy, but rather was the Ming period one of general economic growth.[2] As for the Manchus, nearly thirty years had elapsed since their chieftain Nurhaci set up his claim to the imperial throne (1616). It is true that such a claim could not well be realised without the creation of a political vacuum in China by successful internal rebellion, but even after the Manchus had taken over Peking and were approaching Nanking, the Southern Ming court anticipated no undue difficulty in coming to satisfactory terms. It was much more preoccupied with its own factional politics.[3]

This attitude on the part of the expiring representatives of the Ming reflected the prevailing outlook of Ming government officials in the preceding years. Successful rebellion and foreign conquest were to most a complete shock, which set post-1644 scholars to thinking furiously about the causes of dynastic overthrow. The factor which they most commonly pinpointed as responsible for the Ming disaster was in fact the lack of political awareness. Whether their conception of "political awareness" corresponds with a Western historian's definition of the term is another matter, but certainly the introverted nature of late Ming politics forms an interesting contrast to the external developments which were to destroy the dynasty.

The basis of the political evils that flourished towards the end of the Ming lay, it is commonly agreed, in the very structure of the Ming state, which was, in a word, despotic. The abolition of the premiership and secretariat by the dynastic founder in 1380 left the emperor with sole executive power. In the event of imperial irresponsibility, there would ensue either a paralysis of government or the delegation of authority to favourties who had no legal basis for their position. Either way the monarch himself was remote and inaccessible. Even when the emperor was conscientious, he was obliged to work through what were, strictly speaking, informal channels. In this constitutional set-up there was material for trouble, especially since the bureaucracy was Confucian at least in name and to a certain extent in practice. Ministerial responsibility was axiomatic in Confucian theory, which demanded a high degree of personal moral influence in the relationship between the ruler and his assistants. But friction arose not only between the inner ring of the administration and the rest of officials on the periphery; the bureaucracy itself became rent by factionalism as various groups sought to win the ear of their arbitrary master.

The specific period of institutional decline which is associated with the fall of the Ming began with the withdrawal of the Wan-li Emperor Shen Tsung (r. 1573-1620) from effective government, in reaction against the rigorous, interventionist administration of Chang Chü-cheng (d. 1582) in the first decade of his reign. At first the energies of the politicians were directed against the Grand Secretaries, whose position had been revived as an informal, unofficial branch of the administration, and of whom Chang Chü-cheng had been one. It gradually became clear, however, that the inner

ring had ceased to be the main political problem; the problem was Shen Tsung himself, who for prolonged periods refused to see his ministers.

All this is readily comprehensible to a Western historian. But what of the issues which the Ming officials were trying to bring to the notice of the Emperor? The most striking thing about them is their distinctively Confucian flavour. They were concerned not so much with national policy on the grand scale, as with questions relating to the moral fibre of the Emperor's ministers. Hence the great scandal of Chang Chü-cheng's administration was his failure to observe the proper rules of mourning for his father; also one of the chief causes of contention later in the reign was the subject of bureaucratic merit evaluations. It might be objected, and very reasonably, that the high moral tone of official protests was a necessary cover for more practical interests, and denigration of an opponent's moral character was indispensable (in the Confucian context) to a general indictment of his conduct. But several facts stand out against too extreme an interpretation of this sort. In the first place, officials were almost entirely recruited on the basis of their performance in state examinations based on the Confucian Classics. The amount of moralistic teaching which any government candidate had to absorb, much of it from infancy, must have shaped his outlook to a very real degree. Moreover, the very fact that it was found worthwhile to make an issue of personal morality indicates that the subject carried very real weight. Not only this; those who remonstrated on these grounds were prepared to suffer, even to die, for their opinions. The most convincing demonstration of the vitality of the Confucian moral tradition is the history of the Tunglin movement.[4]

Before the rise of the Tunglin party, purely political issues had been to the fore as well as moral ones. A prominent example is the long-standing tussle between Shen Tsung and his ministers over the settlement of the imperial succession.[5] But from the turn of the century (roughly coinciding with the beginning of the Tunglin movement) the violent political quarrels between opposing factions were, particularly on the side of the aggressors, defined in sharply moral terms, without any institutional or political content save that of a dispute between "ins" and "outs" - and even this element was muted, since the "outs" had in most cases willingly courted degradation for their opinions. The Tunglin Academy (long in abeyance) was revived in 1604 by a group mainly composed of ex-officials. The Manifesto of the school issued in that year lifted the whole situation on to a moral and philosophical plane. The importance of this fact can only be fully appreciated if it is remembered that many scholars of the early Ch'ing, long after the petty factional issues had faded to a mere memory of the past, placed the blame for the fall of the Ming fairly and squarely on the corruption of the scholar-official class by heterodox philosophy. Prefiguring the dispassionate judgment of these Ming loyalists, the substance of the Tunglin Manifesto of 1604 was that the latter-day followers of the philosopher Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529) had, under cover of the master's ideas, smuggled into Confucianism teachings which could only be described as Ch'an Buddhist.[6] The fashionable mood of philosophical eclecticism and moral permissiveness (exhibited at its worst in the notorious Li Chih, sometime official and ultimate outcast of the government), with the concomitant evils of selfish factionalism, was roundly condemned by the Tunglin members, who sought in effect to restore

Chu Hsi, the father of the orthodox school of Neo-Confucianism, to his position above Wang Yang-ming.

The Tunglin Academy attracted a large following at court, where a "Tunglin party" was soon ranged against several other cliques, each arrogating virtue to itself and denouncing its enemies. The real trial by fire for the Tunglin men came during the reign of Shen Tsung's illiterate grandson Hsi Tsung (r. 1620-27). The latter indulged his interest in carpentry by dint of leaving matters of government to those amongst whom he had been reared - his former nursemaid and the eunuch Wei Chung-hsien. The ensuing campaign against Wei was not, it should be stressed, on account of eunuch power as such. Eunuchs had formed an important part of the administration in the Ming (as in other dynasties) since the fifteenth century, despite the founder's prohibition of this very thing. By Tunglin times it was axiomatic that access to the emperor must be through eunuchs. Therefore the attacks on Wei were not so much institutional as personal - provoked by Wei's arrogant assumption of imperial functions, interference with the civil service, and general obstructiveness in the matter of contact between the ruler and his ministers. In short - as Professor Hucker puts it bluntly - "Wei represented evil". The years immediately following Yang Lien's formal denunciation of Wei in 1624 provide conclusive demonstration of the single-mindedness of the Tunglin "party", hundreds of whom for their courageous stand received punishments ranging from dismissal to torture and death. Only after such large-scale terrorism did the flow of outspoken memorials against Wei cease.

The accession of the last emperor of the Ming in 1627 marked an alteration in the situation. The great political issues had died: Ssu Tsung was a reasonable individual; the main clouds

on the horizon were those affecting the more external matters of administrative policy and national security. Yet these were not subjects of significant concern to the imperial bureaucrats; rather (and this was what riled the later Ming loyalists) did they dissipate their energies in petty rivalries, raking up past issues as a morbid pretext for continuing the partisan habit. Much of what spiritual fervour there was tended to be poured into off-beat activities associated with "self-realisation" and "sudden enlightenment". This was by and large the condition of the court when it was overtaken by its doom.

But there are qualifications to this general picture. Within the school of Wang Yang-ming itself there was a moral reaction (associated with Liu Tsung-chou and others). Amongst many of the younger scholars generally there was a continuation of the idealistic fervour of the Tunglin movement. But the most concrete political issue that can be attached to them was (possibly) that of resistance to eunuch administration: certainly the main theme of their thinking was the hope that the Emperor might open himself to the guidance of morally upright officials - the stock Confucian remedy for all the ills of state. One of the leading political societies formed by these moral idealists - and the first to be organised on more than a purely local basis - was the Fu-she (Renewal Society), whose activities were both literary and political: it achieved a reputation for getting scholars through the state examinations. It was called, significantly, the "Little Tunglin". (As an illustration of its affinity with the original Tunglin movement, one of its most prominent members, Huang Tsung-hsi, was the son of a Tunglin martyr). Amongst those who joined it was the young student Wang Fu-chih, then twenty years of age.

Four years later Wang was inflicting a wound on himself to evade enlistment in Chang Hsien-cheng's army. Peking fell to the other peasant-leader in the following year (1644). For six years Wang Fu-chih conducted an active resistance to the Manchus who had taken over China. He saw first one, and then another Ming pretender fall and ultimately joined the court of the Prince of Kuei, who maintained the Ming claim in southern China. There he was so infuriated by the all-absorbing factional struggles that he provoked a plot against his life. After two years he left the court and accepted the inevitable, returning home in 1651. Until his death in 1692 he lived in seclusion, writing copiously but publishing nothing. (His hao, Ch'uan-shan, was taken from the mountain to which he finally retired.) He was thrice married. His contacts with other scholars were almost non-existent. It is interesting that neither of the two well-known figures whom he is known to have met were Confucians. One was the Christian minister to the Prince of Kuei, Ch'ü Shih-ssu, with whom he was on good terms; the other was the famous Buddhist monk Fang I-chih, who visited him in 1671.

His political attitude remained unaltered: he was unswervingly loyal to the Ming, shunning all contact with the new dynasty, which he hated above all on account of its foreign-ness. That he considered it his duty, and the duty of future generations, to strive for the restoration of a native dynasty is clear from his writings. Speaking of this subject he said: "The man of high resolve (chih 志) is steadfast and immovable of heart. He lives thus, and dies thus, and when his body expires his descendants pass the torch (ching ch'i 精氣) on from one generation to the next without intermission."[8] Yet, idealist though he was, he was no impractical opportunist, and took no part in the anti-Ch'ing rebellions of the 1670's, even when that under Wu San-kuei came to

Hengyang. In common with many other loyalists, he placed his hopes not on a political coup d'état, but on the surer, if slower, foundation of a moral regeneration amongst the scholars of the Empire, accompanied by the recognition and acceptance of practical realities in the social, political and economic spheres.

In his philosophical commitments Wang Fu-chih was both like and unlike those who dominated contemporary developments in thought. Of these developments it is of course easy to generalise overmuch, as really so little is known about the immediate, detailed reactions of Chinese thinkers to the political upheaval. But certain strands do appear clearly. One is the continuation and accentuation of the main Tunglin theme of personal morality in Confucian terms as opposed to the debasement of philosophy and ethics under the sway of Wang Yang-ming's followers. But a more practical note than that sounded by the Tunglin school was emerging: all metaphysical discussion, whether that of the orthodox Sung school or the"way-out"Ming school, was regarded as so much "empty talk" (k'ung-yen 空言), to be eschewed in favour of practical studies. To a political scientist of the west this sounds promising, but the Confucian gentleman's conception of practical studies is elusive. True, the field of research included history, geography, political institutions and other such subjects (the most prominent name in this respect is that of Ku Yen-wu; Huang Tsung-hsi was another); but stronger than anything was the conviction that the Confucian Classics still held the key to good government. Fundamentalism bound a great deal of political thinking; for example, Huang Tsung-hsi advocated the return of the well-field system traditionally ascribed to ancient times. The Classical approach was congenial to another penchant of the Confucian scholar: his fondness for purely literary activities. Hence a major drive in Ch'ing scholarship was towards

purely textual elucidation of the Classics, through the study of phonetics and philology. Binding all the varieties of approach together was the agonised seeking for the reason why China had fallen into such evil condition, and how equilibrium was to be restored. It was implicitly assumed that there was a basic pattern of reality into which dynastic and national catastrophes fitted, an objective and moral standard by reference to which the fluctuations of fortune could be explained.

Such were the main elements in later seventeenth thought. But the leading writers of the period - Ku Yen-wu, Huang Tsung-hsi, Wang Fu-chih, Yen Yuan and others - were men of marked individuality, and perhaps none more so than Wang Fu-chih. Like his contemporaries, he blamed the scholars of the Ming for empty philosophising and selfish factionalism and sought to recover the basic moral and practical outlook of Confucianism. He was acutely conscious of the things of time and space - so much so that he has been called a materialist - and yet he was the most subtle and the most systematic philosopher of his age, writing commentaries on a great variety of philosophical texts, Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist. Intensely interested in history, believing that "history teaches", and as convinced as any Confucian of the validity of the Confucian ideal whereby personal integrity in conformity to recognised rules of conduct was the keystone of prosperity, he was nevertheless acutely aware of material change and much more ready than his contemporaries not only to come to terms with, but positively to embrace change. If feudalism had given way to bureaucracy some two millenia ago - then it was because a bureaucratic form of government had become the best thing for the empire, and not because men had degenerated since classical times.

The voluminous writings of Wang Fu-chih were not all published until the twentieth century, which accounts for their survival, as he made no secret of his anti-Manchu feelings. These appeared most strongly in two books, Huang shu (Yellow Book) and E-meng (The Nightmare) but indications were scattered throughout his works. His political thought was enshrined also in his historical works Tu T'ung-chien lun (Discussion on reading the Comprehensive Mirror) and Sung lun (Discussion of the Sung Dynasty). More purely philosophical works were his commentaries on the Book of History, I ching (both of which he studied extensively), Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu (his commentary on the latter being considered one of the best ever written) and two Buddhist studies. His literary achievements, including a substantial amount of prose and verse and textual researches in the Classics, were considerable. In all, the definitive edition of his Collected Works (published in Shanghai in 1933 as Ch'uan-shan i-shu) contains 358 chüan under 70 titles.

He died at the age of 73, having composed his own epitaph in which he affirmed his ardent loyalty to the Ming and his adherence to the doctrines of the Sung philosopher Chang Tsai (1020-77).

C H A P T E R T W O

SOME BASIC CONCEPTS IN CHINESE THOUGHT

I Introduction

Some general remarks on the nature of Chinese thought form a necessary introduction to an account of the ideas current by the seventeenth century. These preliminary observations apply in the main to the basic tendencies of thought underlying the various philosophical systems, but special consideration will, naturally, be given to specifically Confucian tendencies. Differences in the aims of Chinese and Western philosophising call for attention; coupled with the relatively pragmatic nature of the Chinese philosopher's goal is the general bias of the Chinese mind towards the concrete as opposed to the abstract, and hence towards the dynamic rather than the static[1]. In Confucianism this bias takes on a strongly moralistic colouring, which raises some rather interesting problems of ultimate priority: whether evaluative concepts, for example, enjoyed the position of absolutes or whether they were merely relative and derivative. The evidence seems to me to suggest that they were both: that the same ambiguity characterised the Chinese attitude to goodness as that which was revealed as the "Naturalistic Fallacy" in the West. But it is safe to say that there is no neat answer to such problems as these: not only because Chinese thought tended to be unsystematic in form and therefore prone to inconsistency, but because we are dealing with differences of race, culture and language, where the forms of thought are so different from ours as to baffle easy categorisation in Western terms. We may, however, console ourselves with the reflection that the primary data of experience from which we and they each set out were of necessity the same - the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, the growing of crops, life and death, and so on: an area of common ground sufficiently large (putting it mildly) to encourage the search for the main-springs of Chinese thought.

The first point to settle is one of definition: What is Chinese philosophy? It is, of course, a generic term covering a variety of types, but if the over-all characteristic which distinguishes it from its Western counterpart be defined, it is the practical aim which shapes it. Philosophy, according to Aristotle, begins in wonder. But Chinese philosophy, so-called, began in the turmoil of social and political disintegration, and flourished from the outset in the form of specific attempts to prescribe the way back to order in society. Whilst no one would think of denying the close concern of many Western philosophers with human affairs - Plato and Locke are examples taken at random - yet there was always concern with the discovery and definition of "what is", and the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. The sayings of Confucius, in contrast, reveal him as a teacher rather than a philosopher: practical prescriptions for everyday life or for the management of a kingdom, backed by implicit assumptions as to the nature of man and the (earthly) world he inhabits - these form the substance of the Analects.

Nor did the "ivory tower" philosopher figure much elsewhere in the "Hundred Schools" of ancient China. Legalism, for example, was a system of political thought specifically designed in the interests of the state and its ruler. Even Taoism, by far the most speculative of the dominant trio, centred on a "way" of living - whether that of political anarchy or individual mysticism; the very doctrine of wu wei 無為 (non-action) bespoke a type of action, and did not imply a retreat from experience to speculation. The School of Names was to some extent the exception that proves the rule, for its purely logical treatment of abstract concepts was a short-lived and relatively isolated phenomenon.

The subsequent history of Chinese philosophy lessened, but did not close, the gap between the respective aims of Chinese and Western thought. The Confucianism of the Han dynasty represented a certain amount of purely intellectual curiosity as to the structure of the universe, but probably more prominent was the anxiety to adduce cosmological theories in justification of the political status quo. Later, there was the widespread influence of Buddhism, with its stress on metaphysics, and the need to combat Buddhism on its own grounds as well as an acquired taste for metaphysics led the Confucians of the early Sung dynasty to cast the essentially social and ethical philosophy of orthodox Confucianism in a metaphysical mould. The typically Confucian concern for moral action, however, remained primary. The doctrine of ke-wu 格物 (the "investigation of things")[2] which was so prominent in the teachings of Ch'eng I and Chu Hsi was simply one of the steps in the art of moral cultivation and the administration of a state[3]. For these philosophers were, after all, government officials, and not cloistered recluses.

There was, in fact, in Chinese thinking a basic lack of sympathy with the notion of abstract knowledge in the intellectual sense. Whereas a Descartes might seek simply "to know", a Chinese (especially Confucian) philosopher sought "to know what to do" or at least "to know in order to do". Knowledge as a means to action was valued; it was not, properly speaking, an end in itself. In the Confucian tradition, this outlook was partly dictated by the strain of sober moralism which coloured the scholar's attitude to life. But there were at work more profound tendencies characteristic of Chinese thought generally, and these tendencies take us to the heart of several fundamental conceptions.

Perhaps the most basic thing of all was a preference for the concrete against the abstract. Hence action would always be preferable to thinking about action. Within the framework of thought itself, the recoil from over-abstraction may be observed in the tendency to think in terms not of "what the thing is-in-itself" but of "what it does" - that is, "the thing-in-action". Being and its attributes were not commonly distinguished. Moreover, the thing-in-action was not abstracted from its context in time, and as one of the most obvious things about phenomena viewed over a period of time is their changeableness, the result was that all Chinese thinking about the universe was underlaid by the concept of movement, of change. Equally obvious in the process of change, however, is the regular recurrence of certain events: spring invariably follows winter; life invariably gives way to death; and so there is permanence and stability informing the very process of change. According to one of the Ch'eng brothers:

> "The Buddhists regard completion and decay as [proof of] impermanence, being ignorant that it is impermanence that makes for regularity". (translated by A.C. Graham)

In Taoist vein:

> "The way that can be told is not the constant way"
>
> (Tao-te-ching (I))

The very language furnishes abundant examples of these truths. The close relationship of being and attribute, of the thing and its function, is reflected in the widespread coincidence of normative and descriptive terms: for example, a father is in Confucian parlance not simply the progenitor of a child, but one who treats his child as a father should. It was on the basis of a similar association - that of name and reality - that Mencius could justify the murder of the erstwhile ruler of the Shang

dynasty as the killing of a "mere fellow". As for the habit of viewing processes rather than static conditions, it has been pointed out by Chang Tung-sun and others[4] that verbs of "becoming" have much greater force in the Chinese language than do those asserting being. Wei 為 and ch'eng 成 are stronger than shih 是 or yu 有 . The emphasis is on motion and relationship. (The only way to stress existence, rather than what exists, is to use the verb yu 有 , which lacks the force of the English equivalent.) In the words of Chang Tung-sun "The meaning of a term is completed only by its opposite". "Everything must have its opposite", says the Neo-Confucian text, Chin ssu lu[5]. The dualising tendency of Chinese thought is no surprise. Hence in Chinese metaphysics change arose from the interaction of two forces, the Yang (positive) and the yin (negative)[6], based on the observed dualism of light and shade. Speaking generally, the viewing of things in pairs is a recurring feature in Chinese philosophy.

It has been noted above that Chinese philosophy, and more particularly Confucianism, was fundamentally didactic and practical in character. What sort of doctrines, then, were recommended? Was the emphasis upon social convenience and political expedient, or was the teaching of approved practices reinforced by an appeal to abstract principles of "value", in particular to a concept of morality? The answer is not simple, not even in the case of Confucianism. But part of the difficulty arises, I think, from too strict an attempt to force Chinese thought into a Western strait-jacket, and impose a fully-conceived system on a nexus of ideas whose real system was sometimes only implicit. Pending fuller investigation of this subject, I will here merely say that Confucian thought, at any rate, was thoroughly moralistic in tone, but that it shared with its great rival, Taoism, a sense of the ultimate value of harmonising with "Nature" in its broadest sense.

The above remarks serve as a preliminary guide to closer study of the concepts of Chinese philosophy, and as a forewarning against over-hasty equation of these with notions familiar to the Western mind.

II The Chinese Universe

The Concept of Change

The Chinese view of the universe was dominated by the concept of change. Most Chinese philosophers regarded change not as something meaningless and unpredictable, nor yet as mechanically deterministic, but as movement which followed certain fixed principles. Heraclitus' concept of "flux" moulded by the Logos occurs as a parallel, but whereas the Logos was understood as an external principle of order imposed upon change, the pattern of change in Chinese thought tended to be identified very closely with change itself: order was immanent within the very nature of the universe. The concept of order, harmony, pattern - in short, of any sort of principle which can be abstracted from physical events and understood or at least recognised to exist - was of varying importance in different schools of thought. It has been pointed out by several scholars[7] that Taoism stressed change rather than permanence, whereas Confucianism was firmly attached to order. But even in Taoism there was a "constant Way" and a "constant Name"; a main difference between the Taoist and Confucian positions was that for the Taoist apprehension of the Tao was mystical rather than rational. For the Confucian, however, the Tao was manifested in the regularity of Nature in the cosmic sphere, and should be equally manifested in the affairs of human society.

Briefly, the account of the cosmos inherited by the Neo-Confucians and dating back to Han times at least, was as follows. The Universe had not been created ex nihilo; it was self-existent, and had existed always in a time which was not felt to require a beginning. The Lieh-tzu (a Taoist compilation which contains much early material) states that the beginning of things lies not in a Creator, but in primordial chaos. The idea of a Creator is absent from all extant accounts of ancient times,

although it seems probable that T'ien 天 (Heaven) denoted creative power in Hsia times, and certainly continued to be regarded as the "ancestor of all things". Varieties of opinion were held regarding the original source of things. Change was considered to result from the interaction of two generative forces: the Yin and the Yang, meaning originally "dark side" and "sunny side" of a hill, acquiring a variety of intonations, and finally coming to represent the positive and negative - expanding and contracting - influences of Nature. This polarity was one of several variations on the dualistic theme: for example, Heaven and Earth were sometimes represented as the Father and Mother of all things, and were related to the Yang and the Yin principles respectively. The very earliest written sources we possess (the Shang oracle bones and some of the Odes) allude to the antithesis of "above and below": "Above and below succeed each other". The movement of the Yin and Yang was not aimless, but followed a regular pattern. Each force in its turn predominated, having gradually increased its sway from very small beginnings; just as it reached the height of its power the opposite tendency set in, and the process was reversed. It is notable that the metaphors by which the whole process is best expressed are those drawn from the natural universe - from the moon's waxing and waning, from the revolution of night and day, from the ebbing and flowing of the tides, and from all growing things. The point of interest which distinguishes the Chinese conception from the typically Western type is that growth and decay, waxing and waning, are for the Chinese both positive, in one sense. We conceive of death, for example, as the simple withdrawal of life rather than as a force of change in its own right. Our "negative" is much more purely a negative than the Chinese Yin.

Herein lies the key, it may be, to an aspect of the Chinese world-view which is basic to very much of their thinking. Reference has been

made to the interaction of the Yin and Yang: it is important to note that change was not effected simply by the action of an active force upon a passive object, as has been the usual view in the Western world (discounting comparatively recent developments in scientific thought). Whereas we might speak of a certain material object such as a book as "unresisting" when it is picked up, a Chinese philosopher would rather endow the book with the quality of "yieldingness". It follows that the basis of change, in Chinese thought, is correlative: A does not act on B and produce C, but A and B act upon each other and so produce C. It is true that A, in the usual scheme of thinking, must take the initiative, but B reacts in a positive and not just in a mechanical fashion. Our modern terms "stimulation" and "response" are fairly adequate equivalents of the activities concerned (cf. kan 感 ying 應). Such an interpretation as this requires a particular view of the substances which undergo change. "Matter" which is not inert, but self-moving, and yet which maintains a consistency and harmony in the movement of its composite parts, is obviously not quite the same thing as our customary notion of matter. All activity is based on "spontaneous co-operation" and "internal necessity". J. Needham goes so far as to employ a concept used by Leibniz in the Monadology i.e. "Harmony of wills".

The practical implications of this outlook were of the greatest importance. Historical change was only relative: it could only go so far in one direction and must in due course turn back upon itself. Human action, although important, might only take place within certain limits. For a ruler to embark on a policy of expansion when the Yin force was in the ascendant would be to court disaster. (This should not be over-mysticised, for the fluctuations of the cosmic forces affected man as much as heaven and earth, and the ruler could expect to be opposed in such a case by the mass of his subjects. In the words of one of the best-known aphorisms of the Book of Documents, "Heaven sees as my people see, Heaven

hears as my people hear".) But if moving against Nature brought calamity, moving with Nature was a means of correspondingly great benefit. The Chinese sage, unlike the "great man" beloved of Western tradition, influenced the course of history not by asserting his individuality, but by recognising the time to act or not to act. But circumscribing all change for the Confucianist was the unalterable framework of certain fixed principles, such as the five great human relationships, which will be considered at a later point. Alternatively worded in terms of the t'i-yung 體用 concept (coined by Wang Pi of the third century in his famous commentary of the Book of Changes[8]), "essence" was unalterable, but "application" varied. The notion of unilinear "progress", moreover, was precluded; there could never be a better era than had ever existed in the past, viz. in the Golden Age of Chinese antiquity[9]. It is to be admitted that there was a widespread tendency to inconsistency in the opposite direction: few Chinese thinkers envisaged an actual return to conditions of the Golden Age. Such an event would necessarily involve, amongst other things, radical change carried out from above; it was far easier to accept the status quo (which suited the ruling class to a nicety in any case), and the philosophy of I-ching provided a convenient justification for refusing to attempt radical reform[10]. Not surprisingly, it was indeed adherence to I-ching metaphysics which constituted one of the elements in the opposition to Wang An-shih's sweeping reform programme in the eleventh century[11].

The Concept of Order

Western philosophers, and modern philosophers of East and West, have, very naturally, approached Chinese thought with a view to framing it in the categories with which they themselves are familiar. They - perhaps I should say "we" - should not be blamed too much, for the modes of thought which form the very framework of our reasoning cannot be altogether

dispensed with - they cannot even be examined objectively, since they are themselves the examiners.

Nevertheless, there are degrees of naïvety and profundity within the limits of appraisal. Whilst it may be instructive to draw comparisons between certain aspects of the thought of the respective civilisations, we should be wary of over-generalisation and slick pigeon-holing when dealing with a whole corpus of thought. Unfortunately, the study of Chinese philosophy has abounded with identity-labels such as "Idealism", "Materialism" "Naturalism", "Rationalism", "Empiricism", "Evolutionism" and "Organism"[12]. Suspicion is justifiable where any one of these concepts is applied indiscriminately to an entire philosophical tradition. But I do not think we can avoid using such terms if we are to gain any real sense of understanding of Chinese philosophy. And if we tend to feel that modern Western philosophy has opened up the way to such an understanding and highlighted the comparative irrelevance of earlier interpretations, may it not be that we are being trapped in our turn by the current conceptions of our own day?

With these reservations in mind, we shall turn to those aspects of Chinese thought which we may designate in common as "immaterial", considering first of all the period prior to the triumph of Buddhism.

How far the notion of immaterial principle impinged upon the Chinese world-view is rather difficult to determine, for prior to the coming of Buddhism there was no very clear demarcation between concepts of the abstract and the concrete. The Yin and Yang forces were composed of ch'i 氣 : the Book of Changes speaks of "the two ethers" which must even at that time have approximated to the meaning of "material force" operative in Sung philosophy.

On the immaterial side, there were from ancient times (a) words capable of expressing truly metaphysical concepts - such as T'ien 天 (Heaven) or Tao 道 (the Way) - and (b) moral or evaluative terms, such as jen 仁 (humanity) and i 義 (righteousness). Attitudes regarding non-material aspects of the universe varied, as might be expected, not only from one school of thought to another, but from one age to another. It is generally true to say of Confucianism prior to the Sung revival that questions of metaphysics and abstract principle were either ignored or not clearly disentangled from their material surroundings. Nevertheless, the concept of moral value was fundamental to Confucianism from its inception. The influence of Taoism (for example, in the I-ching, which was adopted as a Confucian Classic well before the end of the B.C. era, and alone among the books of the Canon survived the "Burning of the Books" in 213 B.C.) brought Confucianists somewhat closer to the realm of metaphysics. The so-called Confucianism of the Han wandered into "Phenomenalism"[13] which, although elaborate enough concerning the mysterious relations between Heaven and man was hardly sophisticated metaphysics in a strictly philosophical sense. Then came the almost total eclipse of orthodox Confucianism by religious Taoism and later, Ch'an Buddhism, whose influence was only superseded by the rise of a Confucian system very different in kind from its orthodox parent.

It has been said[14] that the notion of an external Creator was foreign to Chinese thought as it appears in the extant sources. But the concept of deity, of a power at once numinous and moral, and even of a Creator in an immanent sense, was not altogether lacking, although it was profoundly affected by the naturalism characteristic of Chinese thought. In religious usage, the term which is usually considered to have most nearly expressed the idea of a personal God was Shang Ti 上帝 (Lord on High), originally, it would appear, the highest of the ancestors and spirits

worshipped by the Shang dynasty. The Chou gradually replaced Shang Ti with their own deity, T'ien 天 (Heaven), to whom were made throughout Chinese history the highest sacrifices, performable only by the Emperor. The importance of T'ien to the rulers of Chou was markedly political, as the Book of Documents attests. Here more than anywhere else in classical literature does T'ien fulfil the image of a highly personal, active and even anthropomorphic divinity. These records of Chou abound with references to the governing activities of T'ien: for example, "Heaven commanded all the princes to build their capitals in the sphere of Yü's labours" (Legge III, p.645). It is noteworthy that the word ming 命 (decree) here, whatever else it may have signified elsewhere, adhered closely to its root meaning of "command", "decree".

In Chinese philosophy proper, the role played by T'ien was central, and its importance was reflected in the variety of its meanings. Basically, the word means "Heaven" and was used from Shang times in antithesis to Earth (T'u 土, soon replaced by Ti 地), with both physical and religious significance. Equated with the male principle, it was regarded as the "ancestor of all things", including both Earth and Man. In the hands of different philosophers it shifted its meaning from that of an active, semi-personal force which reacted with predictable regularity in response to man's moral behaviour, at one end of the spectrum, to that of a general name covering all natural activities and arising from them, at the other.

Examples of the main varieties of usage are given; they are not in any order of importance -

(a) Heaven as the unfailing rewarder of virtue and punisher of evil, as portrayed in Mo Tzu, who traced moral value - primarily i 義 (righteousness) - to the Will of Heaven. It is perhaps significant that, metaphysically speaking, Mohism was one of the least rich of Chinese philosophies[15].

(b) Heaven in the Phenomenalism of Tung Chung-shu and the Later Han "Confucians". Fung Yu-lan points out the conflict at this time between two interpretations of Heaven's activities in the affairs of men: the teleological view, which ascribed cognition and purpose to T'ien, and looked for the systematic occurrence of omens and natural disasters as the warning or punishment of human misdemeanours; and the "mechanistic" view, which asserted the coincidence of abnormal phenomena and human activities on the grounds of the natural correspondence of the Yin and Yang others in Heaven and Man. Needham[16] may be right in stressing the prevalence of the latter view; certainly Tung Chung-Shu's own writings bear such an interpretation[17]. At any rate, teleological interpretations of the universe, however respectable they might be in the context of Western philosophy, tended in China to be associated with unabashed political propaganda more than anything else. Nevertheless, elsewhere in his writings Tung Chung-shu affirms, for example, that human benevolence (jen 仁) is prompted by Heaven's will (chih 志). It should be remarked that it was during this period that cosmological speculation based initially on the Yin-Yang and Five Agents Theories first became rife. More pertinently, this was also the age which saw the definite inclusion of the I-ching in the Confucian Canon, and the addition of the Appendices by which writers of varied affiliation contributed a philosophical garb to the Book's oracular utterances.

(c) Heaven as a vaguely personal, ethical "force" inherent in the nature of things, as suggested in the Analects and, with a more personal touch, in Mencius. Confucius himself said little about Heaven[18] - as his followers noted - and chose to emphasise the need for men to cultivate and assert their own moral qualities in the restoration of order to society. The notion of Heaven was in the background, as a sort of cosmic guarantee of the principles of morality and the ultimate efficacy of human effort. Mencius, on the other hand, sounded an echo to the note struck by the Shu-ching[19] in its descriptions of Heaven indicating its will to its chosen servants, and its dogmatic assertions that an individual monarch need only preserve his virtue to ensure the preservation of his throne. Nevertheless, in the Mencius there occurs a passage typical of the orthodox Confucian approach. Explaining how the sage-emperor Shun gained possession of the Empire, Mencius says that Heaven gave it to him - not in words, for "Heaven does not express itself in words - Heaven indicates its wishes through the actions and service of others" - but through Yao's presentation of him, the spirits' response to his sacrifices, and the people's acceptance of him (Mencius (V a. 5; Dobson 3-10).

(d) Heaven as a thoroughly naturalistic concept, often equally well rendered "Nature". An early exponent of the view that T'ien "has its seasons" and is the invisible source of life, but does not and cannot intervene in human affairs, was Hsun Tzu. The most famous sceptic of ancient times was Wang Ch'ung, who rebutted the various superstitious beliefs

of Han phenomenology, denied conscious activity to Heaven and Earth, and laid stress on spontaneity (tzu jan 自然) and fate (ming 命) which included the sense of "chance". Lest over-hasty judgments of "materialism" in a Western sense be applied to such thinkers as these, let it be remembered that both revealed characteristically Chinese assumptions of a metaphysical nature. Thus Hsun Tzu exalted li 禮 (ritual, etiquette, propriety) into a cosmic principle, equivalent to the Tao 道 (the Way) but with a specifically human flavour:

> "Li is that whereby Heaven and Earth unite, whereby the sun and moon are bright, whereby the four seasons are ordered, whereby the stars move in their courses, whereby rivers flow, whereby all things prosper, whereby love and hatred are tempered, whereby joy and anger keep their proper place. It causes the lower orders to obey, and the upper orders to be illustrious; through a myriad changes it prevents going astray. .... Is not Li the greatest of all principles?" (Dubs pp.223-4).

More odd-sounding to a Western ear is Wang Ch'ung's acceptance of the possibility of a pre-determined harmony operative in the marriage of a couple each of whom is destined to die young[20].

T'ien communicated itself to man by means of its ming 命, in the phrase which can be rendered variously "Heaven's Command (Mandate) or Decree", "Will of Heaven", "Natural Law" or "Fate". Ming was the term for a decree or commission given by an overland; T'ien-ming connotes in the first instance a ruling (and not just reigning) Heaven. (Cf. above quotation from the Shu, Legge III, p.645.) With the increasing naturalisation of the concept of T'ien, however, ming steadily acquired the sense of

"immanent decree of fate", of the unalterable nature of a thing. Like so many other Chinese concepts, it expressed both what a thing is and what it ought to be. It is possible that the distinction was never clearly resolved; this question will be considered in due course.

The whole subject of T'ien-ming, with particular reference to its political significance, will be treated in a separate chapter.

Allied to the concept of T'ien, and often used in conjunction with it, was Tao 道 (way, the Way). The etymology[21] of this term begins with a literal road; metaphorically used as a "way of action", it acquired a normative sense: "the Way of action". In the early sub-stratum of Confucian thought (and for many later Confucian thinkers) it remained at this level. Hence Confucius could say:

"Man can enlarge (the Way) (his way), but the Way does not enlarge the man"

In Taoism, however, Tao replaced T'ien in all its functions, even the creative. Such was the eclecticism of Chinese philosophers that the notion of Tao as something more abstract and also more transcendent (probably because less personalised) than T'ien found its way into the Book of Changes and remained one of the vital issues of Confucianist speculation thereafter.

According to one oft-quoted passage,

一陰一陽之謂道。繼之者善也。成之者性也。[22]

Graham translates: ("The Yin and Yang in alternation are) what is meant by
("The alternation of Yin and Yang is)

the Way. What succeeds the Way is goodness; that in which it is completed is the nature". Such implications as may be drawn from the use of the term Tao in this sense will be mentioned below.

There remains the category of moral notions. Let it be stated at the outset that any philosophy which employs moral concepts is ipso facto not sheerly naturalistic, except by virtue of unresolved inconsistency within the system; it may be said to include at least a mild form of

idealism[23]. The question is: What is the precise nature and role of the evaluative standards which hold throughout Chinese thought? I propose to go straight to the fountain-head and examine the concept of morality in the Confucian Analects, and the Book of Mencius, where it received its most explicit and systematic expression.

Whatever confusions of thought may or may not have clouded the subject, the notion of "intrinsic goodness", of "ultimate value", is fundamental in Confucian thought, and especially in the Mencian stream. Hence, according to Confucius, the superior man devotes attention to his Way, and not to matters of food; he "is neither predisposed for anything nor against anything; he will side with whatever is right (i 義)." (Creel 1951, p.144). Here there is no dogmatic assertion as to what is right, but that right exists as a principle - as the principle - is taken for granted. The claims of morality are even more prominently displayed in Mencius, who prefers righteousness to life itself (VI a.10) and who caricatures the Mohist ideal of happiness as selfish seeking for gain (li 利) in his desire to exalt morality.

The endless disputes on human nature are extremely telling in regard to the idea of goodness; ironically, it is in the teachings of a man like Hsun Tzu, who believed that man's nature is essentially evil, that the notion of right as a cosmic principle comes out most clearly: for if man is evil, then he cannot himself provide the standard of good and evil.

"The moral principles that have remained unchanged through the time of all kings are sufficient to be the central thread running through the Way. Things come and go, but if they are responded to according to this central thread, one will find that the principle runs through all without any disorder".[24]

T'ien 天 itself, generally speaking, connoted a partly moral power, whether in the juristic role of rewarder of good and punisher of evil, or in its aspect of source and container of all things.

But the Confucianists of the early period, though teachers of morals, were not moral philosophers in our sense. The Chinese bias against over-abstraction is revealed in the complete lack of any attempt to isolate the essential notion of morality (implied by words such as "ought" when used as a categorical imperative) and define it, or rather admit that it cannot be defined. Instead, the emphasis is all on the content of righteousness, which indeed was the Confucianist's concern par excellence. The values affirmed in the formative period of Confucianism were those that remained the undisputed sine qua non throughout its subsequent history. These were, specifically, the "four moral norms": jen 仁 , i 義 , li 禮 , and chih 智 , i.e. humanity (benevolence, or altruism), righteousness (practice of what is fitting), propriety (decorum, ritual) and wisdom, manifested above all in the "five great relationships" as outlined in Mencius (III a.4):

"According to the way of man, if they are well fed, warmly clothed, and comfortably lodged but without education, they will become almost like animals. The Sage (emperor Shun) worried about it and he appointed Hsieh to be minister of education and teach people human relations, that between father and son, there should be affection; between ruler and minister, there should be righteousness; between husband and wife, there should be attention to their separate functions; between old and young, there should be a proper order; and between friends, there should be faithfulness."[25]

The over-arching ideal is, as might be anticipated of a Chinese philosopher, one of relation: harmony, order, with everything fitting into its place and fulfilling the role assigned to it. To the practical-minded founders of the Confucian tradition, faced as they were by the social and political confusion of the period of decline and disintegration of the feudal empire, social order was what counted; but there crept into Confucianism an increasing awareness of the theme of cosmic harmony. Yin-Yang theories and arguably the Nature-mysticism of Taoism helped to influence Confucian thought in this direction.[26] Indispensable to the Chinese idea of "harmony" was that of spontaneity, of naturalness (tzu jan 自然). The notion of men performing their functions in obedience to the coercive power of a taskmaster (as the Legalists would have it) was anathema to the Confucianist.

Out of the root belief that the ideal of cosmic harmony could be achieved by the unforced effort of individuals (which ultimately implies that a universal principle of goodness was somehow reflected in human nature) there arose the all-important concept of ch'eng 誠. This is usually translated "sincerity" or (as Dr. A.C. Graham has it) "integrity"; it means genuineness, reality, truth. "Sincerity" fails to convey the full import of the term because the traditional western view of human nature is of something fallen (according to Christian teaching) so that we commonly hear such statements as, "He is sincere but misguided." But for the Confucian, sincerity spelt truth, i.e. correspondence with objective reality. It represented the state of mind where a person did what was right out of pure inclination untouched by any ulterior motive. To have achieved ch'eng was to have achieved perfection. The key passage relating to ch'eng is found in the

Doctrine of the Mean (Chung Yung - one of the Four Books singled out for special honour by the Neo-Confucians). Extracts are as follows:

> "There is a way to the attainment of sincerity in one's self; - if a man do not understand what is good, he will not attain sincerity in himself.
>
> "Sincerity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men. He who possesses sincerity is he who, without an effort, hits what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought; - he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the right way ...
>
> "To this attainment there are requisite the extensive study of what is good, accurate enquiry about it, careful reflection on it, the clear discrimination of it, and the earnest practice of it ....
>
> "When we have intelligence (ming 明) resulting from sincerity, this condition is to be ascribed to nature; when we have sincerity resulting from intelligence, this condition is to be ascribed to instruction. But given the sincerity, and there shall be the intelligence; given the intelligence, and there shall be the sincerity."[27]

The significant point here is that it is not a person's basic capacity for doing good that is in need of expansion; it is rather his understanding that requires enlightenment. Educate him and he can be trusted to act aright - this was the ultimate verdict of Confucianism,[28] and therein lay the implicit assumption that human nature is fundamentally inclined to goodness. For the cosmic efficacy of ch'eng, see Chung Yung (XXII - XXVI).

On the means of attaining perfection there was a shift of attitude clearly discernible in successive Confucian thinkers, based on the relative importance of positive guidance (whether by punishments and rewards or by education and example) and wu wei 無為 - letting nature take its course (literally "do nothing"). Confucius, who did not commit himself to the dogma that human nature is either good or evil, stressed the value of education and the moderate use of punishments, but his ultimate aim was certainly the spontaneous and harmonious manifestation of right feelings. With the definite affirmation of the essential goodness of human nature in the Mencian tradition (as opposed to that of Hsun Tzu) there came a comparatively greater dislike of interference: humanity and righteousness were not to be hewn out of human nature as a cup out of a willow-tree,[29] but simply practised out of the natural inclinations of the heart - the unbidden feeling of sympathy for the child on the verge of tumbling in the well.

The concept of "fitting in" to the natural order was, of course, fundamental to I-ching, which was built up around an oracle system and took as its starting-point the belief that there is order in the entire cosmic process. The I-ching was the happy hunting-ground for other schools of thought besides the Confucian, and its inclusion in the Confucian canon confirmed subsequent Confucianism in the inheritance of a broad range of traditions all tending to magnify the importance of following times and seasons, and taking no untoward action. H. Wilhelm's gloss on the last line of the Ch'ien 乾 Hexagram, in which the creative force reaches its limit, is worth quoting:

"And now the high point of the possible has been attained. The person who loses his connection with his followers and, Titan-like, keeps on striving when the maximum of influence has already been achieved, knowing only how to press forward and not how to retreat, isolates himself from the human sphere and loses his success. For what is complete cannot endure, and what is pushed to the limit ends in misfortune. Thus the text for the last line says:

'Arrogant dragon will have cause to repent'."[30]

Seen against this background, evil consists in being unnatural - perverted or extreme. The superior man holds fast to the Mean (chung 中, which is not a static but a dynamic concept, except insofar as it is regulated by fixed principles). Such is the teaching also of Chung Yung.

An interesting problem arises. Did the concept of "naturalness" (comprising spontaneity and uniformity with Nature as a whole) evoke in its devotees a greater feeling of reverence than the idea of morality per se? In effect, did Chinese thinkers commit the error made by Fung Yu-lan when he says that "The values that are higher than the moral ones may be called super-moral values"? In the latter case, the sentence quoted is simply meaningless: "Higher" is used as a normative term, and the only normative terms we know are those implying moral value. It may be objected that the "reconciliation of opposites" envisaged by mystical thought suggests something transcending all finite categories, but I would defy anyone even to begin imagining such a thing without adducing a principle of "rightness". The classic illustration of this lies in Taoism, for the Tao, though said to be above good and evil, does not itself escape a normative intonation. The "constant Way" is so

obviously approved of. Again, in I-ching "What succeeds the Way is goodness; that in which it is completed is the nature."

I would venture to suggest that it was in part the immense respect for "naturalness", the tendency to see "is" and "ought" as one, that gave point to the interminable debates amongst Confucians as to whether human nature was essentially good, bad, mixed or morally neutral. A.C. Graham makes the same point in different words when he says (p.44) (illogically, but à la Chinoise) that "the question behind their discussions of human nature is always 'Why ought I to do what I do not want to do?'. The answer they would like to give is 'because ultimately I do want to, because wanting otherwise comes from a misunderstanding of my nature.'" He goes on to say that "it is the tension between the need to justify morality, and the evidence of experience [of evil inherent in human nature] which generates the greatest problem of Confucian philosophy."

The attitude of philosophers to this question was of enormous practical significance, for according to their judgment of the issue they propounded their theories of government when dealing with the world of affairs. (It is not, of course, impossible that they made their philosophical commitment on the basis of factual circumstances, such as a predisposition to plan, organise, reform and bully.) If human nature was fundamentally good, then education rather than coercion was what was needed; if it was bad, restraints must continuously be imposed on conduct.

The issue was taken up by the Neo-Confucians and interwoven with the whole metaphysical system.

III The Neo-Confucian Superstructure

The philosophical tradition known as Neo-Confucianism was explicitly an attempt to express basic Confucian doctrines in a systematic form that would include a reply to Buddhist metaphysics which, in company with the minor culprit of Neo-Taoism, was blamed for the decadence and disorders of past Chinese history. To be sure, one of the early founders of Neo-Confucianism told his disciples: "You must simply put it [Buddhism] aside without discussing it .... the essential thing is decisively to reject its arts", but the weapons used against Buddhism were often those originally manufactured by the enemy. Since any Confucian thinker of the seventeenth century was inescapably bound to the Neo-Confucian tradition, the remainder of the discussion of Chinese philosophical concepts will be based on this tradition, referring back to earlier ideas when necessary.

The core of the differences between the Buddhist and Confucian world-views was their handling of the problem of ultimate reality and value. The Confucian conception of the universe had always been holistic: that is to say, there was no sense of a gap between the principles of order and the phenomena of change. That there should be change was itself a principle of reality. Even Taoism, which posited a transcendent, undifferentiated world of non-being[31], treated plurality and change as the necessary mode of manifestation of the Tao. But to the Buddhist, change, transience, and the attendant occurrence of evil, manifested in the phenomenal world, were a proof of that world's unreality; ultimate reality consisted in permanent principles which could be perceived only by the mind. With the regeneration of China in many spheres of life under the Sung dynasty there formed on the part of the Confucian literati an increasingly strenuous resistance to the basic world-view of Buddhism. Reality, i.e. rationality and goodness (the latter of which the

Confucianist was never afraid of asserting and defining in practical terms) existed in this world and this alone - so affirmed the exponents of a revived Confucianism that sought to recover the pure light of the Classics. Implicit in this dogma was the assumption that human nature was in some sense good, for if the affairs of this world were "real" in any enduring sense then whatever goodness was in the universe was shared by man, or, put the other way, mundane ideas of goodness were of universal validity.

All Neo-Confucians were unanimous in their conviction of the rationality and intelligibility of the phenomenal world and in their affirmation of the basic Confucian values. But they were still left with a problem on their hands: the existence of evil. At the practical level, the question was one of remedy, which formed a leading topic of debate between rival Neo-Confucian schools. Similarly controversial was the theoretical aspect of the matters which concerned the origin of evil. In the answering of this question - and of the whole problem of a universe by now apparently bifurcated - the Confucians were driven on to the hitherto unaccustomed plane of serious metaphysics.

A final point about the historical background of Neo-Confucian thought must be noted. Although metaphysics entered the field partly in sheer defence of practical Confucian morality against world-negating Buddhism, there was also a substantial strain of speculative activity indulged in for its own sake, bred from centuries of Neo-Taoist and Buddhist speculation. Many streams of thought flowed into Neo-Confucianism, an amorphous system which could accurately be described as "Chinese thought from the Sung to the Ch'ing". Various historical factors were responsible for this; chief among them was the

government examination system, which practically closed the doors of the only respectable vocation for an educated man to all but those versed in the Confucian Classics. There were therefore herded under the Neo-Confucian banner (because it was no longer practicable to be assigned anywhere else) many who liked metaphysics, having sprung directly or indirectly from the speculative schools.

The Fusion of Two Worlds: Outline of the Debate

The basic problem facing the Sung scholars was to bring together two realms between which Buddhist speculation had driven a wedge. Put at its briefest, the division was between "abstract" and "concrete". In expanded form, the world of order, principle, reason, value, permanence and the like was set against the world of physical phenomena, sense-perception, change and imperfection. The early Neo-Confucians established the use of several sets of terms roughly (not exactly, and not consistently) corresponding to these two categories. There were the well-known terms of earlier Chinese (including Confucian) philosophy, such as T'ien 天, ming 命, Tao 道, on the one hand, and wu 物 (material things, affairs), ch'ing 情 (circumstances, feelings), ch'i 氣 (something akin to physical force) and ch'i 器 (a technical term used to mean "concrete thing"), on the other hand. The distinction was commonly drawn between Tao and ch'i 器, for example. In the well-mulled quotation from the Great Appendix of the I-ching,

> 形而上者之謂之道。形而下者之謂之器。
>
> (Above form it is called the Way, below form it is called the
> (instruments (concrete things).
> (
> (What is above form is called the Way, what is below form is
> (called the instrument (concrete things).[32]

The choice of interpretation depended on which side one was on.

But the most characteristic concept of Neo-Confucian metaphysics was that of li 理 (principle). This was the central term used by the Sung school to express the idea of order, pattern, principle and so on. It was used in conjunction with ch'i 氣 to provide the basis of a formal explanation of the nature of reality. As to the exact implications of the terms li and ch'i, the former is particularly difficult to define. It is not only Western translators who have difficulty with the exact meaning of li: its implications were widely debated within the Neo-Confucian ranks. An obvious clue lies in its historical context, for it was imported straight from Buddhism, where it was a metaphysical absolute immanent in human beings but transcendant over the physical world. Li had previously appeared as "rational order or principle" in third-century Neo-Taoism, notably in the writings of Wang Pi, who employed li as a single, overall concept. The original meaning of the word was believed (until recently[33]) to be "veins in jade" or "to dress jade". Since the Neo-Confucians were chiefly concerned with asserting the reality of this world and the importance of moral action within it, they linked metaphysical, moral and natural principles firmly together and took over li as an all-embracing concept, expressing the immaterial and immutable aspect of reality. Li was also used in the plural to indicate particular principles.

The term ch'i 氣, which was one of the commonest words of the Chinese language, meaning originally "breath", had acquired by Sung times (notably in Chang Tsai) the philosophical meaning of "material force". It comprised what we should call matter and energy, with the emphasis on the latter, as it was typically envisaged in rarefied forms such as fire and wind. Dr. Graham translates it as "ether". Most emphatically it was not limited to "dead matter" (by now an out-

dated conception in the West in any case). In contrast with li, it stood for change and for differentiation.

There were three main positions open to Chinese thinkers on the question of the relationship of abstract and concrete. The middle position was that adopted by Chu Hsi, whose synthesis ultimately enjoyed the status of orthodoxy. Chu Hsi adopted Ch'eng I's dualistic theory, according to which "Outside the Way there are no things and outside things there is no Way". According to Chu Hsi, in ch.49 of his collected works, "Throughout the universe there is no ch'i 氣 without li, nor is there any li without ch'i." In practice he had some difficulty in maintaining this position. Discussing the question of priority he said:

> "When considered from the standpoint of principle, before things existed, their principles of being had already existed. Only their principles existed, however, but not yet the things themselves."

Again:

> "Fundamentally, principle cannot be interpreted in the senses of existence or nonexistence. Before Heaven and Earth came into being, it already was as it is."

Again:

> "The Great Ultimate is nothing other than principle."[34]

Clearly, for Chu Hsi metaphysical principle takes precedence of its material manifestation, but he insists (in other parts of his writings) that in actual fact there is no difference in time; in other words, li enjoys only logical priority.[35]

The "idealistic" monism towards which Chu Hsi's arguments veered constituted the position actually taken up by the Ming philosopher Wang Yang-ming, who was in some ways anticipated by Ch'eng Hao and

Lu Chiu-yuan of the Sung dynasty. These thinkers argued for a more outright idealism interpreting Tao 道 and ch'i 器 as two aspects of a single entity. Wang Yang-ming took the extreme position of regarding li as the only reality, and the mind as equivalent to li. In true Berkeleyan fashion, he asserted:

> "Before you look at these flowers, they and your mind are in the state of silent vacancy. As you come to look at them, their colours at once show up clearly."[36]

The third (and for a long time a less influential) view also argued for the fundamental unity of Tao and ch'i 器 , but instead of drawing ch'i up into the Tao, it asserted ch'i to be the prime entity. Chang Tsai could be described as an early exponent of this sort of monism, in that he did not work with the term li at all, but regarded everything as comprehended in ch'i 氣 . His "Great Void" (T'ai-hsu 太虛) was simply a rarefied form of ether. Explicit assertion of the priority of the concrete aspect of the universe came with Wang Fu-chih:

> "The world consists only of concrete things. The Way is the Way of concrete things, but concrete things may not be called concrete things of the Way. People generally are capable of saying that without its Way there cannot be the concrete thing ... Few people are capable of saying that without a concrete thing there cannot be its way, but it is certainly true."

Again, on "what is above form" (形而上者) (above),

> "'...what exists before physical form' [and is therefore without it] does not mean there is no physical form. There is already physical form .... Lao Tzu was blind to this and said that the Way existed in vacuity. But

vacuity is the vacuity of concrete things. The Buddha was blind to this and said that the Way existed in silence. But silence is the silence of concrete things."[37]

Tai Chen in the eighteenth century similarly took a decisive stand for the meaning of li as mere pattern of organisation, subordinate to ch'i 氣.

It must be pointed out that the third view, if representing a sharp revulsion from the prevalent attitude, bore strong affiliations to the older Chinese outlook which regarded change as dynamic and relative, springing out of the primal one (whether Tao, T'ai-chi 太極 or T'ai-hsu 太虛).

Philosophical Significance of the Debate

Such was the bare form of the dispute. But what of its content? A common way of handling the subject is to discuss it in terms of Western philosophical categories. There are obvious similarities between the li v. ch'i antithesis and those "abstract v. concrete" disputes in the West that have gone under various names, such as Rationalism v. Empiricism, Idealism v. Materialism (or Realism). For two reasons I shall not explore this aspect of the subject very fully. One is that it has already been done: Dr. Carsun Chang, for example, bases his description of the rise of Neo-Confucianism on the comparative approach.[38] Many other writers assume the validity of such a framework. The second reason is that the intrinsic value of this approach is highly questionable on more than one count. a) The idealist v. materialist controversy in the west has long since been something of a dead letter. In particular, materialism failed to sustain its claims as a viable philosophical system. On the face of it, it seems undesirable to transfer the inadequacies and misconceptions of one philosophical tradition to another. b) In the

event, there are difficulties in applying the categories of idealism and materialism to Chinese schools of thought. To describe Chu Hsi as an idealist (as is frequently done), for example, is only one degree better than calling him a materialist; Dr. Chang settles for "synthesist" but he might equally well have written "not applicable". In general, the inconsistencies in the conception of li and ch'i are too marked by the Western standard of reckoning: li is both normative and descriptive;[39] ch'i is for Chang Tsai the all-embracing principle and yet sense-perceptions, obviously based on ch'i, were by him sharply differentiated from moral judgments.[40]

However, as Wang Fu-chih, the writer with whom we are chiefly concerned, is rarely mentioned without the appellation "materialist", it is as well to demonstrate the shortcomings of this view in some detail. The arguments against the use of the term "materialism" in connection with this or any other Neo-Confucian thinker are also relevant to the discussion of the relevance of Organic thought, in which they are therefore included.

A recent line of argument, expressed chiefly by Professor Needham,[41] is that the main line of thought within Neo-Confucianism (i.e. excluding the "idealist" tradition - that of Wang Yang-ming) perfected a long-term development in Chinese thinking towards a philosophy of organism, akin to that expounded by Whitehead. Now this may be but another red-herring, but as it is to date the most plausible presentation of Chinese thought in Western dress, and as this form of naturalism claims to bridge the gap which the idealist and materialist systems failed to do, the argument is worthy of study.

Several of Needham's points are incontrovertible, for example, that interaction consisting of stimulation and response, rather than development through cause and effect, is the basis of change in the

universe, and that harmony is spontaneous rather than imposed from without. But in trying to demonstrate that li 理 (which he translates "pattern-principle") was wholly immanent in ch'i 氣, or that Chu Hsi wanted it to be, he either ignores or misunderstands certain inalienable characteristics of li; the probability is that he accepts them in a measure without seeing the difficulty implicit in the very nature of li.

In the first place, despite the fact that li had once signified nothing more than "order" or "arrangement", for about eight centuries Chinese thought had become fairly acclimatised to the notion of an "absolute principle" as suggested in third century Taoist and asserted in Buddhist writings. It seems hardly likely on the face of it that opponents of transcendence should take from the enemy a term expressive of that very principle and convert it into the prime concept of their own thought, retaining nothing of its former implication. Not only is it not likely; it did not happen. From the first, li in the writings of Neo-Confucianism connoted ethical as well as natural principle: there is abundant evidence that the two were not easily separated in the Chinese mind.[42] (Consider, for example, the characteristic belief that the objective facts of history constitute a guide to moral action, or the very composition of terms denoting moral principle).[43] The phrases so-i jan (所以然) and so tang jan (所當然) were both commonly applied to li by the Ch'eng brothers, and, according to a thirteenth century definition of the term:

> "If we exhaust the principles in the things of the world, it will be found that a thing must have a reason why it is as it is (所以然之故) and a rule to which it should conform (所當然之則), which is what is meant by 'principle'."[44]

The ambivalence of li and allied concepts caused both the Ch'eng brothers difficulty when dealing with the problem of good and evil. Good actions consisted in following li, and yet bad actions could not be devoid of li, for, as Ch'eng I decisively asserted, nothing could occur without a li that it would occur. Ch'eng Hao tackled the problem by saying that good and evil were both involved in li but this evil was not "fundamental evil". In terms of ming 命, everything that took place was decreed, yet one could attain one's "true decree" or alternatively one could usurp the decree.

But li was not only the individual principle of each thing; it could stand for a single, all-embracing concept which Ch'eng I equated with the Way of Heaven[45] and Chu Hsi with Heaven itself. It comprehended the Four moral norms, jen 仁, yi 義, li 禮 and chih 智, according to Chu Hsi.

It is true that a vital element of the meaning of li was the functional one. The "things" with which li was associated were generally not wu 物 (thing, creature), but shih 事 (affair, activity). One is sometimes tempted to translate li by "modus operandi". But the overtones of our word "functional" (except possibly in Organic thought) differ from those of yung 用, which implied the functions a thing ought to have. This preoccupation with correct activity rather than with the agent in itself comes out with ludicrous effect for the unwary Western reader in the following quotations from Ch'en Ch'un, disciple of Chu Hsi:

"If we look at the matter in relation to activities and things, each of itself has a principle to which it should conform (tang-jan chih li). For example, 'the way he placed his feet was grave, and his hands, sedate'. The foot is a thing, gravity is its principle; the hand is a thing, sedateness is its principle. Again, 'when looking, his object is

to see clearly; when listening, to hear clearly'. Clear sight and hearing are the principles of looking and listening. Again, 'sit like a representative of the dead, stand as if purifying yourself for sacrifice'. To be like a representative of the dead, and as if purifying oneself for sacrifice, are the principles of sitting and standing. Inferring by analogy, everything, great or small, high or low, has an appropriate principle to which it should conform."[46]

Nor was the belief in an absolute standard of morality limited to those who held the first or second positions (mentioned above); Wang Fu-chih himself, and Tai Chen, who "insisted that even the great qualities of fellow-feeling, righteousness, decorum and wisdom are simply extensions of the fundamental instincts of nutrition and sex, or the natural urge to preserve life and postpone death, and that they are not to be sought apart from these urges. Virtue will therefore not be the absence or suppression of desires, but their orderly expression and fulfilment."[47], had to postulate an "unalterable, objective and necessary principle as the standard".[48]

For, of course, the whole Neo-Confucian structure was based on the conviction of the validity of moral action. Morality as an a priori principle of action was assumed in Confucian thought, even if not formulated in abstract terms with the logical precision of Western moral philosophy. The net result is that to describe any Confucian thinker as a materialist just will not do, even while it may be allowed that the idealist v. realist controversy of Western philosophy bears a wavering reflection in Chinese thought. Even the term "naturalism" is hardly accurate, except that it is in any case an ambiguous concept, for naturalistic philosophies the world over fail to naturalise morality, or at least to reduce it to dependence on anything other than itself without

vitiating its central meaning. Even the exponents of "emergent morality" in modern organic naturalism fail to achieve a real synthesis of the traditional dualism of post-Cartesian philosophy; all too often inference is made from the indicative to the imperative, from the mere facts of experience to normative standards of conduct. A true reconciliation must admit transcendent principle to an equal share of honour with immanent pattern.

Practical Significance of the Debate

To study the metaphysical controversy in isolation would place it in a false light. It must be seen in relation to certain fundamental problems of Confucian philosophy which it helped to clarify - or mystify (according to one's taste). These problems had hitherto been relatively practical (as was to be expected); they concerned the relationship between good and evil and human nature, the main focus of attention being the practical means of remedying evil rather than the metaphysical origins of evil. In the Neo-Confucian period both of these questions were discussed at length.

The entire Neo-Confucian period has sometimes been viewed as one of fierce debate, but the amount of common ground shared by opposing factions should not be missed. The fundamental factor here is that they were all Confucians, and for the most part Confucians of the Mencian persuasion. In the early period of fluidity, there was scope for the vigorous, efficient reforming policies of Fan Chung-yen and Wang An-shih - policies which their opponents claimed ignored the need to reform the inner man before transforming his outward actions. From the beginning of the Ming, when Chu Hsi's interpretation of the Confucian Classics received the seal of orthodoxy, it was the latter school of thought whose doctrines were absorbed by successive generations of candidates for government service. In particular, the conflicting views of human nature that had existed in the past now

gave way to the Mencian view, which ascribed goodness to human nature as such, thus envisaging the possibility of moral improvement for all men. Moral issues were consequently seen to play the predominating part in government at all levels.

A second characteristic common to all Neo-Confucians who discussed the origins of evil was their denial of its existence on the ultimate plane of reality. They had various ways of making this point, but make it they did. A certain fusion of earlier philosophical traditions seems to have taken place in the process. There was the deeply rooted awareness of nature's dualistic behaviour: nothing could be conceived without its opposite, and yang and yin were sometimes envisaged as good and evil. But yang and yin were also "positive" and "negative", and ultimate dualism was not the answer for most Chinese philosophers. It is interesting to note how many Chinese terms for "evil" and the like are straightforward or implied negatives: fei 非 ("bad", literally "is not"), hsieh 邪 (crooked), p'o 頗 (one-sided). Moreover, it was not sheerly moral ideas that were thereby negated; for the concurrence of normative and descriptive concepts see pp. 41-2, 51 above. But the suggestion of good as the positive, original reality and evil as negative and derivative was only one of several implicit in Chinese thought. Very common was the view of good and evil as complementary aspects of the Tao in its actual manifestation; the essential nature of the Tao was remote, unknowable, transcending good and evil. Yet (as has been noted above)[49] even this Tao reserved some sense of "goodness".

A common factor in the treatment of evil in human behaviour by the Sung and Ming schools was their tendency to associate the passions with evil. In so doing they were inheriting a tradition which went to the roots of the Chinese way of thought. The issues at stake were the typical Chinese concern for objectivity, for

identification of the self with reality as a whole, for kung 公 (public-spiritedness) as opposed to ssu 私 (partiality). It was always felt that the passions were a potential source of danger, since they tended to interfere with one's original capacity for an immediate, impartial response to external events.[50] In the words of I-ching, "the superior man controls his anger and restrains his instincts" (Wilhelm).[51] Some schools were more rigorous than others: Mo Tzu, for example, would have none of the emotions, but only a universally directed jen. Mencius, on the other hand, gave his sanction to the normal activity of the emotions, only counselling that the desires should be few so that the mind be not distracted by their overabundance, and that one's own desires should be the basis of sympathy with those of other people. Perhaps the most luminous account in Neo-Confucian times of the operation of the passions is that of the Ch'eng brothers, according to whom the individual human being, properly speaking, has no passions, for he is one with all nature and his passions ought to be attached to things.

> "It is a constant principle.... that the sage, since with his passions he follows the innumerable activities, has no passions. Therefore nothing that the gentleman learns is more important than to be completely disinterested towards everything, responding in accordance with things as they come ... The sage rejoices over things which deserve rejoicing and is angry with things that deserve anger, so that his joy and anger are not attached to his mind but attached to things ....
>
> "It is inherent in men that each has his blind spot, which prevents him from according with the Way; but in general the trouble lies with selfishness and calculation. If

> you are selfish, you cannot regard action as an immediate response; if you are calculating, you cannot regard insight as spontaneous."[52]

More explicitly,

> "When the sage Shun punished the four evil men, his anger was in <u>them</u>: what had Shun to do with it? For he was angry with a man because he deserved anger; the mind of the sage is fundamentally without anger. It may be compared to a mirror ... The mind of the sage is like still water."[53]

For the school of Wang Yang-ming, wilful surrender to selfish desires was basically the only source of evil; those minded like Chu Hsi differed not in their treatment of the passions but in their attribution of evil to other sources also.[54]

A further similarity between the opposing schools of thought lay in the pattern of their origin and development. The recurring motif in this pattern is one of the rise of a new school preaching moral action, the growth of the school in popularity and the concurrent blurring of its standards of practical morality, leading to a reaction in the form of the revived championship of moral action. The three dominant movements were the Ch'eng-Chu school (associated with the Sung philosophers Ch'eng I, Ch'eng Hao and Chu Hsi), the Lu-Wang school (associated with Lu Chiu-yuan and Wang Yang-ming) and the "Ch'ing School of Empirical Research". In the founding of each of these there was a markedly similar reaction in favour of concrete action against excessive abstraction on the part of scholars. This is clear enough in the cases of the initial establishment of Neo-Confucianism and the conviction of the early Ch'ing scholars that practical learning, and not the endless spinning of "empty words", must be the basis of the Empire's regeneration. Wang Yang-ming's case is

no exception to the general rule. In the first place, the idealism which is so firmly attached to him consisted in the placing of principle firmly within one's own mind; moreover, in identifying knowledge and action he was stressing the importance of the concrete, individual situation. He was reacting in typical Confucian (practical) fashion against the sterile intellectualism of the followers of Chu Hsi.

The above serves to indicate something of what the disputants had in common.

But there were also fundamental differences. The opposite tendencies of scholasticism and introspection (the latter being associated with the school of Wang Yang-ming) did not merely arise from the excesses of later disciples of the schools. They were inherent in the founders' approach to the problem of evil. Prior to the end of the Ming, Neo-Confucianism was split into two main wings on this subject.

The first view, which found official favour, was that of Chu Hsi. On the origins of evil, Chu Hsi ruled that li (principle) is good, but that ch'i (material force), being concrete and limited, is imperfect. He followed Mencius to the extent of identifying human nature with li, but he attributed evil to the embodiment of the original nature in ch'i, drawing on Chang Tsai's theory that evil was simply imbalance between the two forces which drove ch'i. Ch'i in this case was "turbid", and could only become "clear" by restoration of the correct balance. The ch'i of one's physical nature comprehended both the passions and the intelligence. Reformation had therefore to be carried out on two fronts: moral and intellectual. In terms of the famous Confucian antithesis, "knowledge" must precede "action". Knowledge was acquired by

"investigation into the principles of things", which theoretically included looking within oneself as well as without, but since li was best sought where it was not obscured by ch'i, Chu Hsi favoured the more objective approach.

The concept of ke-wu 格物 (investigation of things) became central in Neo-Confucian thought and practice. It was not a new one. The phrase itself was lifted straight from the Great Learning, one of the Chapters in the Book of Rites; in the edited version of the Great Learning[55], ke-wu was made the first stage in the reforming process. It was related by the Ch'eng brothers to a passage in I-ching which speakes of the sages "exhausting the principles, fulfilling the nature and so attaining their destiny". (窮理盡性以至於命)[56]. The practical content of the term as used by the Neo-Confucians consisted in the study of "affairs" (the primary, though not the only meaning of "things" in this context), and the chief field of study was the Classics. It should be stressed that for Chu Hsi and the other early Neo-Confucians the study of the Classics was not a matter of arid scholasticism. Although intellectual investigation was the first stage in the process of outward activity, it must from the start be accompanied by a sense of moral purpose which should integrate the various activities of the mind. The term used to express this inner attitude was ching 敬, commonly translated "reverence", but involving also a strong sense of single-minded attention to the business in hand. (Graham translates it as "composure"). "Making unity the ruling consideration" (主一) was the Ch'engs' explanation of ching, and sincerity (ch'eng 誠) was its outcome. An alternative, exceedingly common, way of describing the foundation of the scholar's attitude referred to the need to establish his goal (chih 志, which spoke both of the will and the proper purpose to which it was bent). Given these conditions

of the right psychological attitude, the knowledge of principles acquired by the investigation of things was more than a merely theoretical understanding. It was a spiritual illumination, a direct apprehension of the sort which leads spontaneously to action. To illustrate it one of the Ch'eng brothers instanced the different effects of the rumoured activities of a tiger on a peasant who had "true knowledge" through having been injured by a tiger and the rest who had only "everyday knowledge". He continues, "So when men know evil but still do it, this also is not true knowledge; if it were, decidedly they would not do it."[57]

Here we are approaching the crux of the whole problem of evil as it figured in Neo-Confucian philosophy. The writings of these early Neo-Confucians reveal their tentative steps towards the logical outworking of the Mencian view that human nature is fundamentally good. Mencius himself, despite the contemporary freedom of Confucianism from systematic logic and metaphysics, is nevertheless reasonably consistent: rather than uphold what was to become a timeworn conception of Chinese thought, first expressed in Shu-ching, namely, "Knowledge is easy, but action difficult",[58] he took the line that "the superior man seeks simply to bring back the unchanging standard, and that being rectified, the masses are roused to virtue." In other words, once people know clearly what is right, they will follow it. This was the position towards which the philosophers of the Ch'eng-Chu school were always edging, although they were not entirely comfortable in it. Actual experience, after all, furnished abundant evidence of conscious and deliberate wrongdoing. Hence the reason why Chu Hsi had to postulate ch'i 氣 as a part of the nature which Mencius had missed. Chu Hsi's solution was not a bad one, but it was not ideal.

The difficulty in ch'i was that it tried to combine two elements: that which is fundamental, "given", in accordance and in interdependence with li 理 (principle); and also that which is adventitious and productive of both good and evil though itself morally void. Now the most important thing that the Ch'eng-Chu school wanted to say was that moral and intellectual reformation is not a process concerned with the original nature; it affects only the mind, which is constituted by ch'i. But man's natural desire to do good, his initial settling of the will on moral action, was firmly grounded in the realm of li - this was an indispensable part of the Confucian doctrine. Hence to admit the need for redirection of the will and for specifically moral effort (in addition to intellectual enlightenment) was to invade the territory of li, or alternatively to attribute to ch'i what by rights belonged to li. To put it more plainly, Chu Hsi was unable to prove that human nature was fundamentally good, in that he failed to solve the problem of why some men basically withhold the assent of their wills from good. Knowledge, it seemed, did not ensure action, unless one compromised the position by introducing a special kind of knowledge.

To a Chinese philosopher, however, the chief focus of interest was not so much the whys and wherefores as the facts themselves and what to do about them. Chu Hsi's decision in favour of the goodness of man's original nature was not questioned thereafter; it was rather reinforced by subsequent thinkers. What did become a bone of contention was the practical issue. The emphasis which Chu Hsi had given to Classical study tended to become exclusive on the part of later generations of scholars; moreover, now that one man's interpretation of the Classics had been officially adopted by the government, the familiar situation of wholesale learning by rote

reasserted itself. When reaction came it was in the form of an appeal for decisive action.

The school of Wang Yang-ming represents the second main trend in Sung-Ming thought. The clue to the distinctive teaching of Wang Yang-ming lies partly in the fact that he was himself a man impatient for action: witness his effective handling of more than one spate of rebellions and the general storminess of his political career. Like his philosophical predecessor, Lu Chiu-yuan, he had no faith in the time-consuming business of "empty talk" (k'ung-yen 空言) and laborious research into minute details, which was the supposed prerequisite for moral action. He therefore denied that the intelligence was clouded by evil, and that the nature was distinguishable from the mind. "All things are complete within me"[59]: mind - nature - li 理 - it was all one. Man already possessed the innate knowledge (liang-chih 良知) of good: not a speculative, theoretic knowledge, but the immediate grasp of how to act in a particular, given situation. In truly spontaneous conduct, knowledge flowed indistinguishably into action and thus rounded itself. "Knowledge is the beginning of action; action is the completion of knowledge"; thus was the unity of knowledge and action explicitly asserted by Wang Yang-ming.

The corollary was that evil arose not so much from ignorance as from deliberate selfishness. The familiar theme of the passions as the source of evil was therefore dominant in Wang Yang-ming's thought. Part of the remedy he prescribed was simply that of undiluted moral effort. But it was the other part for which his school became chiefly famous: this was the doctrine that personal realisation could come in the manner of sudden enlightenment through meditation. This was no new idea, but the ascendancy it gained amongst many of his followers exposed them to the accusation of Ch'an Buddhist tendencies. All in all, Wang Yang-ming's teachings led indirectly to the promotion

of extravagences under the banner of "sudden enlightenment" and to the subjective appropriation of morality for any whim of behaviour.[60]

In the predictable criticism of later Ming scholars by those of the early Ch'ing, the ruling tendency was to avoid all metaphysical discussion in favour of practical learning. Thus Ku Yen-wu regretted "that for the past hundred odd years, scholars have devoted so much discussion to the mind and human nature, all of it vague and quite incomprehensible."[61] But metaphysical speculation did not die out. This time the reaction against the prevalence of theories of li had to deal not just with li removed beyond the scope of human affairs, but with li which was insufferably flaunted in justification of any and every affair[62] and yet beyond the reach of regulation, being grounded exclusively in individual intuition.

The foremost philosopher of the new age was Wang Fu-chih, who can be identified with the main empiricist movement of the Ch'ing in that he rejected the idea of abstract principles existing in any sense independent of their physical manifestation.[63] Like Tai Chen who lived after him, he affirmed that T'ien-li 天理 (Heavenly principle, or Law of Nature) was embodied in jen-ch'ing 人情 (human desires), and could not be seen apart from them. He endorsed the principle of impartiality in human response to events, but insisted that this was interlocked with the satisfaction of the passions. He did, however, admit that the passions could be a source of evil.[64]

Of the Ch'ing scholars in general it may be said that there was a revival of the respect for Classical learning, which had lost prestige under the influence of the Lu-Wang school. The perennial faith of the Confucian that the records of the past constituted a guide to affairs of the present was strongly reaffirmed. There were, however, differences of approach, and these will be considered in the next section.

Further Implications of the Metaphysical Debate

So far attention has been paid to the relationship of the metaphysical debate with differing views on the inculcation of morality, but with little reference to the actual content of correct social and political behaviour as it was envisaged by the various schools. Outside the large area of agreement which must exist between Confucians of whatever persuasion, there was scope for disagreement on the institutional expression of Confucian ideals, and therefore on the extent to which the Classics provided a blueprint for society.

Prior to the Ch'ing, the main source of dissension regarding political institutions was not what was ideal, but what was practical. When scholars uttered the age-old statement that "as times alter, so do institutions", they were not referring to what the Westerner would regard as major organs of government; the Chinese term chih 制 (system, institution) was typically connected with detailed matters of ritual, such as the date set by a new dynasty as the beginning of the year, or the vessels used in sacrifice. Where the basic fabric of society and government was concerned, the Sung and Ming Confucians were virtually unanimous. The structure of the Empire that appeared in the Classical descriptions of China's "Golden Age" was the unquestioned, unquestionable ideal. This attitude is epitomised in the conventional nostalgia for the "well-field" system which according to Mencius governed land-ownership in ancient feudal times. But the ideal was not the practical; the feudal empire had suffered its final demise at the hands of the Ch'in dynasty and by the Sung period a thousand years or so had been spent in the development of a bureaucratic empire. Hence any attempt to revive ancient customs was bound to be fiercely debated in terms of practical expediency - which for a Chinese meant also in terms of right.

The classic demonstration of these issues is of course the case of Wang An-shih. Leaving aside the bitter, emotionally-charged vituperations of the gentlemen harmed by his reforms, and also the element of principled opposition to measures which were felt to savour of Legalistic interference rather than Confucian idealism, it can easily be seen that a substantial part of the charge against him was concerned with the timing and importunity of his attempts at reform. It should not be forgotten that a substantial weight of Neo-Confucian opinion, represented notably by Ch'eng Hao, was originally in broad sympathy with his measures. The reasons for the widespread opposition that developed were summed up by Chu Hsi in the next century:

"The implementation of the reforms was actually planned by all the statesmen together. Even Ch'eng Hao did not consider them to be wrong, for he felt that the time was ripe for a change. Only later, when everyone's feelings had been aroused, did Ch'eng Hao begin to urge Wang An-shih not to do things that went against human feelings."[65]

The philosophical basis of Chu Hsi's position was the Confucian idea that inner reform must precede outer reform. If men's ch'i (physical constitution) was so gross that they were not yet ready or willing for a return to Classical institutions, then they must be educated into a better frame of mind, but on no account be forced. He therefore accepted that, as things stood, a practical return to the past was impossible.

But Chu Hsi's pessimism ran even deeper than this. Basically, he believed that the Classics represented a sort of norm which was all but unattainable by later times. For him, they distilled the essence of li (principle); they revealed the perfect operation of the Tao as it was never since realised - and, it was virtually certain, never

would be realised. The achievements of some of the greatest of China's emperors in the intervening fifteen centuries were dependent for their motivation on human desires and for their success on coincidence - so he told Ch'en Liang, in a debate which foreshadowed a second major cleavage in the Neo-Confucian attitude to the Classics.[66]

The protagonists in this second debate were somewhat unevenly matched. By far the majority of Neo-Confucians, including many of those in the Ch'ing dynasty (prior to Western influences), were in theory restorationists, identifying the ancient feudal period with an unrivalled realisation of the Tao. Ch'en Liang disagreed both with this verdict on antiquity and with the adverse criticism of the post-classical age, but he was no philosopher - as he himself averred. With the new philosophical trend that succeeded the end of the Ming, however, there came the suggestion of a basic change of attitude from that which had characterised the Sung-Ming school. That school had been preoccupied with li-hsueh 理學 (the study of principle), thus concentrating on the unchanging, absolute norms that stood in contrast to the imperfections and variations in actual human affairs. The Ch'ing philosophers, on the other hand, transferred the emphasis of their thought to ch'i 氣 - so much so that many of them were not metaphysicians at all. But some were, and prominent among them was Wang Fu-chih, who grounded li more firmly in ch'i than had yet been done. When it came to the relevance of certain feudal institutions for the present, Wang's answer was a flat, uncompromising "no".

The philosophical tendencies of Wang Fu-chih's thought were undoubtedly related to the original form of his Classicism. Like his predecessors in the Neo-Confucian era, he dug deeply into the most metaphysical of the ancient texts, notably I Ching, but drawing from it the material that spoke of continuous change and transformation. One of the most important concepts of his thought was that of

timeliness (shih 時). He refused to believe of history that the replacement of the feudal by the bureaucratic empire was a disaster, or even a minor pity, nor did he countenance the ascription of the feudal period to the realm of T'ien-li 天 理 (the principle of Heaven) and the rest of history to that of jen-ch'ing 人 情 (human desires). That the Classics revealed what was right for Classical times he did not doubt; that they revealed eternally basic principles in the way affairs were handled he likewise agreed; but the actual concrete solutions to the problems of their times were, he insisted, essentially rooted in those times. Hence he dismissed the idea of returning to the well-field system on the grounds of its intrinsic irrelevance to the present day.

There are yet further implications which might be drawn from the philosophical alignments of the various schools of Neo-Confucianism, did the scope of this paper permit it. One subject to which only brief allusion can be made is the question of the relationship of the li v. ch'i debate to the antithesis between despotism (of a kind which Eberhard calls machiavellian)[67] and Confucian moral hierarchy. Put rather crudely, the issue is this. Chu Hsi's account of human nature, whereby he attributed moral differences to variations in physical constitution (ch'i), clearly reinforced the Confucian conception of moral and therefore political hierarchy, even while it assured men of the possibility of improving one's status by moral cultivation. There would always be a class system, though the individual was not irrevocably confined to his class. Wang Yang-ming's insistence that all men have innate knowledge of principle (li), and that all can potentially become sage-rulers, had ambiguous political effects. It could very

easily lead to a sort of nihilism in which every man was a law unto himself - and indeed the century after Wang Yang-ming was marked by a certain amount of those extravaganzas that periodically betrayed "the Taoist in every Chinese". More seriously, the notion that li 理 dwelt unclouded in the mind of every man was a potent weapon in the hands of the individual who happened to be in political power - as was seen to effect in the reign of the Yung-cheng Emperor of the Ch'ing (r. 1723 - 1735). Wang Yang-ming's position was open to attack on another front: the stress on action before speculation could savour in practice of Legalism - just as the bulldozing policies of that other man of action, Wang An-shih, had done.

In summing up: the philosophical basis of Chinese thought as manifested in the Confucian tradition seems to be two-fold. Uncompromising insistence on morality as a categorical imperative is one of the notes that sounds most clearly throughout the history of Confucianism. So austere was the conception of good that for several hundred years of Neo-Confucianism the Principle of Heaven was assumed to be in direct opposition to human desires. Yet there was an equally strong conviction that "Nature" (in the broadest sense) was good. T'ien-li also bears translation as "Principle of Nature", and the human desires that came under censure were specifically selfish desires - those eruptions of partial feeling that interfered with the spontaneous processes of nature as a whole. The Confucian always had to adjust himself to the present world; the norms which were for him as absolute as any in a more vigorously-argued logical system were nonetheless inseparably associated with the ordinary affairs of men. The mind of the universe was most completely realised in man.

CHAPTER THREE

INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXT

I. The History of Thought Relating to the Imperial Mandate

"Heaven is called 'hard to trust' ... and the Mandate 'not easily got'": with such well-known echoes of the Classical Book of Documents does Wang Fu-chih open his discussion of the rise of the Sung Dynasty. To appreciate the nature of his arguments it is necessary to look at the whole tradition of ideas surrounding royal right and responsibility in Chinese thought.

The Classical sources if taken at their face value would suggest that from time immemorial the conception of rulership in China contained some of the mystical associations that it has enjoyed the world over. Government, according to the Confucian canon, was from ancient times vested in one man, whose function it was to ensure both social harmony and regularity in the processes of nature, which last was believed to mirror Heaven's response to the deeds of men. In Classical thought the monarch's role not only in the state, but in the cosmos itself, was indispensable; only in Taoism was there a wistful backward look to a prehistoric age free of the domination of kings. There was thus no area of life that was irrelevant to the matter of kingship - Government was a political, a social, a moral, even a religious affair. Whatever the precise nature of the theories attached to rulership in the earliest times, there existed by the time of the Chou[1] a body of specific doctrines on the subject of ius. Further theories were woven around the subject by philosophers until well after the first millenium A.D. Of the total sum of ideas that had crystallised by the mid-Sung period, a certain part was inseparable from the whole Chinese culture, being grounded in basic philosophical attitudes as well as in the practical needs of society (particularly of the ruling class). But there was also much of a more extraneous nature, even though widely accepted by generations of scholars.

What we might call the original deposit of formal political theory was laid down in Classical literature dating from the foundation of the Chou dynasty.[2] The chief doctrine there enshrined was that of the Mandate of Heaven (T'ien-ming 天命). The substance of this doctrine was that no ruler has absolute possession of the throne: he has a duty to rule in the best interests of the people, and he rules by virtue of Heaven's Mandate. The Mandate is received only after a demonstration of outstanding virtue by the candidate for the throne. The Mandate is likewise removed from those who show themselves unworthy of it. Hence - according to the Chou documents - Emperors Wen and Wu of Chou acted under Heaven against the degenerate Shang dynasty. It was alleged that the Shang in its turn had risen as the virtuous agent of Heaven's wrath against the preceding Hsia dynasty. As to the means of interpreting Heaven's will, a sure sign that the Mandate was about to change would be the occurrence of appropriate omens, both natural and supernatural, together with the people's readiness to change their allegiance. The clearest way to render the flavour of these ideas is by direct quotation; the following passage, although not now considered authentic[3], is a comprehensive guide to the essential elements of Mandate theory as it existed throughout the two millenia that succeeded the Classical age. The speech is ascribed to the founder of the Shang dynasty.

"Ah! Ye multitudes of the myriad regions, listen clearly to the announcement of me, the one man. The great God has conferred even on the inferior people a moral sense, compliance with which would show their nature invariably right. But to cause them tranquilly to pursue the course which it would indicate, is the work of the sovereign.

"The king of Hsia extinguished his virtue and played the tyrant, extending his oppression over you, the people of the myriad regions. Suffering from his cruel injuries, and unable to endure the wormwood and poison, you protested with one accord your innocence to the spirits of heaven and earth. The way of Heaven is to bless the good and to punish the bad. It sent down calamities on the House of Hsia, to make manifest its crimes.

"Therefore, I, the little child, charged with the decree of Heaven and its bright terrors, did not dare to forgive the criminal. I presumed to use a dark coloured victim, and making clear announcement to the spiritual Sovereign of the high heavens, requested leave to deal with the ruler of Hsia as a criminal. Then I sought for the great sage, with whom I might unite my strength, to request the favour of Heaven on behalf of you, my multitudes. High Heaven truly showed its favour to the inferior people, and the criminal has been degraded and subjected. Heaven's appointment is without error; - brilliantly now like the blossoming of flowers and trees, the millions of the people show a true reviving.

"It is given to me, the one man, to give harmony and tranquillity to your States and Families; and now I know not whether I may not offend the powers above and below. I am fearful and trembling, as if I should fall into a deep abyss.

"Throughout all the States that enter on a new life under me, do not, ye princes, follow lawless ways; make no approach to insolent dissoluteness; let everyone observe to keep his statutes: - that so we may receive the favour of Heaven. The good in you, I will not dare to conceal; and for the evil in me, I will not dare to forgive myself; - I will examine these things in harmony with the mind of God. When guilt is found anywhere in you who occupy the myriad regions, it must rest on me. When guilt is found in me, the one man, it will not attach to you who occupy the myriad regions.

"Oh! Let us attain to be sincere in these things, and so we shall likewise have a happy consummation."[4]

Three major points emerge from this passage, and concern respectively the people, the sovereign and Heaven. The first point is that government exists for the sake of the people - specifically for the ordering of their moral conduct according to the pattern basically sanctioned by their own nature. The people are to a certain extent passive, in that they require supervision from above (they do not even have the responsibility for misdoing, since the sovereign takes the blame in such an event): they are the "inferior people" (下 民), objects of Heaven's care but not agents of its will. It is not they who initiate action against the ruling house. But they have a constant champion in the divine power of the universe, impartially called Shang Ti 上 帝 (Lord on High, or simply, God) and T'ien 天 (Heaven), the former being the chief divinity of the Shang and the latter that of the Chou. Heaven is consistently on the side of the good, and indicates its displeasure in this case by sending down calamities (tsai 災 i.e. natural disasters such as flood or famine, or evil portents) on Hsia. But the final proof of the pudding is in the eating: military failure is incompatible with possession of the Mandate. Thirdly, the virtue (te 德) required of the ruler is peculiarly exalted: he is held personally responsible for both the well-doing and the well-being of his subjects, and might well walk "in fear and trembling". Notice, however, that he is to have help: the "great sage" mentioned is I Yin, who served as a model of ministerial perfection to all subsequent generations. Other passages in Shu-ching and elsewhere in the Classics emphasise the importance of good ministers, but always without lessening the personal responsibility of the sovereign.

The theory of power devolving upon morality by which the Chou justified their imperial claims was obviously a two-edged weapon. As the Shang had fallen from favour, so might they in their turn. The theme of royal responsibility increasingly preoccupied the attention of political theorists during the Chou dynasty, and reached its logical conclusion in another famous theory which may have had some origins in earlier legend: this was the shan-jang 禪讓 tradition, according to which Yao and Shun, emperors of antiquity, were each supposed to have "yielded" the throne to the worthiest man in the empire, regardless of his birth. The recipient in each case was represented as having refused the offer repeatedly before finally accepting. This part at least of the tradition passed into later practice: propriety absolutely required the founder of any Chinese dynasty to decline the throne a certain number of times as a preliminary gesture. For the rest, the basic elements of the Mandate theory - that is, the essential roles of Heaven, people and ruler - were similarly associated with the shan-jang era, as is shown by the relevant accounts in Shu-ching and also Mencius (Va.5).[5]

Before considering the general implications of the Mandate theory, it would be well to examine a little further the three individual entities around whom it revolved.

The subject of Heaven has already been explored in Chapter Two, but something more may be said here. One can see throughout even the authentic books of Shu-ching the basis for the mechanistic concept of T'ien that arose during the Han period. Heaven is described as acting strictly according to rule, as befits the dogma of a political élite. There is little of the mystery of Heaven, the unpredictability of its actions. True, it is constantly reiterated that "the Mandate is not constant", it is not "easily got (or held)", it is "difficult to rely on" and so forth[6], but all such warnings against taking Heaven too lightly

are simply underscoring the theme that virtue alone is the constant factor in retaining Heaven's favour: the good will always be rewarded, the wicked always punished (if they persist in their wickedness). Such a divinity is, in fact, a comfortable adjunct to the position of the ruling house so long as it is in a strong position; de facto power argues power de iure. A truer reflection of history and of the historical feelings of men is found in the Book of Odes, where there is still the backcloth of a belief in Heaven's goodness and favouring of the just, studded however with fitful laments over the "impenetrability of Heaven's decrees"[7]. "The great Heaven is not just, it sends down these ample quarrels; the great Heaven is not kind, it sends down these great transgressions ... The great Heaven is iniquitous (不 平) ..."[8] Admittedly such protests can easily be reconciled with the belief in Heaven's benevolence (as even their immediate context indicates), but their very utterance conveys an atmosphere of freedom very unlike the doctrinal strait-jacket of Shu-ching. Later historians were, in fact, to have a hard time accommodating the Mandate theory in its full rigour to all the vicissitudes of Chinese history.

The type of the ruler as set forth in Classical lore was a blend of mythology and history. The Chinese Empire was almost certainly not a historical reality until the time of Chou itself; but once the Mandate theory had been adduced in support of universal hegemony it was found that neither could exist without the other, hence Yao and Shun, indubitable favourites of Heaven, were painted in imperial, not tribal, colours. The significance of the Mandate could not be localised: it must be universal in the true sense. The ruler's function was to co-ordinate all the movements of Nature (i.e. Heaven, The Earth and man): in the words of The Great Plan he must see that the "proper virtues in their various relations should be brought

forth in due order".[9] He was in a sense all things to all men - sage, priest, king, father - with absolute authority, bound only by his own moral sense and the prospect of losing the Mandate if he failed in his duties. There was no room in the world for more than one such Son of Heaven, and the tenacity with which all future Emperors clung to this belief had more than academic motives. An Empire of China's size required to be ruled by more than the ordinary methods of political control. This is at least one reason why religious, moral and psychological forms of persuasion played such an important part in Imperial China. The Emperor, as Heaven's representative, ruled the people not as a tyrant (pa 霸), by force of arms, but by the subtle influence of his own virtue (te 德). Here indeed was a brake on absolutism and over-activity on the part of the government: Yao and Shun merely "let their robes fall, and the empire was governed."[10] The people were assumed to be naturally predisposed to goodness, so that a naked show of force was an implied reproach on the ruler's virtue, as was the excessive use of penal laws.

Similarly, his ministers were primarily noted for their lofty moral character. They constituted his "legs and arms, his ears and eyes", the agents through which he extended his power everywhere, whose duty it was to correct him when he did wrong.[11] Particularly interesting in the Shu-ching tradition is the myth of the sage-minister. In the pre-dynastic age, Shun and Yü moved from the position of distinguished minister into that of emperor. The founder of the Shang dynasty had I Yin, who was responsible for putting the emperor's wayward successor on the right lines and so securing the dynasty. The classic example of the sage-minister was the Duke of Chou, uncle and guardian of the third king of the line. "The establishment of our dynasty rests with us two", he repeatedly told his colleague, the Duke of Shao[12], and history endorsed his own share of the claim by setting

him up as an exemplar of good conduct whose virtue was crowned by his unselfish surrender of the reins of government when the young king came of age. It was to the Duke of Chou that later philosophers in search of office, such as Confucius, turned when seeking a model of ministerial worth and dignity. In general, there was scope for some confusion between the principle of ministerial virtue and the principle that the ruler was personally responsible for virtue in others.

Of the third major entity in the trio involved in Mandate lore - the people - the question usually asked is whether they had any effective political role, tending to the establishment of a democratic element in Chinese government. The question is more than half a red herring, since even to breathe the word democracy in such a context is an anachronism. But it is perfectly legitimate to consider how far the people had any voice in government, both in theory and practice. The subject is, however, so closely related to Mencius' treatment of the Mandate theme that it had better be considered in that context.

The concept of the Heavenly Mandate was originally used by the early Chou kings for their own ideological purposes. It lent an imposing weight of authority to their rule. But by the same token it entailed a great burden of responsibility on the ruler, who reigned in the last analysis by Heaven's good pleasure, depending on his own virtue. In practice this meant that under certain circumstances it would be right for his subjects to depose him and end his line. It was this latter aspect of the theory of the Mandate that was developed by Mencius. Living as he did in times of acute disorder, when the feudal states, free from effective control by the Chou monarchy, were at each others' throats, and their inhabitants suffered all the miseries of prolonged warfare, it was natural enough for Mencius to be deeply concerned that government

should first and foremost benefit the people. Hence,

民為貴。社為次之。君為輕。

"The people are the most important element in a nation; the spirits of the land and grain are next; the sovereign is the lightest."[13]

The people should therefore be treated with kindness and respect. Moreover, if they were not so treated, Heaven was sure to withdraw its Mandate and the people would be justified in rebelling. When asked categorically if the historical circumstances of the rise of the Shang and Chou dynasties indicated that a minister may put his sovereign to death, Mencius replied quite pointedly that a sovereign as degenerate as the last rulers of the supplanted dynasties was no true sovereign, but a "mere fellow" (一夫), and as such might be cut off without compunction.[14]

Here was a clear statement of the so-called "right to rebel", a concept whose significance has been widely debated. According to one point of view, it "served ... as a fundamental institution to make Oriental monarchism more democratic than most of the Occidental aristocracies."[15] But for others, such as Wittfogel, the fact "that in China the right of rebellion was formulated in the Confucian classics did as little to check total power as does the presence in the USSR of Marx' and Lenin's writings, which postulate revolutionary action against oppression."[16] The strength of the latter point of view is in the fact that the "right to rebel" was a moral right, and not a legal one enshrined in constitutional form.[17] And this doubtful "right" was the only approach to a formal political check on the ruler's behaviour: so long as he was ruler, he exacted complete obedience. But the place of this concept in actual Chinese history cannot be determined simply in terms of its legal status.

Westerners are prone to exaggerate the importance of formal law as a necessary element in the constitution of a state, because their own civilisation is secured so largely by legal sanctions.[18] In China, moral and psychological pressures were the hallmark of Chinese government from the Emperor down. A rebellion might fail and so be accounted illegitimate, but it retained validity as a portent of Heaven's displeasure and of greater disaster to come, unless the government mended its ways. The practical effect of any particular idea on the course of history is always impossible to determine, but it may be well imagined that the knowledge that dynastic tenure of the Mandate was provisional and likely to be limited must have helped to prevent untrammelled despotism. It is at least true that whereas in Britain the reigning sovereign can claim descent from Alfred (for example), the Chinese Empire was ruled by a series of unconnected dynasties, some of them founded by peasants without pedigree. The Chinese expected "dynastic cycles": and they got them. There might exist no legal machinery for rebellion, but anyone who chose to rebel did so knowing that the lines had already been laid, the forms prepared, in the whole tradition of Mandate theory. Everyone knew the correct way to handle a dynastic changeover; native Chinese and alien dynasties and temporary usurpers alike couched their inaugural proclamations in thoroughly stereotyped form.

The only political right which the people had was that of signifying their acceptance of a new dynasty. Strictly speaking, they did not bestow sovereignty; rather was their acquiescence a token of Heaven's decree, as Mencius pointed out in a famous passage[19]. As for the actual conduct of administration, the Emperor's subjects had no legal authority whatsoever. Yet such was the vigour of the humanistic belief in man's perfectibility and the general importance of morale that, as Confucian teaching exerted more and more influence

on government, the road to the highest administrative posts lay open to the humblest peasant who could prove his sagacity and worth in the Classics-based state examinations. Moreover, the qualities expected of an official were not those of technical expertise or detailed knowledge of any specialised branch of affairs, but rather an understanding of men and of the correct principles of conduct; in their capacity as moral preceptors they were expected to influence not only those beneath but also their superiors. The advisory function was institutionalised in China to an unrivalled degree. Besides the ordinary official's powers of remonstrance, there existed a formally designated Censorate, with powers of surveillance, remonstrance and impeachment. The Emperor himself was not free from criticism. He was not, of course, bound to take notice, and in certain turbulent periods a perfect battery of censorial complaints brought severe punishment on the memorialists but was otherwise unheeded.[20] But the willingness on the part of officials to face death and dishonour at such times surely proves that censorial duties were taken very seriously, which would not have been the case had the censors been habitually cold-shouldered.

The Mandate theory, then, qualified the imperial authority in two ways: one, by sanctioning the possibility of a change of Mandate, the other, by surrounding the imperial position with an aura of moral responsibility. Mencius most of all of the Confucian school stressed the ruler's responsibilities rather than his privileges; his message was clear and doctrinaire: in a nutshell, "Be humane (jen 仁) and you will have the Empire; forget humanity and you will lose the Empire". We are informed that "the Three Dynasties gained the Empire by Humanity and lost it by Inhumanity".[21] He declares that, "Calamity and happiness in all cases are men's own seeking".[22] In

the Mencian concept of political cause and effect there was nothing very mysterious. Although he sharply told off King Hui of Liang for desiring counsels of profit rather than righteousness, he was fully aware of the relationship between economic sufficiency and good order, and his interpretation of jen was practical enough. His greatest subtlety lay perhaps in his appreciation of human psychology, enabling him to draw concepts like jen away from relative abstraction into the realm of intimate personal experience. Thus jen on the grand scale was graphically pictured as a simple extension of one's spontaneous feeling of compassion for a child about to fall into a well or an animal being led to the slaughter.

In the centuries that succeeded Mencius and the Warring States period, however, the Confucian concept of kingly virtue underwent a curious change, apparently tending to elevate the ruler's position but in fact representing an attempt to curtail his freedom. On the face of it, he was exalted into an almost godlike figure, whose influence should be felt in ways wellnigh beyond the ordinary means of mortal communication. Tung Chung-shu asserted that

"to hold an exalted position and practise benevolence, to hide one's holiness and show forth light, is the way of Heaven. Therefore, he who acts as the ruler of men imitates Heaven's way, within hiding himself far from the world that he may be holy, and abroad observing widely that he may be enlightened. He employs a host of worthy men that he may enjoy success, but does not weary himself with the conduct of affairs that he may remain exalted. Loving all creatures, he does not reward in joy or punish in anger, and thereby he may be benevolent. Therefore he who is the ruler of men takes nonaction as his way and considers impartiality as his treasure."[23] Which being interpreted meant that the ruler should take a back seat and let his ministers get on with the job. The passage continues:

"He sits upon the throne of nonaction and rides upon the perfection of his officials. His feet do not move but are led by his ministers; his mouth utters no word but his chamberlains speak his praises; his mind does not scheme but his ministers effect what is proper. Therefore no one sees him act and yet he achieves success. This is how the ruler imitates the ways of Heaven".

The historical reasons for this development in political thought were of the greatest importance. For positive theories of imperial government, China (both before and after the beginning of the Han) was faced ultimately with two ways of thought: Legalism and Confucianism. Each had its own attraction. The practical administrator would find in Legalist attitudes a congenial framework for his actions: he would be guided by a detailed set of rules and regulations both in his own conduct and in assessing the conduct of others. Legalism reduced human life and society to a state of admirable simplicity, whereby human nature was interpreted as merely selfish and human activity made the object of narrowly political and legal control. Confucianism, on the other hand, took more account of the total nature of man, and also denied that human nature was wholly evil and therefore in need of rigid supervision. It did not lack an authoritarian element, but its voice of authority lay in tradition, custom, human feelings and the moral sense. Formal law was accounted very secondary; undue busy-ness in government - even if seemingly benevolent - was liable to suspicion.

It is difficult to say what kind of choice China might have made had not events forced things to a head. The searing experience of Legalism under the Ch'in dynasty (B.C. 255-206) favoured a reaction in the early Han years towards <u>laissez-faire</u> policies. In the first flush of the new régime many of the Ch'in laws were repealed, and thinkers turned their attention to Taoism and the more humanitarian

strands of Confucianism, as well as various other systems of thought such as the Five Agents and Yin-Yang theories. The general effect of the new drift of thought, so far as the political power of the monarch was concerned, was to lessen his opportunity for arbitrary action in return for a considerable increase in the "mystique of monarchy". The typical Chinese conception of cosmic energy, preferring the immanent to the transcendent, had become associated with the Emperor even as his cosmic importance was reasserted.

Anti-Legalism was thereafter a stalking-horse from behind which officials could shoot all kinds of criticisms of government policy. Admittedly, the Legalist goal of standardisation in all aspects of life became something of a reality under the Han; the bureaucratic system of the Ch'in remained; also, it was still possible for a strong-willed Emperor to brush aside the web of indoctrination and official opinion, as did Wu Ti of the Han and Shen Tsung of the Ming. But an enduring limit was set to the arbitrary power of the ruler by the incarnation of Confucian principles in the system of government recruitment. This system, begun in the Han and perfected in later dynasties, ensured that the basic qualification for appointment was not training in administrative routine, nor detailed practical knowledge of any sort, but an education in the scriptures of Confucianism (as defined in the post-Classical era).

A concomitant development in the orthodox attitude to rulership was a reluctance on the part of theorists to prescribe specific, detailed aims of policy. Since the government should not exert much pressure except in the moral sense, Confucianists could no longer press for an immediate restoration of bygone customs and institutions: the element of timeliness entered more definitely into Confucian thinking. One of the most basic concepts of historical development became that of relative change within a framework of

stability. A limited amount of change was to be expected, and the ruler must adapt himself to it, whilst adhering to certain fixed principles. He must not, however, seem to impose change except as the need and opportunity for it clearly arose.[24]

In the centuries between the Han and Ming dynasties, although the already existing concepts of rulership were not wiped out they were modified by new ideas. Especially notable was the growth of authoritarian Confucianism which accompanied the progressive centralisation of Chinese government after the establishment of the Sung in 960 A.D. The Sung rulers were uncommonly kind to the Confucian literati, and yet it was these same literati who developed a theory of the relationship between ruler and minister that was to inhibit bureaucratic independence in the future. Ssu-ma Kuang, for example, denied the Mencian theory that a virtuous servant should oppose the wishes of a tyrannical ruler and disagreed with Mencius that age and noble rank were of less value than virtue to the state and society.[25] The Ch'eng-Chu school, though permitting humble censure, tended to equate loyalty with obedience - not, it is true, the mechanical obedience of a Legalist-type minister, but the submission of one inspired with the very Confucian sentiment of personal devotion to the "ruler-rather".[26] Great stress was laid on the personal tie established between ruler and minister: Feng Tao (A.D. 882-954) was unequivocally censured by orthodox Neo-Confucians for serving under five dynasties and many more rulers, and the fall of the Sung, as that of the Ming, occasioned widespread withdrawals from government service. At the same time, the "bad last emperor" aspect of traditional Mandate theory became a thing of the past. The original Confucian concept of loyalty in conjunction with ministerial responsibility, if distorted by the end of the Sung dynasty, was unrecognisable under the Ming. Criticism and reform were to a large

extent ironed out of the orthodox version of Chu Hsi's philosophy.

In the old dualism of change and stability, the emphasis was on stability rather than change. It would seem that just as China's experience of Legalism under the Ch'in dynasty hardened her against any overtly Legalistic formula of government, so did the failure of Wang An-shih's attempts at reform discourage any repetition of them. Harmony must be preserved at all costs; no matter how ideal a change might seem on paper, if the people were not ready for it they should not be coerced. Hence was found the justification for maintaining the bureaucratic system which the Neo-Confucians professed to deplore: ancient ways were of course superior - but men were obviously not ripe for change, and that being so the principle of timeliness clearly forbad change. The net effect was that Neo-Confucians were characteristically committed both to stagnation and reproach; their eyes were always on the past, never on the future.

Side by side with the development of new practical attitudes to rulership a different, more academic type of thought was swelling the content of Mandate lore. This was the search for a pattern in history. To rationalise and unify their past was always a powerful urge with the Chinese, but some periods more than others had their share of arbitrary speculation on the workings of history. The heyday of this fashion was in the Han, whose theorists were above all syncretists. They were also, to a high degree, systematisers, no doubt seeking to reflect the newly found order of society in a well-ordered universe, as well as rationalise the position of the new Han dynasty. Under their pens the rise and fall of dynasties became part of a cosmological pattern in which various sets of motifs were interwoven to form a limited, predictable whole. Technical virtuosity, and not profound philosophical speculation, marked the efforts of these thinkers to comprehend the entire scope of Chinese history, past, present and

future, in a single, meaningful form.

The Chou doctrine of the Mandate was taken over (although the Mencian interpretation did not come into prominence until the inclusion of Mencius in the Canon a millenium later). An example of the embroidery added to the theory is furnished by the historian Pan Piao (A.D. 3-54) in his account of the rise of the Han founder. He speaks, as is to be expected, of Kao Tsu's great virtue and ability; he reinforces the tradition of accompanying omens and portents, including references to the strange physical characteristics of Liu Chi somewhat in the manner of the Bamboo Annals. He adds a new dimension: pedigree. It was not, perhaps, absolutely essential to attribute a good family background to a holder of the Mandate: the sage-Emperor Shun, after all, was of the humblest origins. But as it unquestionably added weight to Kao Tsu's claims, an impressive genealogy was contrived for him, alleging his descent from the Emperor Yao. Nor was this circumstance left in the realm of happy coincidence:

"... in order for a man to enjoy the blessing of rulership, he must possess not only the virtue of shining sageliness and apparent excellence, but he must be heir to a patrimony of abundant merit and favour long accumulated. Only then can he, by his pure sincerity, communicate with the divine intelligence and extend his grace to all living men. Then will he receive good fortune from the spirits and gods, and all people will come to his rule. There has never been a case of a man who, the successive generations having passed without showing signs of his destiny or recording the merit and virtue of his family, has been able to rise to this position of eminence. The mass of people see that Kao Tsu arose from among the common men and they do not comprehend the reasons for his rise. They believe that, happening upon a time of violence and disorder, he was able to wield his sword, as the wandering political theorists compare the conquest of the empire to a

deer chase in which success goes to the luckiest and swiftest. They do not understand that this sacred vessel, the rule of the empire, is transmitted according to destiny and cannot be won either by craft or force."[27]

Portents played an extremely large share in the political calculations of the Han government. There was never a time in Imperial history when natural events were not assumed to mirror political ones, or when supernatural omens were not adduced in support of any remarkable occurrence in human affairs, but "interactionism" was especially rampant during the Han dynasty. Time and again in the pages of the Ch'ien Han shu do we read of Emperors donning sackcloth and ashes (metaphorically speaking), castigating themselves in the most abject terms and proclaiming intentions of reform, on the occasion of a reported eclipse, for example. Wang Mang's abortive attempt to found a dynasty in the years between the Former and Later Han was bolstered by an unconscionable number of miraculous omens. In the theory of portents the court bureaucrats had an excellent means of managing the Emperor: it was the institutional right of any official to report phenomena and attribute responsibility to the ruler.[28]

The philosophical basis of the attitude towards portents by Han times was not altogether clearly defined, but it is plain that an important ingredient in the prevailing thought was mechanistic. Wu-hsing (Five Agents) and Yin-Yang theories provided the cosmological framework for interpretation of omens. In short, the whole business was one more aspect of Han theorists' attempts to reduce reality to something completely predictable and comprehensible, functioning according to certain automatic (if arbitrarily conceived) principles. The highly systematic and utilitarian nature of Han ideas is a constant reminder that the Empire's philosophers were also its statesmen.

As for the general cosmological pattern into which dynastic history was fitted, the basic thing was that dynasties were believed to rise and fall in recurrent cycles, and each dynasty was correlated to a variety of natural elements, each category of which had its own cyclical revolutions. Hence, according to general belief, derived from much earlier notions and promoted by the Liu Hsin school, the universe was dominated in turn by one of five elements or agents (wu-hsing 五行) - wood, fire, earth, metal and water. Since Heaven, Earth and Man were interlocked (the interlocking factor being the ruler himself, according to Tung Chung-shu), the cycle of the Five Agents corresponded with the dynastic cycle. Each dynasty (and each ruler of the legendary, pre-dynastic era) was held to rule by virtue of one of these Agents. Each Agent was associated with other entities such as a particular season, colour, number and many others. As was natural in such arbitrary speculation, there were differences of opinion over such matters as the Five Agents' order of succession and dynastic correlations. Tung Chung-shu, the greatest synthesist of the Han dynasty, added the theory he particularly approved, according to which dynastic change proceeded by "Three Sequences" (san-t'ung 三統) or "Three Beginnings" (san-cheng 三正). These were the colours black, white and red, and it was supposedly in accordance with these sequences that a new dynasty inaugurated a change of "institutions" (that is, changes in the calendar and in ceremonial). A further theory espoused by Tung Chung-shu was that dynasties alternated between Simplicity (chih 質) and Refinement (wen 文).

Much of this kind of speculation was academic, but by no means entirely so. The three chief ministers of the empire were formally responsible for harmonising the Yin and Yang. This duty could be taken very literally, as is illustrated by stories such as that of Ping Chi (d. B.C.55) who ignored the activities of a crowd of

brawlers but was concerned to find an ox panting in spring, when the "lesser Yang" had not yet given way to the "greater Yang" (Yang represented heat).[29]

The mechanistic ideas of the Han dynasty were partially outgrown, but their conceptual basis remained: in brief, the belief in cyclical change and in the interdependence of man and nature. The characteristic passion of the Chinese for numbering and classifying continued to show itself, as in Shao Yung (A.D. 1011-1077)'s numerological theories of the universe. But most of the arbitrary attempts to attach an academic system to actual historical events passed from favour. There was left, however, one important legacy from this aspect of Han thought: this was the concept of legitimacy.

The full-blown theory of legitimacy stated that "legitimate" dynasties succeeded one another in an unbroken line. A dynasty in the "true line of succession" (cheng-t'ung 正統) had not only received the Heavenly Mandate, but had inherited its position from its predecessor. The Five Agents theory and other similar ones were a powerful stimulant to this notion of legitimacy. By Sung times there was some sharp dissension over the practical application of the doctrine to history. Even the Han scholars had some difficulty with the Ch'in, which they decided to treat as an "intercalary" dynasty. Between the Han and the Sung there were three very awkward periods, when no single dynasty dominated China.[30] What was to be the criterion of legitimacy? Should it be virtue, or the size of territory ruled, or length of tenure, or the circumstances of accession? None of these standards could be applied with any consistency. A few of the most prominent historians of the Sung dynasty tried to face the problem honestly. Ou-yang Hsiu suggested daringly that the legitimate line simply lapsed in periods of disorder.[31] Ssu-ma Kuang went even further in refusing to have anything to do with the distinction between

legitimate and intercalary dynasties: he would say only that a true Son of Heaven should reign over a united Empire.[32] But despite his disclaimer he was unable to avoid treating particular "dynasties" as legitimate in each period; otherwise he would have been without a dating-system at certain points. The Tzu-chih t'ung-chien therefore perpetuated the custom of treating the succession line as unbreakable. In the tenth century, for example, out of a large number of candidates five so-called dynasties were accorded legitimacy, largely because they were located near the former capital of the T'ang dynasty. Practically all the disputes on the question of legitimacy were concerned merely with determining which dynasties had it; generally speaking there was no doubt cast on the basic concept itself. Hence Chu Hsi intimated in a manner that left no room for argument that the legitimate dynasties were Chou, Ch'in, Han, Chin, Sui and T'ang.[33] In a later day Sung Lien treated the Mongol dynasty as legitimate.

The significance of the theory of legitimacy becomes clear when we reflect on the actual term used in the Chinese. The idea of cheng-t'ung represented an idealisation of Chinese history. Just as the operations of nature succeed one another in due order, without intermission, so, it was claimed, do "true" dynasties. The idea was doubly appealing because it not only offered a complete rationalisation of the past, but also enabled current dynasties to establish a link with the most revered rulers of antiquity. Cheng-t'ung was essentially a matter of inheritance. But in that the supposed "inheritance" was in fact theoretical, not to say glaringly unreal in some cases, the concept of legitimacy was open to attack by occasional "realistic" historians. It is important to remember that the idea of mere law was not a powerful one in Chinese thought, and the quasi-legal associations invoked by translating cheng-t'ung as "legitimacy" are somewhat misleading.

It was difficult for Chinese historians to remain completely at ease with the separation of de iure and de facto power, which a legalistic outlook permits.

When the Manchus invaded China they invoked the most powerful of Chinese traditions in order to smooth their passage. It is noticeable that they canvassed themselves not as avengers on the wicked Ming rulers, in the fashion of older Mandate theory, but as legitimate successors of the Ming, whose line, they insisted, had been extinguished as a result of rebellion. To the recalcitrant South the Manchu Regent wrote in honeyed terms, praising the last Ming Emperor, abusing Li Tzu-cheng and professing to act solely on the principle of righteousness. The Loyalists were blandly referred to the Spring and Autumn Annals for the error of their ways.[34] Replying to the Regent, the Ming general Shih Ko-fa set him right, politely but firmly, about his Classical allusions, and claimed for the Ming pretender "the right to the throne, the Mandate of Heaven, and the backing of popular opinion". In illustration of this he described how

> "On the first of May, when the Emperor arrived at Nanking, he was received by myriads of people who thronged the streets and their cheers reverberated far and wide. Then the ministers of state persuaded him to ascend the throne. He was overcome with grief. Only after his repeated declinations were rejected, did he promise to act as a regent. It was not until the fifteenth of the month after ministers and people had petitioned him again and again that he consented to be crowned. Prior to his coronation, phoenix gathered in the city, the river stream appeared clear, and other symptoms of peace and prosperity abounded. On the day

> of coronation, purple clouds surrounded the city like a fan and lumber floated out from the Great River for the reconstruction of the Palaces. Are these not signs of the 'Heavenly Mandate'?"[35]

Force of arms, however, was on the Manchus' side, and the more theoretical as well as the fundamental factors in changes of Mandate became purely material for speculation by scholars under the new Ch'ing dynasty.

II. The Textual Nature of Sung Lun

Before considering the ideas advanced by Wang Fu-chih in Sung lun, it will be well to explain the nature of this text. Political ideas were not often given separate and systematic expression in China. They might be implied in works of a philosophical or historical nature; but that was all. Huang Tsung-hsi's short political treatise, Ming-i tai-fang lu, was quite unique - particularly in an era when interpretative generalisation was suspect, and empirical observation, such as that found in the scattered comments of Ku Yen-wa's Jih chih-lu, increasingly valued. A time-honoured method of conveying one's political convictions was, however, associated with the writing of history. Two apparently antithetical tendencies merged curiously to form the traditional view of the historian's craft: they might be termed the objective and subjective tendencies.

An outstanding ideal in Chinese historiography was that of simply presenting facts and letting them speak for themselves. Such was the style of the Tso Chuan and arguably of the Ch'un-ch'iu itself;[36] such was the form of Shih-chi, that classic of Chinese historical writing. Even when subjective motives were at their most clamant in the compilation of a history, the external form was relatively unchanged: one brief statement of fact followed another without any unseemly intrusion of the writer's opinions, save in an occasional passage reserved for the briefest and most generalised reflections. Historical criticism (shih-p'ing 史評) was in a category of its own, and the works listed under this head in the official Ch'ing compilation Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu (Complete Work of The Four Treasuries) are very few. It is still a long step from historical criticism to didactic comment.

But there is another side to the picture. The historian valued objectivity not merely because he wished to leave a detached and composite record of the past as a matter of academic interest; he was interested in the facts principally because he believed that they do speak, and that "history teaches", that it is essentially human beings who make history and that events of the past illustrate Heaven's rewarding of the good and punishing of the bad. By his selection of "relevant" facts - notably those facts relating to the conduct of government - he presented a picture which clearly showed where praise and blame lay. The "praise and blame" theory, as it is called, was said to derive from Confucius' editing of Ch'un-ch'iu. Whatever the actual status of Ch'un-ch'iu, it is certain that the didactic ideal existed from an early date, although it did not fully come into its own until the Neo-Confucian era. Under the pens of such celebrated scholars as Ou-yang Hsiu, Ssu-ma Kuang and Chu Hsi, historical writing became unashamedly polemical, while maintaining its matter-of-fact form. The title of Ssu-ma Kuang's compendium was, significantly, Tzu-chih t'ung-chien (General Mirror for an Aid to Government). Freedom to select and arrange facts and the choice of significant terms in which to relate them subdued history firmly to the demands of political morality.

Now Sung lun and its larger companion Tu T'ung-chien lun are in an extremely unusual category. The term lun 論 (discussion, discourse) is, understandably, not listed as a formal type of history in Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu. In view of the polemical purpose of ordinary historical writing, a piece of work which is ostensibly a discussion not merely of an historical text, but of the events it describes, promises to be something less than detached. That Wang Fu-chih shared the orthodox view of the function of history, is borne out by his own remarks, for example

that history, and specifically the Book of Documents, is only of value as a guide to practice (i.e. moral and political, but not institutional, practice). Add to this the known violence of Wang's sentiments with regard to the national upheaval of his own day, and there need be no surprise that his political views loom large in his historical discussions. These views are not always self-explanatory or even self-evident, and it is only by reference to a wide variety of historical and philosophical data that the allusive cloak can be penetrated.

As to the construction of Sung lun, the chapters (chüan 卷) are divided not topically, but reign by reign. Within each chapter, however, the author selects various topics, stating the facts with extreme brevity and launching into a discussion that ranges over the entire field of Chinese history. For a work of Chinese historical criticism his arguments contain an unusual amount of sustained logical reasoning. Sung lun draws on a variety of historical sources, unlike Tu T'ung-chien lun which, as its title implies, is based largely on Tzu-chih t'ung-chien. To examine the relation between the text of Sung lun and its sources is beyond the scope of this study; only in certain selected cases have I made use of the source-material. Sources consulted are Sung-shih, the official history of the Sung (SPPY ed.), Hsu tzu-chih t'ung-chien ch'ang-pien (Continuation of the Comprehensive Mirror in chronological form) edited by Li T'ao (1115-1184), and Sung-shih chi-shih pen-mo (Topical Sung history) compiled by Feng Ch'i and Ch'en Pang-chan of the Ming Dynasty.

III. Wang Fu-chih on the Founder of the Sung

The first chapter of Sung lun is concerned with the founder of the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960-1279). Briefly the historical background is as follows: Chao Kuang-yin, a protégé of Emperor Shih Tsung of the Later Chou (A.D. 907-960), gained the throne in the same way as each of the founders in the preceding period of the Five Dynasties, namely by a military coup. There seemed on the surface no reason why his dynasty should not be similarly short-lived; however, he himself lived long enough to lay the secure foundations of one of the most celebrated Chinese dynasties. By leaving the throne to his brother, rather than his son, he provided against the crisis that the accession of a minor was always liable to precipitate. In matters of policy, his reign is particularly famous for the change in the balance between military and civil power. On the one hand he eliminated local military commands and placed all troops directly under central authority. This move had the effect of weakening China's borders against the barbarian tribes, but for the time being it ensured a degree of political stability such as China had not known since the T'ang dynasty. On the other hand civil administration was centralised through the strengthening of offices near the throne and through the final replacement of an aristocratic by a bureaucratic system of government, the standard means of entrée to which was by state-examination. Confucianism (albeit of a revised sort) was established once and for all as state doctrine and Confucian principles visibly incorporated in government. It was in the Sung period that the great Neo-Confucian movement got under way. T'ai Tsu, the founder, was noted for his personal qualities of generosity and restraint.

The SPPY edition of Sung lun divides the first chapter into fifteen sections. I have followed this arrangement except that I

have combined the eighth and the ninth sections as sub-divisions of Section (viii), making fourteen sections in all. The subject of each section is indicated in the headings which I have inserted, and which form no part of the text. A glance at the subject-matter of each shows that they divide as follows: Sections (i), (iii) and (xiv) deal directly with the personal merits of the Sung founder, Section (ii) with the question of loyalty to a defeated dynasty, Section (vii) with the status of localised governments in times of disorder and Section (xiii) with the issue of succession. Four more Sections - (iv), (v), (vi) and (x) - extol the importance of scholar-officials. Sections (viii) and (xi) are principally concerned with national defence. Sections (ix) and (xii) deal with aspects of ritual.

Rather than summarise the contents of each section, it might be helpful to discuss the chief qualities of Wang Fu-chih's thought which emerge from this chapter, illustrating them from relevant passages, with supplementary references to two others of his texts: Tu T'ung-chien lun and Shang-shu yin-i (freely rendered as Reflections based on the Book of Documents).

The book opens with a discussion of the bestowal of the Mandate on Sung T'ai Tsu. The author makes no attempt to glamorise the rise of T'ai Tsu; rather than make the most of what little achievements the Emperor had to his credit, he goes to the other extreme to show how heavily the dice was loaded against him. Chao Kuang-yin had displayed neither great virtue nor military prowess; and yet Heaven, disregarding all the rules, gave him the Mandate! The reason could only be that he stood in tremendous awe of Heaven, never taking his position for granted. In fact, by stripping Chao Kuang-yin of any merit save that of humility Wang Fu-chih is reserving for him and his dynasty the highest form of praise: the founding of the Sung was so much the more Heaven's doing.

The description of Heaven's efforts to bring order to the war-weary people perturbs some of Wang Fu-chih's modern critics as seeming to suggest a personalised conception of God.[37] To others the language might suggest the Hegelion idea of an impersonal, metaphysical force shaping the events of history towards a definite objective.[38] And indeed there is much in Wang's writings to support the latter view. In one instance he is found taking a lone stand for the benefits of the Ch'in regime, saying that Heaven used even such a worthless dynasty to further its own designs;[39] indeed his whole attitude to the past is that history is its own justification. This is such an important point that it is worthwhile pausing to consider evidence from other parts of his writings. A particularly apposite passage occurs in Sung lun(7):

"The strongest of trends[40] is weak at its ending, and being weak it is easily reversed. This is a necessary characteristic of trends. Principle consists in following necessary trends,[41] and Heaven is the self-existent element in principle. By following principle the superior man conforms well with Heaven. It is ever the case that man simply cannot compete with Heaven. It is easy to see the harm of competing with Heaven when it is not moving in a certain way. But it is more difficult to appreciate the harm of competing with Heaven when it is about to move in a certain way. To compete with Heaven when seeking something good, even when the thing sought is within the bounds of principle, is yet to transgress the allotted fate.[42] Should one transgress the allotted fate of any principle then even if one is aligned with the strongest of trends one will see it gradually come to weaken.

"The superior man discerns that the termination of a trend moving from strength to weakness must be by gradual means, and he gladly complies with this on behalf of the Empire. He disputes

without words and accomplishes his end without action so that everything in the Empire comes into its rightful place, and the Empire stands as firm as a rock without the possibility of further disorder.

"Now when Heaven is about to move in a certain way, why then should men expend their energies in a flood of enthusiasm as though no respite were permitted day or night? The ancients appreciated this. They therefore discerned when the people's suffering had reached its limit and observed that the fate allotted in this case was about to be terminated. Immovably firm, they bided their time; with contained advance they complied with the aspirations of the masses[43] and so laid their plans. When T'ang the Successful overthrew Hsia, and when Wu of Chou defeated Yin, they followed this course. How much more should this be one's attitude when it is not the time for a change of Mandate and reform of institutions! ... Now when a difficult situation reaches its limit it is reversed. The inevitable tendencies of Heaven do not wait upon men. Their subtle beginnings are already evident; the trend has already changed ... If Heaven is about to give us something and we in ignorance of the fact try to compete with Heaven, then Heaven will take the thing away ... Heaven is simply principle; principle is simply the path followed by trends. Since this has not always been observed, let me say that when Heaven blesses the nation there should be none of this anxiety.* Heaven did not fail to bless the Sung. When those who plan for the nation fail to get what they want from Heaven and try to extort it from men, they consider themselves to be achieving Merit and establishing Virtue."[44]

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* The author has been discussing Wang An-shih's policies

"Principle consists in following necessary trends; Heaven is the self-existent element in Principle". Now clearly Wang Fu-chih's T'ien does not correspond to the "anthropomorphic God" (一個人格化了的上帝) imagined by Ts'ao Tao-heng.[45] It does, however, denote some sort of overruling power. But the essential core of Wang's thought is his conviction that function determines form, that Tao 道 is inseparable from ch'i 器. Consequently the actual disposition of shih 勢 (trends, circumstances, prevailing tendencies) must dictate the course to be followed by the man of principle. He does not deny that there is an autonomous element in li 理 (principle): this element is the very law which dictates that li should follow inevitable tendencies; we may even go further and say that it is the guarantee that natural events will always contain principle: not only does Heaven not operate apart from concrete events, but concrete events do not happen without Heaven.

In the historical field this means that human events have a tendency to work towards good. The role of the individual is to be open to the intimations of destiny so that he will sense when to act and when to be still; and when he acts it will be without heat and without presumption. To say that the Sung Founder received "the diligent help and instruction, manifested in a concrete way, and the enlightenment of ever-attentive God above" is merely to say in pointed terms that T'ai Tsu was sensitive to the moving of events taken as a whole. In the words of Section (xiv), echoed in the passage above, "he sensed when the limit of the people's sufferings had been reached". He was also "awed by the impermanence of Heaven's Mandate"; in Section (i) it is his "reverent awe" (chü 怚) that is almost his sole qualification. This awe is not the feeling of reverence experienced towards a personal deity, but rather the sense of awe

engendered by an awareness of one's littleness compared with the unfathomable forces that create history. I shall revert to the subject of the man who receives the Mandate, but for the moment our concern is with T'ien and the general principles operative in historical change.

There is, then, a principle inherent in the nature of things that makes them resolve themselves continually into a state of harmony. The individual's part is from one point of view, strictly subordinate: "The inevitable tendencies of Heaven do not wait upon men"; in the context of the founding of the Sung, Heaven did not find a man prepared with the suitable qualifications to receive the Mandate, but "bestowed the Mandate on a man in the midst of a situation where there was no-one fit to be so entrusted and only gave him full power thereafter". But Wang Fu-chih's universe is not crudely deterministic, for a man may thwart the natural processes of destiny (see the passage translated above). Nor is his historical philosophy one of unqualified optimism: times of disorder are to be expected, for "the alternation of order and disorder is Heaven's affair".[46] But there is, unquestionably, a general optimism informing his view of human affairs. It appears in his endorsement of the Confucian concept of government which reckons human nature as good; it produces such significant yet casually dropped remarks as "The Empire's wealth is of itself sufficient to meet the Empire's needs."[47]

His fundamentally optimistic outlook also helps to create a view of historical change which is markedly different from those of most other Neo-Confucians. Broadly speaking, two views were current, their most famous representatives being Chu Hsi and Wang An-shih. Both views shared a common nostalgia for the Classical past; they differed in that one favoured stability rather than

quixotic attempts to revive the past or pursue reforms of any kind, whereas the other view supported change, whether it be the restoration of former institutions or the adaptation of present ones to meet the needs of the times. The distinctive position of Wang Fu-chih was that, whilst he abused those who, like Wang An-shih, tried to effect change on human initiative, he shed the attitude of nostalgia and said in effect, "Trust history; let change arise naturally, and when change is endorsed by its endurance over a long period of time regard it as beneficial." This view he applied in practice to the passing of such systems as the feudal militia, corporal punishments, well-field and so forth. It is important to note that this notion of history is not necessarily progressive or "evolutionary" in the debased, popular sense. He did substitute a period of barbarism for the supposed Golden Age, but only extensive research will show whether he also envisaged a monolithic advance towards a future Utopia. His main thesis seems to have been rather that the institutions finally established for each particular age were the best for that age. He does, however, see progress in certain aspects of history: he believes, for instance, that the bureaucratic Empire is an actual improvement on the feudal system.[48]

What is the basis of Wang's rationalistic interpretation of historical change? He is careful to deny conscious purpose to Heaven (天之命有理而無心者也.)[49]; is it, then, that he completely naturalises the concept of Heaven, reducing "the will of Heaven" to "the will of the people", in the manner of the propagandists for the late Ch'ing dynasty who appealed to min-i 民意 (people's will) as the source of authority, thereby robbing T'ien of all but a metaphorical significance? In this case, the motive force of historical developments (in Wang's philosophy) would be simply the basic desires of human beings, and at least one modern writer would be justified in

interpreting Wang's remark that T'ien is "what men have in common" as, "T'ien is the concretely expressed aspirations of mankind".[50] The elliptical nature of the Chinese language as well as the elusive philosophy of an unfamiliar era of course enables a modern construction to be put on many a phrase from literary Chinese. Thus, "Heaven sees as my people see, Heaven hears as my people hear", may appear to have a fine democratic ring about it. Thus too the immanentist strain in Wang Fu-chih's metaphysics may encourage the twentieth century reader to equate Wang's T'ien simply with chung-chih (the aspirations or convictions of the masses). But although he maintains the Classical link between Heaven and the people, he equally maintains the Classical distinction. In Shang-shu yin-i(4) he argues for an equal balance:

"It is only Heaven that is honourable above all, whose Tao may not be transgressed, and that may not be disregarded by men. The saying that 'Heaven sees as my people see, Heaven hears as my people hear', refers to Heaven in the context of the people, thus placing the people in highest esteem. On the other hand, to speak of the people in conjunction with Heaven is to treat the people with extreme respect. The apt reader works out the meaning of these words by pondering and turning them over in his mind ... One should judge the mind of Heaven from the people, and treat the people according to the Way of Heaven ...

"Because men do not know how to esteem the people, it follows that although they see Heaven in the people yet they will not fear to treat the people wickedly. Because of men's inability to evaluate the people, if one relies on Heaven to examine the people, then the characteristics of the people will certainly be thoroughly understood.

"Heaven is manifested in the people, and the people must establish their destiny (ming 命) in accordance with Heaven,

whereby Heaven and man will be united under one principle. Heaven is simply principle (li 理) ...

"If you ignore the people and talk of Heaven, so seeking good fortune according to auspicious omens and prognostications, and if you abuse the people by making pretence of timely divinations, even so arrogantly seeking your own ease, then in hostile reaction men will say, 'Heaven's Mandate is not worth reverencing'. When the two sides join issue in this case the main thing accomplished is to brush aside the feelings of the people.[51] If you ignore Heaven and talk of the people, accordingly building your palace by consulting with casual wayfarers, and if you transgress the Tao to seek fame, even inciting disorder by paying heed to only one side of a case, then in hostile reaction men will say, 'Men's opinions are not worth considering'. When the two join issue in this case, the main thing accomplished is to rebel against the principles of Heaven."[52]

In the above passage, the union affirmed between Heaven and the people does not obliterate the "otherness" of either. The relationship between them to some extent is an instance of the relation between abstract and concrete in Wang Fu-chih's thought: it will be remembered that for him, "The Way is the Way of concrete things, but concrete things may not be called concrete things of the Way",[53] but that he in common with all other Confucians freely employed the concept of autonomous moral principles.[54] Hence Heaven does not exist apart from the people, but for all that Heaven, and not the people, is the fount of authority. The traditional distinction between those who labour with their hands and those who labour with their minds[55] is upheld by him when he says in Section (x) of Sung lun (1) that "The people ... find satisfaction in material profit; the scholar ... finds satisfaction in righteousness". But in his general insistence that

government exists for the sake of the people Wang Fu-chih sounds a Mencian note that was relatively muted in political thought of the Neo-Confucian era. He makes bold to say that the fortunes of an imperial house cannot be considered apart from those of the people at large; a dynasty that has ceased to hold the Empire together has ipso facto lost Heaven's support.[56] The point is echoed in our text in the statement that, "The pivot of success or failure and the crux of good order or rebellion consist in the forces determining whether the people live or die and in the sources of purity or corruption in mores."[57]

Since Heaven and the objective tendencies of history are of such great importance to Wang Fu-chih, the nature of human action is clearly defined. Man responds, rather than initiates. Wang Fu-chih's analysis of T'ai Tsu's reign bears out this conception at length. Various aspects of his policies are dealt with, until in the final section the basic character of this ruler (in Wang's eyes) is explicitly discussed. It transpires that a quality which is of the highest importance in rulership is chien 簡 , Simplicity. This concept has already appeared in Section (iii), where the author says that "the way of those who seek Virtue in themselves is consistently simple (chien); the way of those who seek it from others is consistently complicated. It is complexity that causes administrative confusion and a conglomeration of penal laws", but, he says at a later point, it is utter Simplicity that is the key to order in the Empire.

The full flavour of chien can be appreciated only by reference to its use in previous Chinese literature. The usual meaning of the expression in the Confucian Classics is "ease of demeanour", occasionally "a generous ease", as in the Book of Documents[58], more often verging on "carelessness" as in the Analects (V.21) and Mencius (VII.b.37) or "rudeness" in Mencius (IV.b.27). It is the

Classics of more syncretic or Taoist origin that yield the meaning most in harmony with Wang Fu-chih's concept. The word does not appear in Lao Tzu, but it occurs three times in Chuang Tzu. In one of these instances[59] it means "to treat separately or singly" (strongly reminiscent of its root meaning of single bamboo slips used for writing). The meaning on the other two occasions is simplicity or restraint as opposed to ostentation or exaggeration. "From small beginnings come great endings", says Chuang Tzu in a passage to which Wang Fu-chih happens to allude in Sung lun (1, Section (viii)).[60] In another chapter, Chuang Tzu approves of "restraint" in mourning as befits the belief that the dead one has simply "gone home".[61] The loftiest sense of chien is attained in the Great Appendix of I-ching, where it consistently appears with i 易 (easy), the one obviously serving to amplify the other's meaning.[62]

"The Creative knows things through the easy.
The Receptive can do things through the simple".[63]

Again,

"The Creative is decided and therefore shows to men the easy.
The Receptive is divided and therefore shows to men the simple".[64]

Developing the concept of chien, Wang Fu-chih contrasts Sung T'ao Tsu with three other rulers famed for their liberality and frugality. Their actions, he claims, sprang from imperfect motives, such as blind adherence to convention, preoccupation with the details of government or the ostentatious display of a misguided tolerance. But "the Sung Founder's goodness all flowed from the heart. The intents of his heart were drawn forth and grew ever greater. The sincerity of his heart was given expression and did not prove false ... Fundamentally he was single-hearted in his disposition, and his conduct naturally had Simplicity. In Simplicity he practised Compassion ... In Simplicity he practised Frugality ..."[65]

It is interesting that the expression i hsin — 一心 (single-heartedness, integrity) occurs in the context of the final postscript to Tu T'ung-chien lun, one of the most important passages of all his writings on the theory of government. It is so relevant in its entirety to the tenor of our chapter in Sung lun that a summary of its contents will not be amiss. The best way to govern, Wang says, is by reading the Book of Documents along with the Analects, but "the crucial point is whether the ruler's heart is reverent or dissolute, and whether his statutes are too lax or too harsh". Regarding detached systems, the Documents and Confucius are of no help, since the wise man does not attempt to regulate posterity; "when it comes to questions of particular incidents and laws, then one must follow the times and try to determine what is fitting in each case. Every age has its different points of laxity and strictness [in application]; every affair has its contingent circumstances. It is better therefore to have no inflexible rules, lest one use the letter of the law to do violence to its spirit." He next turns to the book on which he bases his own text, and observes insultingly that "Aid to Government" is hardly an appropriate title since Ssu-ma Kuang knows nothing about government, but only about disorder. His method, says our writer, is that of Legalism (fa 法): he praises the good and rails on the bad, never varying his approach to events, and "losing his over-all objective by dabbling in trivialities". This approach is inadequate because anything can serve as an "aid to government" - or to disorder - whether it be leniency in administration, protestations of loyalty, ridding China of barbarian invaders or the severe limitation of military power. Hence the only consistent aid to government is single-heartedness (i hsin). Good government is a matter of the heart, of attitude. History should be read with understanding - with empathy.

Tao is unlimited, and men must be infinitely flexible, for no-one can set up a finished model of government.[66]

The theory outlined in the above postscript is abundantly illustrated in Wang Fu-chih's treatment of Sung T'ai Tsu's administration. Qualities of flexibility, balance, timeliness are again and again enjoined upon the ruler. Sung T'ai Tsu is criticised for upsetting the balance between old and new in ceremonial observances when he extended the use of modern vessels.[67] Other changes in ritualistic law, involving mourning and adoption, are assessed in the light of their suitability for the times in which they took place.[68] The conclusion which the author reaches in a significant passage at the close of Section (xii) is that "both conformity and change are in accordance with one Tao ... What they have in common is Timeliness ... What differentiates between them is Timeliness ..."

Because one's response to circumstances must change as they change, there is no point in laying down fixed regulations for the future, beyond the few laws that reflect the basic, unchanging facts of the human condition. This principle comes out very clearly in the discussion of T'ai Tsu's arrangements for the succession. Having allowed that his brother succeed him, so safeguarding the dynasty from the dangers of a minority government, he unwisely nominated another brother and his own son as next in line. This attempt to bind posterity to the personal wishes of an individual is wrong, according to Wang Fu-chih, because T'ai Tsu could not know whether his nominees would in the event prove acceptable to Heaven and the nation. On the contrary, he should have anticipated that his orders would be set aside. In terms of the common Chinese antithesis, his action was ssu (partial/selfish) and not kung (impartial/public-spirited).[69] Again, there is small virtue in setting a precedent in the hope that one's successors will divine one's motive for acting thus. The Sung

Founder may have intended to accumulate resources in order to combat the Khitan, but his successors should not have been expected to realise that saving was not an end in itself.[70]

Another facet of Wang Fu-chih's attitude to rulership is illumined by these examples; it is perhaps best expressed by the phrase in which Legge renders chien 簡 : "a generous ease"(allowing "generous" to act in its own right as well as a qualifier). The man who is responsive to the tide of circumstance and in harmony with the eternal, underlying verities can afford to be open-handed. He may trust the Empire's physical resources (rather than resort to a policy of hoarding and temporising),[71] and he may trust its moral resources, embodied in the ranks of its scholars. Not only should the ruler expect these last to respond to his moral influence; he need not fear to lavish offices on them, for if Heaven endows men with qualities of worth and ability, it is unnatural to deny these a means of expression, just as much as it is foolish to fear that a large bureaucracy will be a burden on the Empire.[72]

The attitude of high moral disdain for triviality and meanness of any kind enters into his most vital convictions about government. If any one theme is writ larger than any other in this text, it is the Confucian versus the Legalist concept of administration. Government is a matter of moral influence; the agents of government are men fitted not by training of a limited, technical sort, but by breadth of scholarship and outlook. His tone is elevated in the extreme. Nothing could exceed his contempt for the very un-Confucian figure of Chao P'u who "skulked around gossiping in the interior of the Palace", or the glowing idealism with which he depicts the Empire governed by an imposing hierarchy of scholar-officials. From time to time Chao P'u hovers in the background of some unsuitable policy of T'ai Tsu's, the symbol of every quality inimical to the Confucian ideal: secretive, hypocritical,

envious, unscrupulous - and uneducated. T'ai Tsu himself does not escape censure. His predilection for conducting private investigations in disguise is deplored as both unseemly and futile; the only way for a ruler to gain an objective report is by trusting to the official means of communication. The officials themselves must be treated with respect: they are valued as ends in themselves, and not just as a means to government. They should be encouraged to form personal ties of loyalty and friendship, which, far from diverting loyalty from the ruler, assist him by improving the general morale of the administration.[73]

Magnanimity is the keynote of all domestic policy, according to Wang's ideal. Taxes are to be few and administration uncluttered by many rules and regulations, on the principle that the ruler's business is to demand much from himself but little from others.[74] The policy here advocated (which has been described as one of laissez-faire[75]) is of course the perennial response of the Confucian mentality to the Legalistic practices which inevitably crept into government policy and bureaucratic routine.[76] Like every other feature of practical government, the quality of magnanimity is subjected to the test of the basic attitude from which it springs. It is no mere easy-going tolerance, extended indiscriminately to good and bad. It must spring from an undivided heart, from an attitude of "Simplicity", from a sensitivity to reality as a whole, and not from any secondary, "partial" motive. As the ultimate proof of Sung T'ai Tsu's sincerity in this matter, Wang Fu-chih cites his unselfish bestowal of the throne upon his brother, an action which compares very favourably with the dynastic policy of other reputedly great rulers.[77]

The same breadth of mind that characterises Wang Fu-chih's standard of rulership is reflected in his attitude to the more

academic aspects of Mandate theory. He detests the application of fanciful theories and artificial categories to complex historical events. It goes almost without saying that Phenomenalism is out. Five Agents theories, the astrological constructs of Liu Hsiang and his son Liu Hsin, the elaborate cosmology of Tung Chung-shu, together with the numerological theories of Shao Yung, are alike dismissed, and indeed the Sung historians themselves had rejected much of the fantastic speculation of the Han. There still remained an area of academic rationalisation, however, in the theory of cheng-t'ung 正統. For all the doubts of the occasional historian such as Ssu-ma Kuang it was Chu Hsi's outlook which prevailed, and the validity of the concept was subsequently taken for granted. But Wang Fu-chih utterly rejects it, and with it he rejects the traditional judgments on periods when the Empire was divided amongst several claimants. One such period comes under review in Section (vii), where the author makes Sung T'ai Tsu's generosity to the fallen rulers a peg on which to hang a prolonged discussion of the Five Dynasties period (A.D. 907-960). He goes along with traditional historiography so far as to dismiss the southern "kingdoms" as of negligible importance; but he stops short at criticising them for positive misdemeanour. Whereas they are commonly reviled for their "rebellious" secession from the Northern-based "Empires", Wang removes the basis of this criticism by denying the imperial claims of the northern governments. These claims are, he says, based solely on the fact that the area ruled happened to coincide with the seat of T'ang government. The so-called Emperors have not a single point to their credit, being either rebel-bandits or barbarians; their sole motive is sheer greed for territory.

The theory of legitimacy did not, however, depend upon the actual conduct of the allegedly legitimate dynasties; Wang Fu-chih was not alone in castigating them, although he went to a greater

extreme than most. To demolish the idea of cheng-t'ung he had to meet it on its own terms, and this he did in the famous first postscript to Tu T'ung-chien lun, in a passage that breathes historical realism in every line. He first of all attacks the origins of the concept, which he identifies as a gambit to justify the usurpations of the Ts'ao and Ssu-ma families after the fall of the Han. Next he exposes the logical inconsistencies within the idea of cheng-t'ung. T'ung, he says justly, implies both unity and continuity - that is, an undivided Empire under an unbroken sequence of dynasties. But the historical facts speak the contrary: China in earliest times was not a united Empire, and from the time of the Warring States period order has alternated with disorder and the line of succession has been broken. Moreover, to speak of the rule of a particular house when the Empire as a whole is in disorder is to treat the Empire as the personal property of the ruler, rather than as commonwealth.[78] When the Mandate is lost, it is truly lost: the scions of Hsia and Shang did not continue their fathers' claims once their power had been overthrown; and yet the preachers of legitimacy would give the founder of the Minor Han dynasty equal status with Kuang Wu, founder of the Later Han, as though the continuance of dynastic glories was a matter of bequeathing one's own descendants to the nation! As for the alleged "inheritance" by which one dynasty succeeds another, this is pure fabrication in the case of the usurpations that occurred between the Han and Sui dynasties. Even supposing one graces them with the name of inheritance, Sui in that case must have inherited the Mandate from the Toba and Yü-wen families - and at this point whatever Wang Fu-chih had to say on the subject of those barbarian interlopers has fallen foul of the censor's pen. In short, "Legitimacy or illegitimacy rests entirely with men. Legitimacy or illegitimacy is men's affair; the

alternation of order and disorder is Heaven's affair."[79]

A similar ruthless exposure of arbitrary schemes of classification occurs in his treatment of the officer Han T'ung, who died fighting against Chao Kuang-yin. Wang Fu-chih not only argues against the designation of Han T'ung as a loyalist, but denies that clear-cut categories of loyalty and disloyalty existed during the Five Dynasties period. The first of these conclusions is not in itself entirely original[80], but the systematic argument which leads up to it is very much so. Where he diverges from the common path of historiography is in his consciousness that circumstances alter cases even to the extent of determining motives. This refusal to assume that a man's actions are an unfailing key to his essential, ultimate character, or indeed to accept that there is necessarily any such finality in a person's character, is revolutionary. It enables him to suggest that infamous rebels like Ts'ao Ts'ao or Liu Yü might, by the mere circumstance of an earlier death, have been judged loyal, and that, conversely, Han T'ung in the event of success would have been forced by circumstances into taking the throne himself; it prompts him to explain Han T'ung's lack of any such ambition first of all by reference to his powerless situation, rather than to any cut-and-dried quality of loyalty in his character. This is not to imply that Wang Fu-chih is a determinist or a materialist: in the same section he goes on to draw a convincing sketch of the motives which induced Han T'ung to act in one way when the same circumstances might have induced him to take another; but he is unquestionably more convinced than most Confucians of the effect of material events upon human behaviour.[81]

Despite his general antipathy to dogma on any subject other than the most general principles of nature, there is one practical issue in which he displays the most uncompromising rigidity.

"There might be abdications, successions, and even changes of mandate, yet never should a foreign dynasty be permitted to interrupt the succession /of Chinese sovereigns/".[82] A streak of irrationality seems to undercut his feelings about the barbarian, for despite his recognition that centres of civilisation rise and fall, despite also his belief that the primitive Chinese were as beasts and barbarians,[83] he claims that the distinction between the Chinese and the barbarian is immovably grounded in nature. He therefore rejects the conventional belief that the barbarian may be civilised and admitted to the nation.[84] His horror of a barbarian ruler is the most powerful ingredient in his argument against the concept of legitimacy (which involved treating a great number of foreign rulers as legitimate). In other words the unusual and realistic position at which he arrives in that matter is not based solely on detached intellectual conviction of certain logical principles.

The matter of defence from the tribes on China's northern and western frontiers was ever a critical issue of Imperial policy, presenting Chinese rulers with the choice between weakness against barbarian incursions and the strengthening of the provinces at the risk of insubordination to the central government. The crucial decision to end the problem of regionalism by centralising military authority and subordinating it to the civil bureaucracy was taken at the beginning of the Sung, and appropriately Wang Fu-chih gives the question prolonged consideration in the first chapter of Sung lun.[85] Since he regards national security against the outsider as the most important aspect of government policy,[86] he is intensely critical both of the Sung's policy of demilitarisation and of the prolonged failure to recover the northern provinces lost to the Khitan. His attitude is supported by a number of sustained arguments, both logical and

ingenious. His criticisms in each case are ultimately directed against weaknesses of mental attitude rather than practical policy pure and simple. The complex factors involved in the decision over Yuchou (see Section (viii)) are resolved into an affair of simple jealousy emanating from T'ai Tsu's secretary, Chao P'u, and infecting the whole civil service of the Sung with a readiness to suspect disloyalty in anyone who scores military achievement, whilst T'ai Tsu indulges in an exceedingly unbecoming attitude of playing the civil and military off one against the other. Another aspect of the Sung dynasty's northern policy, concerning the decision to accumulate material resources, before venturing an attack, is given similarly short shrift, in a section from which emerges very strongly a favourite theme of Wang Fu-chih's. One should act in the present, he says in effect; just as he disapproves of attempting to turn the clock back, so he disapproves of trying to regulate the future. There is no guarantee that one's descendants will put their stores of wealth to their intended use; in the meantime it would be much better to utilise the current state of high military morale while it lasts.[87] ("The Empire's wealth is of itself sufficient to meet the Empire's needs.") A puzzling discrepancy seems to exist between this and his earlier argument in Section (viii) where he concedes that "The army could not be utilised all of a sudden and raised to the necessary standard ... Men were weary of warfare; and the spirit of boldness had waned". He cuts the knot, however, by reverting to the critical importance of mental outlook: intervals of respite are permissible, but only when clearly understood as periods for gathering strength; moreover, mere military achievement is useless without the support of a good understanding amongst those in control of government: "The secret of all success and failure lies in the degree of trust among the ruler and his ministers; it does not depend upon the forces

of physical strength within the Empire". The argument is as old as Confucianism itself.

And here it is fitting to conclude this introduction to some of Wang Fu-chih's ideas on the Mandate of Heaven. Obviously such a fragmentary selection from his writings as is dealt with in this paper cannot form the basis of too many sweeping conclusions, yet some important characteristics of his thought do emerge unmistakably. Confucian humanism, with its typical ideals and prejudices, runs very strongly in him. His ideal ruler is distinguished by integrity of inner attitude and not, generally speaking, by any external features of political action. This does not mean that the details of his conduct do not matter; the point is that the correct way to handle affairs, details and all, is by concentrating on their basic principles. Such an approach is in the best Confucian tradition. Yet in a sense it is Wang's consciousness of concrete, finite circumstance that reinforces his attitude, for it is because circumstances are always changing that one must not nail a dogma to any one of them. Nor may one seek principles apart from them, as did the majority of Confucianists: doctrinaire theories such as that of cheng-t'ung are spurious, bearing no relation to the actual facts of experience. Wang Fu-chih's own arguments in the pages that follow are a lively illustration of his realistic bias. Although the epigrammatic sentences of the original do not always yield their meaning easily, the logic with which a whole theoretical position is constructed grips the reader in spite of himself. And so to the text.

THE TEXT: THE FOUNDER OF THE SUNG DYNASTY

(Chapter One of 'Discussion of the Sung Dynasty')

by Wang Fu-Chih

(i) The Operation of the Mandate in the Foundation of the Sung

The Sung rose and united the Empire[1]. The people were contented, government was settled, and culture flourished. And from this we can further our knowledge of the Mandate of Heaven[2].

Heaven is called "hard to trust"[3]: it cannot be coerced[4] to suit the purposes of worthless men. The reason why Heaven cannot be coerced is its constancy[5]. The Mandate is called "not easily got"[6]: it is not easily inherited by worthless men. The Mandate is regulated by the changes and transformations of Heaven coming to maturity in devious fashion through much deliberation[7]. If men are unable to give vicarious assistance in doing the work of Heaven, then it must make a special effort. The best ground on which emperors receive the Mandate is Virtue[8]: Shang and Chou are cases of this[9]. The next best is Merit[10]: Han and T'ang are cases of this[11]. It is said in the Odes[12],

> "[God above] scrutinised the four quarters,
> Seeking [someone who would give] peace to the people[13]."

Virtue sufficient to pacify all the Empire and Merit sufficient to suppress great disorder can both bring peace to the people. When Heaven finds a ruler who is securing this it bestows the Mandate upon him, and the people are thereby given peace. Heaven's business is accomplished[14].

But why in the case of the Sung Founder did Heaven not scrutinise the earth beneath, nor did it bestow the Mandate where it seemed fit to be bestowed?

Chao K'uang-yin[15] sprang from the ranks and became an adjutant-general as his father had done. He rose and fell along with the restless current of the times, and his surname and style were as yet unknown to the world. In the light of these facts he could hardly attract the eager anticipation of the peasantry[16] by bestowing his favours on the lower orders.

In the service of the House of Ch'ai[17] he punished Hotung[18] in the west and resisted the Khitan[19] in the north, but still had not struck a single blow that was particularly to his credit. His victory at Ch'ukuan[20] was not of a critical nature. That he should be rewarded with a military governorship was out of all proportion to his deserts[21]. Such a lack of accumulated Virtue and such a dearth of Merit cannot be spoken of in the same breath as the outstanding achievements of Han and T'ang in pacifying the Empire. Even compared with the deeds of Ts'ao Ts'ao[22], who exterminated the Yellow Turbans[23], destroyed Tung Cho, extricated Hsien Ti from a dangerous situation and suppressed the rebellion of the two Yuan brothers[24], or compared with the deeds of Liu Yü[25], who made captive Yao Hung, executed Mu-jung Ch'ao, put to death Huan Hsuan, defeated and killed Lu Hsun, and so pacified the Yangtze area[26], Chao K'uang-yin's achievements do not amount to one-hundredth part of them. Taking advantage of wild disorder he rose through the support of soldiers and snatched the imperial position[27], yet in the end he rose in stature through the help he gave to his age, and all the Empire received his pacification.

Alas, in this case Heaven helped the people by devious means, and bestowed its Mandate on a man in the midst of a situation where there was no-one fit to be so entrusted and only gave him full power thereafter. Heaven itself bestowed trust[28]; it was not that the man

first of all presumed to place his trust in Heaven. And so it was with hard toil that Heaven gave him the Mandate. The Virtue of Shang and Chou and the Merit of Han and T'ang, which fitted them to rule the Empire, all existed before they had the Empire, and were the ground of Heaven's bestowing the Mandate on them: and so it was with ease that Heaven helped them. The Sung founder had no accumulated goodness nor the achievement of dispersing rebellion, but when we turn our attention to the question of his imperial rule we see that indeed he was fit to rule the Empire. But whatever Virtue he bestowed on the people in quelling civil war was displayed only after he had the Empire. That is to say that the rule exercised by the Sung over the Empire was communicated morning and evening by Heaven to the heart of the Sung Founder and was due to his enlightenment by Heaven. Therefore is it said that "the Mandate is not easily got"[29]

For without the blades of the weapons being steeped in blood, three-fourths of the Empire was subdued; without punishments being tried even as a temporary measure, aggressive generals submitted. Without T'ai Tsu's having been early taught by a Kan P'an[30], culture sprang up, and even while stained with the lingering traces of slaughter and plunder he caused kindness to be spread abroad. How should this have been expected from a Head of the Palace Corps[31] who was suddenly pushed to the fore by military power, under whose aegis he had so long failed to achieve distinction? What was it that enlightened and inspired him, and enabled his perceptions and ideas to be clarified, as when mists are rolled away and the blue sky appears - what could it have been, if it were not the diligent help and instruction, manifested in a concrete way[32], and the enlightenment of ever-attentive God above?[33] It was Heaven who gave help, and man who received it. In Heaven's help can be seen Heaven's intention, and in man's receiving of that help can be known the power of Heaven's Virtue[34].

Why was it that the Sung Founder received an irregular[35] Mandate, and therewith finally united the Empire and established great peace which lasted for a hundred years, meriting the description "Flourishing Government"?

It was only because of his reverent awe[36]. One who has this awe is consequently troubled and does not tolerate an attitude of complacency in himself. When sudden crisis looms up, he is cautious and not blinded. For high Heaven's unfathomable spirit moves in the deeps and is something which cannot be understood by comparison. And so when a man can remember to maintain this attitude, is not this the highest wisdom? To gain one's position smoothly and remain in it peacefully without forgetting to be in awe, is the "respectful fear of the heavenly dragon"[37]. This was why T'ang of the Shang dynasty and Wen of Chou, while acting under the protection of Heaven and the aid of men, maintained awe from first to last. But their successors, who gained their position smoothly and remained in it peacefully, received the adulation of men, which caused them to lose all diffidence. On turning to examine themselves they believed they had no shortcomings. And so they blissfully forgot to be in awe, and Heaven did not live in their hearts.

But fortunately the Sung founder was not this kind of man. In terms of kinship he was not so close as Li Ssu-yuan,[38] adopted son of Emperor T'ai Tsu of the Later T'ang and Shih Ching-t'ang,[39] favourite son-in-law of Emperor Ming Tsu of the Later T'ang. In terms of position he did not compare with Shih Ching-t'ang, Liu Chih-yuan[40] or Kuo Wei,[41] who each had sole direction of military campaigns, occupying cities of strategic importance and marshalling powerful forces.[42] In terms of opportunism[43] he did not equal Kuo Wei's usurpation of power, nor that of Ch'ai Jung[44] who followed the latter. He had no plan that would

forward his ruler's success within his own mind, and externally had conducted no laborious resistance, as had Li Ssu-yuan, Shih Ching-t'ang, Liu Chih-yuan and Kuo Wei, who rose along with their masters and helped them to seize power.[45] Those who promoted and upheld him were his comrades, whose relationship with him was not that of minister and lord. Those who submitted to his unifying rule were the common people to whom his name was hitherto unknown. Those to whom he gave a share in his administration were prime ministers serving Ch'in in the morning and Ch'u in the evening.[46] Those whom he wished to reduce were enemy-states who did not accord him recognition of his authority and prestige.[47] He was enthroned with breath-taking suddenness, and it seemed as though his authority could not last. Since his power was slight, he did not dare to use his military might for aggression on people afar. Lacking any enormous prestige, he did not dare to exterminate those who had loyally served the previous dynasty. Being without a scholarly background, he did not venture to mock at the old breed of Confucian scholars with his own wisdom. Since his grace was not all-pervasive he did not dare to govern the officials and people with repressive laws.[48] From awe arose prudence; from prudence, moderation; from moderation, compassion; from compassion, harmony; and from harmony, culture.[49] And so the spirit of violence and brutality which had prevailed in the century after the Kuang-ch'i reign-period[50] of the T'ang gradually lessened and receded till it vanished, leaving no trace. How wonderful was this! - that Heaven should inspire the Sung Founder with awe of its own awfulness, and day and night constrain him to remain diligent; his government received awed respect, and the ancestral sacrifices were preserved. It was simply in this way that the Emperor exhibited his deeds and Heaven gave their origin to events. Thus, even after he had received the Mandate, Heaven still, as it were, dispelled his youthful ignorance and opened up

the first crannies of intelligence, and enveloped the heart of the Sung Founder. If Heaven did not itself bestow trust then how could the Heavenly Mandate be easily transferred? [51]

Nevertheless, even in this case there were certain respects in which the man was equal to receiving the Mandate. Although he had had no outstanding achievements he did not throw himself away, and although he had no accumulated acts of kindness he did not destroy his chances. And so he received Heaven's help, and in fear and trembling he held his aspirations to the Mean, and did not exceed himself. Thus, although at that time there was no ruler of Shang, Chou, Han or T'ang, yet Heaven was able to exercise the influence of its Virtue in imparting to the Sung Founder honour and respect for the people, and lovingly entrusted its Mandate to him. That he should be fit to rule the Empire was perhaps inevitable.

(ii) Han T'ung and the Question of Loyalty

Does Han T'ung[1] deserve to be considered a loyal servant of Chou?[2] I cannot venture to think so. Supposing Yuan Shao and Ts'ao Ts'ao, who reduced Tung Cho, or Liu Yü, who punished Huan Hsuan,[3] had been vanquished and died themselves, they must certainly have been credited with loyalty. I fear that to credit Han T'ung with loyalty is very like this. Had Han T'ung leapt on a horse, closed the gates and defended the Palace; and had the Imperial troops adhered to him and the townsmen been of one mind with him; and had the Sung Founder been like Ts'ao Shuang and Han T'ung like Ssu-ma I,[4] and had those who wished T'ai Tsu long life tumbled overnight, - then, everyone would have placed great hopes in Han T'ung, the young ruler[5] would have entrusted him with his commands, the power of the Throne would have been under his control, and there would have been none to rival him. The numerous men who rose to high office under his aegis would have already withdrawn their hopes from a sovereign who was a minor, and the Yellow Robe would suddenly have descended on Han T'ung, who could not have refused though he had wanted to.[6] Could Han T'ung in this event have acted like Duke Chou who, when at Court, had Kuan-shu Hsien and Ts'ai-shu Tu punished, and in retirement toiled at enlightening the peasantry, never deviating from first to last from his support of the Chou shrines?[7] Then he could be credited with loyalty - but indeed I cannot venture to believe so.

Then did Han T'ung resist the Sung Founder to the death because he cherished rivalry in his heart and for that reason wanted to "chase after the deer" of the Ch'ai?[8] I suggest we dare not slander him thus. And why not?

The rise of the Sung Founder did not have the appearance of removing of mountains and shifting of seas, nor did it have such long-accumulated grandeur that it could not be reversed.[9] Han T'ung had shared with Sung T'ai Tsu control of the Palace troops.[10] They had drifted out of touch with each other, but were not hostile. Therefore when T'ai Tsu suddenly rebelled and mounted the throne and Han T'ung shook his arm to call for support, no-one responded. This was not a case like that of Liu Yü[11] and Liu I,[11] or that of Hsiao Tao-ch'eng[12] and Shen Yu-chih,[12] casting their improper glances on the sacred vessels and striving to be first in possession, each waiting with his crowd of followers for the situation to resolve itself suddenly. Since he had not their power he did not have their ambition, and since he had not their ambition he did not shape his ends as they did. How can we slander him seriously by saying "Han T'ung cherished the scheme of replacing the Chou Dynasty himself, and therefore hated the Sung Founder"?[13]

As to the fact that Han T'ung was bargaining for death in taking up the struggle, this is a circumstance common amongst other men; all one can say of it is that it cannot be considered the way of one who through fear goes where events carry him.

When someone who has shared the same tasks as other men, forthwith turns his back up on them, and having been of equal status with them all of a sudden towers above them; when he has cherished uncommon[14] aspirations which he has not divulged, and being placed in an unsuitable position promptly accepts it without demur, in such circumstances men of intelligence cannot but be angry and men of spirit cannot but be indignant. Death would be of no account to such people. They could scarcely act as a law unto themselves in the morning and adopt the posture of subject in the evening, or cast off powerless isolation and accede to power. This is why I say that the fact that

Han T'ung bargained for death in struggling against the Sung Founder was a common circumstance amongst other men, and is no evidence of a carefully-planned objective.

Alas! When the world is full of strife, and the ruler is not one endowed with Heaven's Mandate, when the state has no lasting basis and men do not know to be loyal, how can one easily speak in terms of loyalty?[15] We may in fact allow men to escape the charge of inconstancy. Men like Feng Tao,[16] Chao Feng,[16] Fan Chih[16] and T'ao Ku[16] first stood side by side with those to whom they had once given orders; next, they bowed their heads to those with whom they had walked side by side; and they finally kowtowed as "Your humble servant" to those before whom they had bowed. They made haste to serve and stood erectly to attention, bubbling over with self-satisfaction. They were quite unconscious of any incongruity in their former and latter roles.

But Han T'ung was the kind of man who maintained an unsophisticated disposition.[17] We can allow him constancy in respect of this. But it is only too easy to say in hasty tribute "He was a loyal servant of Chou"!

(iii) The Abundant Virtue of the Sung Founder

T'ai Tsu had admonitions engraved on stone and locked away in the Palace, so that when his successors went in, on their accession to the throne, they must kneel to read the admonitions. There were three of these. The first was, to protect the descendants of the entire Ch'ai clan. The second was, not to kill literati. The third was, not to impose further agricultural taxes. Truly, such commands as these can only be described as possessing "Abundant Virtue".[1]

Those who have Abundant Virtue seek it entirely within themselves.[2] If a ruler neglects himself and seeks Virtue from other men, causing names to be further rectified,[3] righteousness spun out yet more, decrees made more complex and punishments consequently increased, then such conduct can only be described as possessing "meagre Virtue".[4] Those who seek out what is of advantage to the people and promote it, who seek out what is harmful and remove it, who pick out what is called good and see that the people follow it, and pick out what is called bad and forbid the people to pursue it, are all seeking Virtue from other human beings. These things, regarded as "fundamentals" by muddle-headed Confucians, are the worn-out brooms of Shen Pu-hai and Han Fei Tzu.[5]

Now if the good ruler maintains a magnanimous attitude himself,[6] the people are encouraged and ignorant scandalmongers have no chance to act presumptuously. If he maintains an attitude of self-restraint[7] then the people have plenty, and covetous folk have no chance for importunate demands.

The Sung Founder cared for the descendants of the former dynasty with faithful generosity, and did much by his liberality to foster uprightness amongst scholars; by economising on national expenditure he cared for the livelihood of the common people. In these things he did not seek Virtue from others. He cast aside his personal

doubts and fears and refrained from giving vent to his anger; and he suppressed any taste for extravagance or miserliness. He sought all these things from his own mind and body. As to what was profitable or harmful to others, good or bad for them, he respected their choice and did not strive to share control of these things. Virtue was amassed in his own person. Without his looking for an abundance of it, it accumulated imperceptibly. Therefore I maintain it can only be called "Abundant Virtue". The way of those who seek Virtue in themselves is consistently simple; the way of those who seek it from others is consistently complicated. It is complexity that causes administrative confusion, and a conglomeration of penal laws. Yet Confucian scholars of later generations have consistently embraced these as the very art of government. Is this not indeed harmful? The Master[8] said that "if the people be led by laws and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments" then the burden of laws and punishments would cause the people's sense of shame[9] to go to the winds. Therefore I maintain that this can only be called "meagre Virtue".

The Government[10] of King Wen of Chou[11] had five salient principles all of which demanded much from the ruler and little from the officials and people.[12] Among the things excluded by these five were concern with profit (he did not exert his energies to promote it); harm (he did not exert his energies to remove it); good (he did not exert his energies to supervise men's practice of it) and evil (he did not exert his energies to prevent men following it). Therefore King Wen's Humanity[13] was like the canopy of Heaven over the Earth, and he had no anxiety lest there be rebellion amongst the myriad things.

Now a country well-governed, a country in disorder and a country at peace represent three sorts of conditions. A mountainous country, a country of plains and a country of marshes are three sorts of

terrain. Worthy people, ignorant people and usable people represent three types of calibre. Putting these sets of three together we have nine varieties. Their elements of profit and harm, and good and bad, cannot be enumerated. Classify them according to their differences and the cleverest mathematician will be unable to reach their full count.[14] If a ruler is determined to do so, he will first lose his own Virtue. Let his words follow the Way untiringly, and let his actions be in immediate conformity to Law, yet, if he seeks to exercise true kingly government by these means, then customs will become abased, officials become overbearing and the people die in ever greater measure. It will be for no other reason than that he merely seeks Virtue from other people.

The Sung Emperors made demands on themselves in three ways.[15] They went beyond Han and T'ang and came near Shang and Chou. Their generations succeeded one another for a hundred years, going through the reigns of five emperors, under whom the Empire enjoyed peace. It was the mind of T'ai Tsu which accomplished this. It was not until the Ching-li reign-period that controversies first began. It was not until the Hsi-ning reign-period that legislation started to pile up.[16] Rulers turned from themselves to make demands upon other men. Only then was the spirit of Virtue that was in T'ai Tsu gradually dissipated. The pivot of success or failure and the crux of good order or rebellion consist in the forces determining whether the people live or die and in the sources of purity or corruption in mores, and the key to this is utter Simplicity. One who realises this Simplicity[17] may become a true king of the Empire.[18] How can those muddle-headed Confucians who have been swept off their feet by theories of Shen Pu-hai and Han Fei Tzu be fit to have a part in this?

(iv) T'ai Tsu's Liberal Policy Towards Scholars

Since T'ai Tsu established an oath not to kill literati and laid it upon his descendants, to the end of the Sung era no civil officials were put to death by the executioner's blade.[1] Though Chang Pang-ch'ang[2] tried to usurp the throne for himself, he only had to commit suicide. Ts'ai Ching[3] and Chia Ssu-tao,[4] who plunged the country into great peril, both kept their heads upon their shoulders in their place of exile. It has been said: "Because Chou respected scholars, the scholars respected themselves." At the beginning of the rise of Sung, how could there have been any self-respecting scholars such that T'ai Tsu would not have despised them, but would have been moved to sentiments of protection and compassion for them?[5]

If in the period from Hsi T.sung[6] and I Tsung[7] of the T'ang down to the beginning of the Sung we examine those amongst the scholars who earned a reputation for purity, we find only Chang Tao-ku[8] and Meng Chao-t'u,[8] or those who gave up an illustrious position and retired out of respect for their own integrity, we find only Han Wu[8] and Ssu-k'ung T'u,[8] or those who took to the hills and did not emerge, dying of old age in their mountain caves, we find only Cheng Ao[9] and Ch'en T'uan.[9] As for those who were particularly vile in character and despicable in conduct, betraying their lords and slaughtering their own comrades, and bartering their ancestral shrines, then Ts'ui Yun, Chang Chun, Li Ch'i and Chang Wen-wei were foremost.[10] People like Feng Tao, Chao Feng, Li Hao and T'ao Ku, regarded it as the natural thing to play the turncoat and change allegiance in order to improve their position.[11] Others such as Ho Ning,[12] Feng Yen-i,[12] and Han Hsi-tsai[12] and their ilk were infatuated with entertainers. Although they had not indulged in any great wickedness, they were just fit to provide amusement along with birds, beasts and fishes, and did not merit serious regard. When the worthlessness of

scholars sinks to such a nadir, to treat them as of no account according to their worthlessness would cause them no uneasiness; and to detest their worthlessness and provoke them would be to make them value things that are bound to lead to punishment, and scholars would then experience repressive administrative power.

However, T'ai Tsu gave very deep thought to this.

On the decline of Chou in ancient times, unemployed scholars put pressure on lords and princes by their unreasonable discussions and their grasping at favour and emolument, and the Six States which combined against Ch'in were overthrown in consequence.[13] Ch'in could not abide their clamour, and stamped down on them by burying the literati alive in pits and conscripting officials into the army.[14] In the period of Han's decadence the scholars formed interest-groups and ruthlessly struck out at those who differed from them. In this way they competed with the Emperor for power, and the Han was thereby destroyed.[15] Ts'ao Ts'ao abhorred their wrangling and employed Ts'ui Yen and Mao Chieh to stamp down on the official administration by reproof.[16] But Ch'in earned hatred from the Empire, and was destroyed in the second generation. When Ts'ao Ts'ao died, the Ssu-ma clan could not satisfy popular feeling and set themselves to be lax and liberal. And P'ei K'ai, Wang Chieh and that ilk, by their advocacy of licence, overturned what Ts'ao Ts'ao had accomplished, and so China was ruined.[17] By this we see that neither despising scholars according to their worthlessness, nor reforming them by punishing their dishonourable traits, was ever able to succeed. If they are thoroughly provoked, hatred is engendered and the calamity is overwhelming; if they are but lightly repressed, then they submit at first but rebel at the last.

This is why we hear of the ancient kings nurturing, but not controlling, scholars.[18] If intelligence and ability is gathered together,

then it overflows and attains a proper balance and with encouragement it may be guided into a flourishing condition. This is true flourishing. How could rulers forgo this and seek for stupid, violent knaves with whom to share the Empire? In this connection The Odes say:

"The hawk soars up into the sky,
The fish leaps in the ocean.
The King of Chou enjoyed a long reign,
And did he not influence men?"[19]

The soaring bird does not fear the hurricane, and the leaping fish does not fear the torrential deeps. They float through sky and ocean, confidently expecting a hundred years of vigorous life.

Why were the Chou scholars able to respect themselves? - because they were respected by King Wen. Lao Tzu says: "If the people are not afraid of death, what is the good of trying to intimidate them with death?"[20] This saying is not far from the truth. If the people do not fear death, yet they have fears of their own. All alike are bred and nourished by Heaven and Earth. Even if someone "goes it alone" and troubles other men, thereby slighting the ruler's pity and care, yet, be he never-so-stupid, he cannot remain unashamed. How much less can those who are already scholars, whose intelligence and ability does not lag behind that of other men, and whose ears are already accustomed to hear, and their eyes to see, the purport of the Odes and Book of Documents, unceremoniously reject this as mere rubbish?[21]

Now since T'ai Tsu's was the vigorous temperament of the soldier, the men he appointed to assist him in government, although lacking the devotion to learning of a I Yin or a Fu Yüeh,[22] disdained the scholastic tone of immorality and heterodoxy, and did not act insolently. They thus approached the hawk soaring in the stored spaces of heaven, and the fish swimming in the calm waters of the ocean's depths. Can

it be denied that Heaven opened the way for their understanding to the point where it could be reckoned in harmony with the Tao?

And so there was a real reason why those of the Sung scholar-officials who far surpassed Han and T'ang increased beyond number. To treat men well if they are good and badly if they are bad is not enough to govern a single household; and how much less the Empire! When the Yellow River overflows its banks eastwards, there is no-one who can check and turn it back westwards. To seek satisfaction by using bureaucratic methods and the means of categories[23] in the forcible reformation of the scholars of the Empire is the attitude of vulgar inflexibility. How can it be sufficient to plumb the hidden treasures of those who have Virtue![24]

(v) On the Selection of Officials

There is a saying that "He who wins scholars will prosper." The implication of "win" is not that the ruler congratulates himself in his heart, considering it as a matter of his own Virtue.[1] The ruler in actual fact wins scholars because his subordinates win them and present them to him. The ruler also wins scholars when his subordinates win them and themselves give them employment that they might render useful service to the state. Therefore there is no greater defect in a ruler than that of competing with his ministers for scholars. If the ruler competes with his ministers, then they also will compete with him for scholars. If the ministers compete for scholars, then scholar also will compete with scholar for official rank, whereupon the loyalties of men in the Empire will be dispersed beyond retrieval. The Book of Documents says:

"Shou has an innumerable host of men,
But they are divided in loyalty and in effectiveness."[2]

They were divided not only from Chou, but from each other, only Chou stood out as the most isolated individual.

Below the ruler are the great ministers,[3] the cultural preceptors[4] and the officials.[5] They all represent positions pursued by scholars in fulfilment of their ambitions. The ruler's task is to appoint ministers who shall prove loyal, to choose preceptors who shall prove sound, and to select officials who shall prove worthy;[6] if this is done, then those of the Empire's scholars who dwell in seclusion will aim to be officials, those entering the schools will aim to be preceptors, and those going up to Court will aim to be ministers. As the movement of a net is controlled by hauling on its main rope,[7] so will the scholars come in a body to render useful service to the state. If they do not disdain the calling of minister, then national affairs will be properly

dealt with; if they do not disdain the calling of preceptor, then scholarship will have lustre; if they do not disdain the calling of official, then conduct will be correct and polished, and everyone will help to give ease to the Emperor. If all make a concerted effort to give him ease, the qualities of wisdom and worth in the Empire will be channelled in the same direction, and the Emperor will be able to win as many scholars as he wants. A spirit of harmony will pervade court and provinces to overflowing, and splendour and prosperity will wax unsurpassed. This is what is meant by the saying "He who gains scholars will prosper."

If the ministers do not consider it a matter of virtue to recommend scholars for advancement[8] then this will be a loss in the employment of scholars. If the preceptors do not consider it gracious to instruct scholars, then this will be a further loss of scholars. If the officials do not consider it a fine thing to suggest scholars for promotion, then scholars will be completely lost. And so the objection made to scholars "being appointed to rank by the State and also receiving favours from private quarters" is illegitimate.[9] When inferiors lack cohesion and are therefore estranged from the ruler, whilst he is concentrating on his personal advantage to the exclusion of broader concerns, and an innumerable host of individuals is matched by an innumerable host of loyalties, so that loyalties being divided effectiveness is dissipated, rarely does this not lead to destruction. And so there is no greater defect in a ruler than that of competing with his subordinates for scholars.

Ever since the T'ang dynasty, all <u>chin-shih</u>[10] were under the patronage of their sponsors, and this counted as a cause for gratitude for the rest of their lives. This did not originate in the T'ang. No <u>hsiao-lien</u>[11] of the Han dynasty ever in his life ventured to reckon himself on a par with the great official who had

recommended him, and when he died, he adopted mourning for three years:[12] it was simply a matter of human feeling. But those who used the doctrines of categories and laws to restrain people accused those others of no longer realising that they had a ruler.[13] When he heard this, the ruler said in extreme indignation,"Through those fellows winning over the scholars, I am losing them". With heterodox theories such as these, compounded of suspicious jealousy and scrutiny, they used the doctrines of Shen Pu-hai and Han Fei Tzu to hem in the cream of the officials; they dispersed the loyalties of the scholars and caused them to become disaffected; they pursued evil paths and gave impetus to rumours as a means of coercing the ruler. These fellows, nursing villainy in their hearts and usurping the ruler's power of command, vaunted their independence and disrupted national affairs. The effect was that ministers forfeited trust, preceptors held themselves aloof from their pupils, and officials could not be pacified. Thereupon the mainrope of the net was broken and the knots severed, and the isolation of the ruler was complete.[14] Hence the saying,"If one is not trusted by his friends, he will not get the confidence of his sovereign".[15] If his friends do not trust him, how could he manage to get the ruler's confidence? If youths insult their elders, those of low status offend honourable men, distant relatives come between near-relatives, and useless specimens ruin men of worth, though they all say,"I know only that there is an Emperor", how could they have knowledge of the Emperor! They know of nothing save rank and emolument.[16]

Now the intimate friendships of scholars are not formed merely for fame and wealth. Their opinions can be aired by this means, and their moral purpose fulfilled; similarity in their tastes induces confidence in each other, and they are mutually benefited by their vocations coming into contact.[17] The Book of Changes says: "When uprooting

ribbon-grass, one must pull out the whole clump".[18]

To uproot only a single stalk of grass without pulling out the whole clump is utterly insufficient to cover a large mansion. The great ministers are the mind and belly,[19] the cultural preceptors are the ears and eyes, and the senior officials are the arms and fingers. With the mind responding to the perceptions of the senses, and the senses responding to the activities of the limbs, all is united to form a whole human body, with every part functioning properly in it. Mutual separation of these parts renders them numb, and numbness causes paralysis and death.[20] How is it then when the ruler and his ministers compete for scholars and cling stubbornly to them as if they were their own acquisition!

T'ai-tsu urgently wanted to get scholars into the government, and since the chü-jen who had failed the metropolitan examinations were clamouring for justice and alleging that they had been unfairly treated, he brought the chin-shih to the Palace and examined them there; and he did not allow them to claim the patronage of any private individual.[21] Fortunately, during the rest of the Sung era this move was not repeated. If this policy had been preserved so that it became the system, the Sung would have shared the lot of the deserted Ch'in dynasty.

How could a ruler ever succeed in administering peace to the whole of China and caring for the numerous scholars by means of the severest scrutiny, the most vexed recriminations or the softest favours?[22]

(vi) On the Ruler's Contact with Public Opinion

T'ai Tsu frequently went about in disguise. When some warned him about his lack of caution, he replied "The holder of Heaven's Mandate is responsible to himself for his conduct"[1]. With this piece of braggadocio he boldly fooled men. The reason he went about in disguise was that after his own fortunate gain he was apprehensive lest another emulate him, and he observed popular feelings that he might be ready to deal with them. It was by narrow sentiments of private advantage and the small wisdom of suspicious precaution that the Virtue of the Sung withered away. Popular history relates how as T'ai Tsu went out in the imperial carriage a stray arrow suddenly hit the carriage-boards, and on seeing it he said with a fine display of bravado: "Even if your bow-shot killed me it would be no good to you!" In fact he himself had instigated the shooting of the arrow. Even on occasions when he went about in disguise, his attendants were involved in comprehensive security precautions, but to those who said in remonstration "What if an accident should occur?" he merely returned a laugh.

In general there are three reasons why a ruler may like to go about in disguise. The foregoing constitutes one of them. The second is abandoned profligacy, as in the case of rulers like Liu Tzu-yeh[2]. The third occurs when rulers consider fault-finding to be a mark of ability. Professing, it may be, their solicitude for the people of their domain, they keep a close watch on the moral standards of official behaviour, on the material conditions of the people's livelihood, and on the pulse of national affairs. This sort of person's quest for good government is extremely eager, his approach to the Way extremely near it in appearance, and his self-confidence extremely firm. Yet, at best, the result is disorder; at worst, ruin. It is folly indeed to come to the point of disorder or ruin without mending one's ways!

Why "folly"? The point is that no-one who has pitted himself against the entire Empire by means of the distance his own two feet can go, the evidence his own two eyes can perceive, the words his own two ears can hear, and his power of hair-splitting discrimination and pettifogging wisdom, has ever been able to accomplish his end.[3]

Moreover, when a ruler goes about in disguise he considers his identity is hidden, but how can it be hidden in actual fact? Before his feet have even left the palace-gates the time appointed will already have leaked out to his intimates, and in the instant his form enters the main streets the rumour of his approach will already have reached the innermost alleyways. The inhabitants of the latter have ample scope[4] for keeping watch on the Emperor, but he cannot even begin to keep watch on them.

In these circumstances, when those who cherish their own cunning schemes cover up their cleverness with apparent candour and practise flattery in the guise of simplicity, denouncing upright conduct, which they loathe, and joining forces with treachery, which they commend; and when the ruler accepts the deceptions they offer to his face so that he incurs their laughter behind his back, and provokes the righteous to anger whilst bartering his favour with traitors: then national affairs cannot be restored to order. Even though the ruler escape this ultimate fate, a single instance of success is not enough to conceal the inferior man, nor is the blemish of one action enough to damn the superior man. The favour or hatred of one man is not sufficient ground for determining kindness or cruelty on a wide scale; the welfare of a single region is not enough to embrace the most outlying areas. Similarly if a ruler takes random information from one of the ordinary people, and delivers extravagant praise or censure[5] without scrutiny or investigation, believing his informant's statement to be without bias

and preening himself on his fine, discriminating perception, and if on this basis he determines official promotion and degradation, weighs up what he will encourage and what he will get rid of, applies rewards and punishments and decides what is to be given and what taken away; and if none of the body of officials dares to take issue with him - they indeed being no match for the devious ways and coercive measures of treacherous men, whose poison they are forced to swallow; then the outcome of such a situation is at best, disorder; at worst, ruin. Since it has been thus from of old, for a ruler to form his own conclusions without examination is excellent cause for sorrow.[6]

If a ruler would bring the affairs of the Empire to maturity he must carefully examine the principles concerned. If he would fulfil the aspirations of the Empire he must apprehend the feelings involved. Nevertheless, there is a definite method in the way the ruler's enlightened faculties of perception are to be used. It is by this means that he chooses men of worth and ability: if his chief minister is a just man, then worthless elements will be weeded out. By this means he finds out official corruption: if the high ministers are pure, then avaricious officials will be excluded. By this means he secures justice in lawsuits: if legal officers are conscientious then false accusations will be eliminated. By this means he deals with dangerous situations: if the chief ministers are loyal then the state will have a solid foundation.[7]

Consequently, if the ruler uses his wisdom in discriminating good from bad, he need not be directly involved with more than about three individuals for all the people of the Empire to receive the illumination of his splendour as it filters down to them.[8] It goes from the Court to the provincial government, from there to the prefecture and district, and thence to the villages. It is the district magistrate

who supervises matters in the villages, it is the prefects who supervise the rule of the district magistrates, and it is the provincial officials who supervise prefectural administration. In this way news reaches the ministers at Court, who, with such comprehensive knowledge of all that is going on in the Empire, can dispense with matters of little value and correct serious abuses, get to the root of obstructions and clear away hindrances. In accordance with this system, even matters of private speech between man and wife are effortlessly manifest in their entirety to the Son of Heaven[9] as he lets fall the fine fringes of his robes.[10] "Every foot in the Empire is mine. Every eye in the Empire is mine. Every ear in the Empire is mine." One can cheat his unaided intelligence, but one cannot pull the wool over the eyes of all. The enlightened ruler's art depends solely upon this. The impromptu confidences of the vulgar are not to be considered worthy of a hearing. How much less those of evil men burrowing into every opening for treachery!

The Sage Kings of old consulted with grass and fuel-gatherers, interrogated artisans and blind musicians, and established the custom of drum-beating to register complaints, for the sake of getting at the undercurrent of opinion amongst their subjects and so amending their own errors: it was not for the sake of spying upon other men.[11] Going about in disguise is the opposite of this. The closer the spying, the more confused is the hearing, and one who indulges in this is bringing utter ruin on himself unawares. Therefore I say it is excellent cause for sorrow.

And so there are three types of going about in disguise, and they are every one repugnant to the Way of the Ruler.[12] In the case of someone like the Sung founder, even had he not gone about in disguise, yet what likelihood was there of anyone else following upon his tracks and

baring his arm to seize from him what the latter had seized from others? Thus his behaviour merely amounted to foolishness.[13]

(vii) Reflections on the Period of Disunity

It was not merely through the generosity of the Chin dynasty[1] that Liu Ch'an[2] and Sun Hao[3] were leniently treated by the Chin: there was good reason for it. Liu Hsien-chu[4], being descended from the Han rulers, preserved the territory of Szechwan, served the ancestral altars, employed the worthy and strove for good government in an admirable fashion. Sun Wen-t'ai[5], rising from the position of district general, extirpated Tung Cho[6] and restored the capital of Loyang. His family for three generations[7] withdrew to defend the lands of Wu and Ch'u, and for over a century the people of that area were free from warfare[8]. Ssu-ma Yen[9] could not trample rudely upon dynasties that had been helped by Heaven and cherished by men, and cut off their line. There was good reason why it should not be cut off. Although Liu Ch'an was a stupid and Sun Hao a cruel man, they were not to be classed as ring-leaders of disorder whose assumption of arms wrought havoc with the cardinal principles of Heaven. They made full amends for their errors by being degraded to the level of mere servants: how could they be subjected to complete destruction?

But Li Yü, Meng Ch'ang and Liu Ch'ang[10], who were degraded to the rank of Princes and received principates in fief, were accorded the treatment of *clientes* contrary to their deserts, and because of the Sung Founder's generosity. They succeeded to the gains of their fathers without any accumulated store of merit or consolidated record of defence; as "lords of paltry, out-of-the-way states"[11] they smuggled themselves into kingship, after which they consistently failed to emulate the awe-inspiring presence of [such as Kung-sun Tsan and his men who terrified the barbarians as they rode mounted on] white horses[12]. These rulers of the south could have been degraded to the level of mere footmen without undue mortification: and yet the generous courtesy of T'ai Tsu extended to their persons. This is why we speak of the generosity of the Sung Founder[13].

Yet in spite of all this, these three southern kingdoms[14] could not be arraigned for their arrogant struggle for supremacy and their failure to acknowledge the governments of the north[15] earlier than they did, and be punished accordingly as prisoners-of-war. Subjects must first have a lord, servants must first have a master. The ruler is logically prior to the minister, just as the father is prior to the son. But for a long interval after the fall of the T'ang[16] the Empire was without a ruler. Chu Wen[17] was a rebel-bandit, Li Ts'un-hsu[17] and Shih Ching-t'ang[17] came of the Sha-t'o Turks. Liu Chih-yuan[17] and Kuo Wei[17] took advantage of the general military débâcle to take unexpected occupation of their positions, like fireflies shining in the night. They cut China in two and proclaimed themselves Emperors: although they held barely a quarter[18] of the country, yet, because the ruins around Pienliang and Loyang were the site of the old T'ang palaces, they seized the opportunity afforded by the gaps, and subsequently unenlightened historians endorsed their claim to legitimacy[19]. In such circumstances, would Heaven permit, or men agree, that men of tough character and superior strength should tender their lands and own themselves vassals, submitting to the authority of an overlord?

Therefore although Hsu Wen[20], Meng Shih-hsiang[20] and Liu Yen[20] were of the same type as Chu Wen, Li Ts'un-hsu, Chih Ching-t'ang and Liu Chih-yuan, they compared favourably with them in that they were neither rebel-bandits nor barbarians. Hence the fact that they held on to their lands and refused to become vassals, only tendering allegiance after their strength was spent, assuredly entitles them to the sympathy of superior men and does not admit of harsh reproach[21].

But in the case of one who takes advantage of disorder to seize power and is captured only with the greatest difficulty[22], such a one

deserves the extreme penalty[23], since he has originated disorder simply for the sake of plunder, being without any ambition to reconstruct the Empire[24].

Although Hsiang Yü[25] was thoroughly reprehensible in his conduct, yet his extermination of Ch'in was prompted by righteous indignation. Therefore Emperor Kao Tsu of the Han enfeoffed him as Duke of Lu, and accorded him a lavish funeral: he did not conceal the Duke's merits. During the rebellion of Wang Mang[26], when men's hearts turned towards the Han and there was a sudden resurgence of the Liu descendants[27], men like Wei Hsiao, Kung-sun Shu, Chang Pu and Tung Hsien[28] threw the cardinal principles of Heaven into disorder and so brought calamity to the common people, who were longing for peace. During the cruel and licentious rule of Yang Kuang of the Sui[29], although the people were reduced to extremes yet Tou Chien-te[30], Hsiao Hsien[30] and Hsu Yuan-lang[30] took advantage of this situation to loot and slaughter them in their already exhausted state. Liu Wu-chou[31], Liang Shih-tu[31] and Hsueh Jen-k'ang[31] relied on the support of the Jung and Ti barbarians[32] and slaughtered the Chinese people. Wang Shih-ch'ung acquired the coveted Mandate of the Sui, carrying out this theft by means of flattery[33]. All these persons were ring-leaders in the Empire's troubles, who, far from wanting to put an end to disorder, instead profited from it. As a result the common people[34] were delighted when their heads were hung up at the place of execution in Ch'ang-an[35], even though some of them had submitted before this. These types cannot be spoken of in the same breath as Shu, Yueh and Kiangnan[36].

The true king[37] seeks out the mind of Heaven on the higher level, and on the lower level he gives his sympathy to the aspirations of the people. He unerringly gauges how to mete out punishments and rewards and the different gradations of rank so that there is no confusion. When

Hsu Wen[38] helped Yang Hsing-mi to arrest the poison of Pi Shih-to and Ch'in Tsung-ch'üan, the Yangtze area was pacified: the disorders in this area were not instigated by Yang and Hsu[39]. When Liu Yen effortlessly took control of all Yueh, closing his borders to external interference, he inflicted no harm on the people by struggling with Wu and Ch'u for supremacy[40]. As for Meng Chih-hsiang, supposing he had not seized control of Szechwan, but Shih Ching-t'ang or Liu Chih-yuan had with trembling eagerness contrived to get a foothold, so that, with the Khitan pressing in from without and the military commanders brewing trouble within, disaster would be unavoidable, then of a certainty there could be no crossing of the Chienko Pass to bring peace to Szechwan[41].

Hence these three dynasties never earned reproach from Heaven or men. Their descendants preserved their inheritance, barricaded their cities as a means of defence, and submitted after their followers were scattered. Seeing they had not taken delight in cruelty or the infliction of harm, it was indeed unthinkable that they should be overwhelmed with improper and excessive punishments such as would befit a Tou Chien-te or a Hsiao Hsien. It is the ring-leaders of disorder whom Heaven abhors, and it is the contendors for supremacy whom men detest. There is a limit to the showing of humanity and the bestowing of justice[42]. Only in such matters as the Sung founder's liberal treatment of the fallen princes may one speak of true generosity[43].

(viii) The Origins of Anti-Militarism: The Matter of Yuchou

When a man uses glib arguments to oppose others,[1] he cannot be overcome; when our opponent out-argues us as by "weighing the situation according to principle, and assessing it in the light of the circumstances", then indeed he has no difficulty in overcoming us. Yet how can glib arguments be credited with solid substance? Those who cherish secrets of which they cannot speak victimise others through deceit, and bring their talent for glib arguments to the aid of their pernicious advice, whereupon their hearers suffer helpless defeat. It is only the enlightened ruler - with his comprehensive knowledge of the origins of gain and loss, adversity and prosperity, and the firm impartiality by which he brings to light the true and false from beginning to end - who carries his argument to a conclusion without recourse to discussion.

When Ts'ao Han[2] presented his plan for the capture of Yuchou,[3] T'ai Tsu deliberated it with Chao P'u[4] who asked:

"If Ts'ao Han captures it, who can defend it?"

T'ai Tsu replied:

"Why, I'll have Ts'ao Han defend it."

P'u asked:

"If Ts'ao Han should die, who can defend it?"

And upon that the Emperor's arguments were brought to a conclusion.[5]

Now Chao P'u's words on this occasion were as brittle as spring ice - which breaks of itself before the hammer is applied; why then did the Emperor bow to P'u's opposition? In comparison with one another, the capture and defence of Yuchou would have been difficult in the one case, but easy in the other. When the circumstances leading to toil and hunger are radically different from those conducive to ease and a full belly, and the assailants are placed in a position where they may either advance or retreat, then the men are not fixed in their

resolve. Defence, on the other hand, is a life and death struggle. If Yuchou could be plucked from the grasp of tough barbarians, there need be no qualms about its protection.

If we relied upon its walls and ramparts, employed its population and stored up its grain produce, then, since the barbarian swarms could not compete with us on open ground, how much less in Yuchou, protected in its rear by the mountains of the west, girdled by the Lu Water, with serried ranks of precipices reaching eastwards to the sea? It was quite a different proposition from the miles of desert north of the Yellow River in Yingchou[6] and Mochou,[6] a standing invitation to sudden attacks from mounted warriors.

If Yuchou were taken, the defence of the area north of the River would be assured, but otherwise the whole of the plains of Chao[7] and Wei[7] would be border territory. If Chao and Wei could be defended, so also could Yuchou. Were we temporarily to abandon the capture of Yuchou through fear that after Ts'ao Han's death there would be none capable of its defence, but yet have no fear that there would be none to defend Chao and Wei, and that we might be about to take the whole area of Hopei and Honan and present it to the Khitan? Were Han to die and we be unable to obtain his like, then the capture of Yuchou would become all the more urgent. The thing to worry about was the difficulty of capturing Yuchou. Once it was taken, then let Ts'ao Han superintend the task of defence; but even a man inferior to Han, by relying on its renewed fortifications, by feeding the troops on its stores of rice and millet, and by using the military equipment provided, could maintain his position of lofty grandeur for a hundred years. From the Han dynasty onwards, it was by occupying Yenshan[8] that we controlled our northern frontier. How could the men responsible all have been like Ts'ao Han? And yet to the end that short rampart was inviolable. Why then worry lest there not be another Ts'ao Han?[9]

Those who take thought for the distant future indeed only know what is available to them to know. The Empress Lü[10] questioned Kao Tsu of the Han on the subject of chief ministers[11] for the future, and after she had done this more than once, he replied: "This is beyond your sphere of knowledge." It was not only the Empress Lu who did not know; Han Kao Tsu did not know either. What can be known is that if a firm foundation is laid in fostering talent, if men are selected by the right methods, if they are employed with sincerity and guided by li 禮[12], then it may at an early date be faultlessly predicted that there will be deeds of renown from great leaders of even a hundred years hence. What was the point of worrying, at the time when Ts'ao Han was in full vigour, that his successor would be hard to come by? What is the point of predicting that there will be no skilful generals in the future and consequently holding back from recovering old territory, or of prophesying that there will be no eminent men amongst one's descendants, and so surrendering China prematurely to the barbarian foe, thereby evading the hardships of conflict?

And so Chao P'u's words of a truth consisted of glib arguments - as if attacking his shield with his spear he promptly demolished his own case, in a manner akin to the instant dissolution of spring ice.[13] That in spite of this the enlightened T'ai Tsu finally submitted to his pernicious advice may have had some underlying cause. When Chao P'u said, "Who can defend Yuchou?" he was not saying, "There will be insufficient talent to defend it." When he said, "When Han dies, there cannot be another like him", he was not saying, "The world does not contain talent like Han's." P'u had very deep suspicions of Ts'ao Han.[14] But T'ai Tsu said that he was above suspicion, whereupon P'u declared, "If you leave Han out then anyone will be clear of suspicion!"

The Yu and Yen area was a breeding-ground for warriors and horses. Ever since the T'ien-pao reign period of Hsuan Tsung of the T'ang,[15] Fanyang (i.e. Yuchou) was a centre of rebellion,[16] and in P'inglu, Wei Po and Ch'eng Te followed in revolt.[17] If the Sung founder did not correct this mistake (in Chao P'u's eyes), but promoted and commissioned a soldier who could overawe the tough barbarians, and who by his control over the area north of the Yellow River could cast a roving eye over the N. China Plain, then the ancestral shrines of the Sung would be imperilled.

Alas! Sealing his lips on such private ideas as these, he skulked around gossiping in the interior of the Palace, and took pleasure in obscurantism. Was this not to be much regretted?[18]

Now it is quite true that there have been those who availed themselves of their military power to declare rebellion in the area of the Great Wall in the north. In Han times there were Lu Wan, Ch'en Hsi, P'eng Lung and Lu Fang.[19] Under the T'ang it began with An Lu-shan and finished with Liu Jen-kung and his son.[20] But like meteors they rose and were swiftly extinguished. How should the destroyers of the Han and the T'ang be such as these?[21] Moreover, the fact that they accumulated troops for self-protection reduced the peril of barbarians breaking through the northern frontier, and although they stubbornly refused to lay down their arms, yet they served the purpose of the barking dogs that guard our courtyard. Such was the position until Chu Wen butchered Wei Po, and Li Ts'un-hsu destroyed Liu Shou-kuang,[22] and only then did the Khitan ride swiftly in and press inexorably through to Hopien.[23] Let their route of entry be controlled: then even if it be by a domineering, swollen-headed fellow, there is no difficulty in mowing him down. Even if this were not the case, one who carves out a piece of territory and occupies it, acting like cock of the walk, may still, by

virtue of his mixed roles of independence and allegiance, and his own guard over his frontiers, serve as a defensive barrier for us against the barbarian.[24]

Failing to discern this, he displayed a lack of tolerance in small matters and preferred to hand territory over to the enemy, thus incurring the evil of being browbeaten. He cast a suspicious eye in all directions, but kept his purpose secret and was content to abandon this segment of territory. He was unable to tell men "My anxiety lies in this direction", and so his glib arguments entered the ears and alarmed the hearts of his hearers.[25] Since P'u said,"Han cannot be trusted", Han's successors were even more liable to suspicion, and so the line of defence was drawn at the Yellow River: the whip, though easily long enough, was not inflicted on the horse's belly.[26]

The rulers and ministers of the Sung made things awkward for themselves by hiding their sentiments, and they brought about misfortunes that affected the official class for six centuries, all on account of this attitude of secrecy.[27]

But a man of P'u's sort had further concerns than this. On the strength of his position as confidential adviser, he received favour as for great military merit, and looked with disdain at the generals and officers, being suddenly placed above them. But in fact there was no way of making them submissive at heart. T'ai Tsu's rise in Ch'enchiao[28] was effected by Shih Shou-hsin[29] and others, and P'u had no part in it. The march down to Kiangnan, the recovery of Szechwan and the pacification of Kwangtung and Kwangsi was the responsibility of Ts'ao Pin, P'an Mei and others: P'u had no part in it.[30] Hence the deserving officers[31] who had exerted their last ounce of strength at that time all looked down on Chao P'u and were indignant at his repression of them.

Since Chao P'u certainly had no power to match theirs, he daily pondered how to supersede them and secure his own position. Regarding the importance he attached to his intimate acquaintance with the ruler, by which he should become relied on as a "minister of national pacification";[32] surely he did not reckon on establishing harmony in the Empire by establishing it in the Chao family![33] By doing away with military statesmen he simply made it impossible for anyone to share in the royal favour by achieving outstanding success. Therefore when P'u received bribes from Wu and Yueh, T'ai Tsu remarked,"They consider the affairs of the Empire are entirely dependent upon scholars". Thus T'ai Tsu also kept a cautious eye on circumstances, just because he had deep suspicions of his own, and profited from the mutual opposition between soldier and scholar.[34]

However, T'ai Tsu was wrong to employ Chao P'u. A man lacking in Humanity cannot be entrusted with national policy. For he would in a later day do a disservice to T'ai Tsu's sons and younger brother in order to secure favour and emolument.[35] How intolerable was this! If T'ai Tsu really wished to extol civilised Government and put an end to violence, then like Emperor Kuang Wu[36] of the Han, who promoted Fu Chan[37] and Cho Mao,[37] he should have subdued the spirit of belligerence with the influence of purity and refinement, and be able himself to pacify every part of China and reform tyranny. Men like Chan and Mao were all true and noble of heart, and not men of slender knowledge lurking like birds of prey to seize their victims. The result was that when meritorious statesmen retired, the world took them as models of constancy. How could there be no such men at the beginning of the Sung, and why must affairs devolve upon this clever politician, clutching his tablets, relying on his family background and jumping on T'ai Tsu's military bandwaggon? That he escaped harm was mainly due to Tou I and Lu Yü-ch'ing,

who far surpassed Chao P'u.[38] He was a crooked man placed in a position of intimacy, and with one speech he disrupted the cardinal principles of a hundred ages. Alas! This deserves to be bitterly lamented by the Empire for evermore.

Regarding Ts'ao Han's plan to take Yuchou, there was no reason to fear for its subsequent defence, but only lest the attempt to take it prove a failure. How is this to be understood?

The army could not be utilised all of a sudden and raised to the necessary standard. It was impossible, in an age of comparative ease, when men's purpose had grown slack, to be a fit match for a formidable opponent. The Sung inherited the legacy of the Five Dynasties. Men were weary of warfare, and the spirit of boldness had waned. The rulers of Kiangnan, Shu and Yueh dabbled in literary pursuits, gave free rein to pleasure and amusement, and, at the worst extreme, unleashed harsh tyranny so that men's hearts were alienated and the soldiers scattered, being swept hither and thither, as it were, by any wind that blew. It was at this point that the Sung founder took the opportunity to establish his merit. The Southern rulers had not sworn to defend to the death, nor had the Sung founder plunged into the bloodshed of conflict in the manner of Hsiang Yü,[39] Kung-sun Shu,[40] Tou Chien-te,[41] and Hsieh Chu,[42] who experienced successive triumphs and defeats as they laid the foundations of conquest. And so the Empire had not fully received his pacification before the spirits of the generals and common soldiers had for the most part sunk away.

In these circumstances to hasten into conflict with the tough barbarian was at first regarded with little enthusiasm, subsequently it was briefly experienced and finally, after a single scratch, the Chinese were cowed in both body and spirit. Therefore when T'ai Tsung undertook

his great northern campaign his men were terrified into a disordered rout and more than half were killed or injured.[43] How did this tally with such energy as Ts'ao Han's, foremost in individual effort, who could guarantee the collapse of the solid walls of Yuchou?

Nevertheless the situation was by no means irremediable. In the Han period, time was when Kao Ti was confined in Paiteng,[44] but by the time of Wu Ti[45] the Chinese were able to deprive Munan[46] of its court. In the T'ang, time was when Kao Tsu submitted as a vassal to the Turks,[47] yet by the time of T'ai Tsung[48] the appearance of a single horserider could cause the barbarian to retreat. There were times in Han and T'ang when they laid down arms and rested the horses so as to give respite to the Empire; there was a measure of control over successful generals and enforcement of their subservience, so that they did not dare to cast their eyes on the throne. But the point is that there was no-one of Chao P'u's sort, scared out of his wits by military achievement, and stamping down on it to reduce it to shreds while he grabbed security, riches and honour for himself. In the case of Han and T'ang the later rulers of these dynasties were able to turn to good account the long spell of waiting. How can there be anxiety lest the Empire lack men of courage and daring who will offer their services in expelling the barbarian?

Kou Chien, who ruled one corner of the Empire, enriched and instructed the people and ultimately reduced the palace of Wu to a fishpond.[49] But little good could be gained from this since his officials all fell to squabbling like angry hens, with the result that Fan Li[50] retired, Wen Chung[50] met his end, and Yueh was finally destroyed by Ch'u. The secret of all success and failure lies in the degree of trust among the ruler and his ministers; it does not depend upon the forces of

physical strength within the Empire.[51] Careful account must be taken of this.

The narrow wisdom begotten of Chao P'u's malevolence was accepted as dynastic practice by the Sung, and was taught in official circles high and low until all became one in suspicious outlook. Ti Ch'ing and Wang Te-yung were actually a thorn in the flesh which the officials only feared they could not get rid of.[52] And so when Ch'in Kuei became prime minister even raw young students who shied from war knew they need not respect Yueh Fei.[53] Thus while Chao P'u was Prime Minister, Ts'ao Han's plans were inevitably in danger of failing. Han himself had absolutely no qualms about undertaking the responsibility of capturing Yuchou.

(ix) On the Balance of Old and New in Ritual

The Li Chi[1] says: "In ritual one should follow the original precedent."[2] The "original precedent" speaks of the beginning of an affair. Those following it do not dare to take liberties with the spirits[3] in indulging desires that have arisen later. It also says: "In ritual, Timeliness is the important factor."[4] "Timeliness" means "fitting in with circumstances". Those who treat Timeliness as important will not repress desires which have already sprung up, nor shun them on account of the spirits.

For this reason the roasting of millet was followed by the presenting of it in wooden bowls to the spirits; the slicing of the pork was followed by roasting it; out of simple wine were made the three wines, and out of plain soup was made highly seasoned soup.[5]

Not to abandon the original precedent is Simplicity. But to hold fast to one's Reverence and not follow passing circumstances is Refinement. Not to oppose Timeliness is Refinement, but to extend one's Love without seeking objective excellence is Simplicity.[6] They are regarded as equally important and are perfected in close relationship. The humane man and filial son completely fulfil them when serving the spirits. The use of fruit and meat[7] baskets for sacrificial purposes was the Chou system. The period up to Hsia and Yin contains things which most certainly cannot be examined exhaustively. What cannot be examined cannot be followed and imitated. But considering such aspects of ancient ways as may be examined to be the original precedent, when we use fruit and meat baskets, cauldrons and meat stands, vessels and cups for sacrifice, we prepare these vessels in imitation of the Chou system.[8] The fact that we follow the original precedent and hold fast to our Reverence does not mean to say that the spirits will only be pleased if it is thus. To honour one's ancestors and not dare to treat them with irreverence is refined conduct, and Simplicity is thereby

diminished.

Sung T'ai-Tsu wanted to remove these vessels of Chou and use modern vessels; he was wrong. Since he was wrong, he could not quieten his mind and it naturally became fearful. Therefore before long he restored the old vessels to use. But in his initial desire to use modern vessels, that he might lay a firm basis by complying with circumstances, he was not in fact very contrary to the Tao. Being dissatisfied with the ancient practices, he used the vessels habitually provided by his ancestors;[9] but taking fright he changed in mid-course and preserved the things reverently set forth by the ancients. All this was a matter of his inner attitude. It was not that he depended on external experience[10] in order to imitate the ancients, nor that he complied with current practice in order to follow Timeliness.[11] He could not bear to grow careless in his Love, nor did he dare slacken his Reverence. He could not bear to stint Simplicity, nor did he dare cast off Refinement. And so both aspects were maintained. In the necessity to maintain both aspects we can discern that humanity and filial love operate in accordance with Heaven.

Nevertheless, he had not yet fully divined all anxieties nor minutely investigated their meaning.[12] Regarding the service of their ancestors by ancient Emperors and Princes, there were the triennial and quinquennial sacrifices, the seasonal offerings and the monthly presentations. The latter extended from the Emperor to the common people, and in this respect sacrifices descended in stages.[13] In sacrifices one shows forth Reverence by Refinement. If rank is not honoured, then Reverence is not developed to the fullest extent. In the presentations, one fulfils Love by Simplicity; if it is one's relatives who are involved, then Love can be completely extended.[14]

Sacrifices must have a "corpse";[15] if there is a corpse then there is an offering and when this takes place there is a responsive sacrifice and reiterated sacrifice of wine; after the latter takes place there is the meat offering. All is completely fulfilled. This is the ultimate in Refinement, and one has no wish to profane it. Therefore the wine vessels are arranged, and the simple wine is laid out, the blood and fat are burnt, the victim carried forward and the plain soup prepared. From of old it has been thus. The fruit and meat baskets, cauldrons and meat stands, vessels and sacrificial cups all put Refinement in an important place by imitating antiquity, and the honour subsequently accorded them has been extreme. Since they have been given extreme honour, Reverence has reached its fullest extent.

Customs such as the presentations, on the other hand, contain some features that are not obligatory. The presentations are not denied Reverence, but the main stress is on Love. When the main stress is on Love, then one follows Timeliness and thereby deals correctly with circumstances. In the ancient presentation there is no evidence for the vessels laid out nor the savours offered; their essence is only a matter of Timeliness, and they need not be derived from antiquity. It may be allowed that men of humanity and filial sons cannot bear to do away with vessels which have given satisfaction after constant use and savours found pleasant through repeated testings. But even the fruit and meat baskets, cauldrons and meat stands, are not the vessels of high antiquity. Even the seasoned soup and the roasted meat are not the food of high antiquity. Ancient and modern customs complement each other, and ancient custom does not nullify modern practice. If this is so even with regard to sacrifices, how much more is it true of the presentations![16]

Since Han and Tang, so-called sacrifices have all been presentations. There has been no abandonment of the modern in order to follow the old. But one dare not fail to adopt the attitude of following the original precedent. There remains a small percentage of the original practices; hence fruit and meat baskets are still with us. There has been a great deal of attention paid to retrospective reverence for antiquity. But ancient and modern vessels are mixed together and ancient and modern savours are presented intermingled. One who reflects upon the fact that they do not oust one another, will use each in turn in its own season, and will extend his Love and Reverence to the utmost to accord with what is fitting.

But T'ai Tsu had not analysed this[17] and suddenly removed and as suddenly restored the ancient vessels. He erred in that he did not minutely investigate the meaning of these things and so did not secure the proper ceremonial. Nevertheless the impulse by which he removed the vessels, and the attitude with which he restored them, were genuinely in accord with the Mean.[18] When he was roused to alarm, he could not bear to use forcible restraint, and this remained a constant factor. When a true king arises, it is by pursuing this attitude that he seeks to achieve true mastery of the essential meaning of things, so that the thorough interfusion of Simplicity and Refinement depends upon the person concerned. Such matters cannot be swept aside or caused to flourish by a chance impulse of thought.[19]

(x) The Folly of Retrenchment as a Measure of Bureaucratic Reform

The Statute of the K'ai-pao reign period which purified bureaucratic government by reducing the number of officials, and enforced official probity by increasing salaries, may be called good of its kind[1]. Nevertheless, we may take issue with it. It is said "Choose men for offices; do not set up offices for men", but this saying relates to the examination of name and reality and the search for speed and efficiency;[2] it is not the way to encourage talent, improve mores and urge the Empire along the Way of the superior man.

In the Empire of the chün-hsien[3] system there are several hundred department magistrates and over a thousand county magistrates; the longest spell of office is six years and the shortest three.[4] This is an absolute standard in the employment of officials[5] from among the literati. On the other hand those who fill the petty positions of registrars and sheriffs are promoted indiscriminately from the lower herd.[6] If one man is recommended[7] to the central government each year from each of a thousand or more counties, in ten years the number of these men will exceed ten thousand. How are these ten thousand men going to be allocated? Moreover it is unquestionable that the advancement of one man per annum is not enough to exhaust the talent of the Empire.

When states were set up in ancient times, the area with which a viscount[8] or baron[8] was enfeoffed was the equivalent of one or two districts in a modern county[9]. The chief minister, three assistant ministers, nine high officers[10], twenty-seven intermediate officers and eighty-one lower officers who drew their salary from the state were the "superior men", clearly differentiated from the ordinary people. Regarding those advanced in keeping with this system to the court of a duke[11] or marquis[11] or even further advanced to the royal court, it would

be impossible to enumerate all the cases of lands and emoluments received and ranks accumulated through the generations. This is why the Odes say:

"Numerous[12] is the array of officers
And by them King Wen enjoys his repose."[13]

Even with King Wen's Virtue, had his administration not been thus he would have had no repose. By fostering talent he embodied in himself the principle of Heaven and so brought his affairs to maturity; thus was the Empire pacified. Hence the Book of Changes says:

"Heaven above, the lake below:
The image of TREADING.
Thus the superior man discriminates between high and low,
And thereby fortifies the aims of the people."[14]

The people aim at popular fulfilment and find satisfaction in material profit; the scholar aims at a scholar's fulfilment and finds satisfaction in righteousness.[15]

Let the ruler not restrict excellence nor mar refinement, and then as he fosters a state of high morale the Rites and Music will flourish and mores achieve excellence. It was certainly not by exacting reality according to name or shortsightedly[16] questing for speed and efficiency that the Three Dynasties knew an increase of magnanimity and an extension of refinement corresponding to the pure virtue of Heaven and earth!

The scholar's possession of moral purpose[17] is analagous to the farmer's possession of physical strength. To the farmer, strength is the foremost thing, and even if he does not exert it this does not mean that he lacks it. To the scholar, his moral purpose is pre-eminent, and even if his purpose is fruitless this does not mean that he is without it.[18] The scholar's comprehension of goodness is analagous to the artisan's or merchant's comprehension of profit. The artisan or

merchant may perchance be influenced by goodness, but since he has already comprehended profit he is sure to cling to feelings of anticipation in that direction. The scholar may perchance be dazzled by profit, but since he has already comprehended goodness he is sure to be afraid of sullying his reputation.

Men of the higher sort rely on the resources provided by Heaven and comply with human nature. When these entities are guided smoothly things go well, but a policy of violent repression makes things go awry. It is proper according to the principle of rank that educated men should receive emolument, and all men feel that pent-up abilities must be given room for expansion. Now supposing men who are scholars are thwarted on the road to official advancement or, even though they do receive an appointment, supposing they are hampered and frustrated till when white-haired they still lack the fulfilment of promotion, in such conditions the scholarly vocation becomes a morass of hardship and those whose purpose bears no fruit, if they seek to become farmers, lack the necessary strength, whereupon they will desperately turn to be artisans or merchants, without compunction for the ruin of their ancient Virtue.[19] The craftier of them deal in plausible speech, flourish their literary talents, display specious cunning and initiate accusations and lawsuits, so stirring up trouble in the Empire and acting like poison among the people. Should this situation be prohibited only after it has reached such a pass, rebellion will be consequently provoked.

For this reason when the Former Kings set up states, the scholars who were scattered like stars or pieces of chess were observed at archery and advanced at banquets; in each district and each hundred it was the rule to feast and elevate them.[20] After examination by the Magistrates they were given responsibilities. There is no reason at all to suppose that such men necessarily outshone those of later generations.

The success lay rather in the method by which they were helped to achieve perfection.

Now theorists have been solely concerned lest officials proliferate and oppress the people. The matters in which officials can oppress the people are taxation, litigation and labour-conscription. Even the government of a decadent age conducts no business apart from these three. Now if we examine the Six Statutes for the Officers of Chou[21], less than two or three out of ten officials were employed in these matters in the government of the people. But when it came to encouraging the growth of schools, directing Rites and Music, regulating hospitality, superintending sacrifices, enquiring after omens and providing vessels and robes, each one of these duties had a separate minister and each minister a number of officials under him. In this way they all helped the ruler to govern the nation well and forwarded national affairs on behalf of the people. If officials are encouraged and helped by being allowed to follow vocations of elegance and refinement that will direct their minds to culture and enlightenment, then indeed they will not be carried away by emotional judgments into over-indulgent treatment of the vile and avaracious or into predatory behaviour towards poor people and weak families. Hence even if officials are proliferous yet government will assuredly be in no disorder, and how can it be justly feared that "nine shepherds" will be arbitrarily applying the lash to "ten sheep"?[22]

Let officials be employed according to their bent and advanced according to their virtues, let them be supervised without offence to their sense of propriety[23] and degraded or promoted according to their conduct; then there will be neither redundancy nor pluralism in the offices relating to taxation, litigation and labour-conscription. If the ruler chooses and employs his men for specific tasks, such will

be the purity of the bureaucratic government that there surely could not still be a compulsive anxiety to chop down the number of officials as though they were an intolerable thorn in the flesh.

But in the case of an age that has forsaken the Way, when the state grudges salaries and cuts down the number of official posts so as to monopolise profit for itself, with the result that all the vast wealth of the Empire cannot sustain the thousands of its officials - and yet the gold is corroding in the treasuries, silk mouldering in the chests, and grain rotting in the barns, so that an abundance of stored wealth turns to heavy loss[24]; this is a situation where Heaven will not help and which men must detest. To say that it is an inadequate way of ruling the Empire is putting it mildly. The issue is one which the superior man does not trouble to debate.[25]

(xi) The Fengch'ung Treasury: The Rejection of Military Action in Favour of Delay

When military operations are begun, fodder and grain supplies, tools and weapons, boats and carts, horses and oxen, sandals and shoes, tents and engines of war, are daily worn out and daily have to be replenished. The most important thing is expenditure on the oxen slaughtered and the wine strained in order to reward meritorious achievement and requite counsels of strategy, and there can be no end to this. There has never been anyone who was able to promote an enterprise and plan it through to victory while as yet his stores were incomplete. And so a national strategist pays close attention to the preliminary amassing of reserves in order to prepare for an enterprise.

Nevertheless, if one piles up stores month after month, year after year, hoping to use them all of a sudden, one will merely suffer an accumulation of wealth and the enterprise will after all not be carried through to success.

T'ai Tsu established the Feng-ch'ung Treasury in order to save up what was left over from expenditure, saying, "With the aid of this we shall plan the conquest of Yen and Yun"[1]. This aim was not pursued to its conclusion, and after several generations China was per contra given over to the northern foe[2], thus demonstrating that the enterprise was not after all successfully completed. Since a great deal of wealth had been accumulated, it aroused in Chen Tsung a spirit of overweening extravagance out of which he sacrificed to spirits and gods.[3] As a result, in Shen Tsung's reign ruler and minister imitated this example so that they raked in profits from the Empire and incurred odium, thus bringing about their own destruction.[4] So much for the accumulation of wealth.

With wealth one can maintain officers, but the officers do not require to be maintained by a surplus of wealth. When Hsieh Yuan quelled the Northern Honan area by means of the troops of the northern prefectures, the Liu Sung profited from it and rose to power.[5] When Kuo Tzu-i quelled An Lu-shan with the use of troops from the northern regions, Su Tsung profited from it and restored order.[6] How can it have been that through the possession of stores, accumulated in the past they hired officers willing to face death? It was not only a case of mustering some brave men: by a mere gesture they summoned up "a hundred triumphs"[7] and gained the Empire.

Now where soldiers are concerned one utilises their sudden bursts of courage, their exceptional feelings of confidence and lack of fear; one also makes use of those contingencies in which advance means profit, but inactivity leads to dissatisfaction. If one depends upon the accumulation of wealth to seek out officers and provide for them, then the feelings of impulsive anger in the upper ranks will long since have fallen into abeyance and ceased to exist; in the lower ranks, the peasant will have settled down to his fields, the artisan to his shop and the merchant to his traveller's inn; the officer-aristocrat with his superior wisdom, having purified his mind, will have hastened into the activities proper to a Confucian scholar. The rank and file who have long fed on slender rations by virtue of an empty designation will chafe at active service. Recruits then will all be lazy fellows who have been loafing around the market-places, having no home to go to and venturing their lives as a means of livelihood.[8]

When national reserves are abundant men will meditate plunder. With the plausibility of a few phrases and the superiority of one talent they will present a false front of intelligence and

courage; they will receive their fill of food and clothing in idleness, regarding the Court as so many crumbs thrown away, simply something to be licked and gnawed; and which of them will be perturbed by its deficiencies? Rather than display a single day's-worth of merit, they will find excuse to eat in idleness. Let a little be withheld and their resources will collapse and disintegrate, and they will rebel in consequence. Now how can this constitute seeking out officers and providing for them! That which was gathered together little by little has been exhausted by being frittered away in a few days and months. To plan achievement on this basis only brings disaster.

Moreover, men of real intelligence and courage who are set upon positive action cannot put their hopes in descendants whose abilities may be average or less.[9] Though we accumulate with a view to positive action, our posterity will not be able to understand the significance of our conduct and they will merely keep what we have accumulated, regarding our saving as a matter of ancestral Virtue. (We shall pass over those who squander their rich inheritance.) Cautious and circumspect rulers will regard the hoarding of reserves as an established principle, and although they cannot tell how much there is for the dust that stops the crannies and the mould that conceals it, yet the compulsion to add to it is unremitting. Worthless men will take advantage of this situation to smuggle away the treasure to their own homes, but the ruler will not realise his losses and even though rebellion suddenly breaks out he will guard his treasure to the point of death, not having dared to harm his surplus in order to escape disaster. On the brink of his downfall he will vainly bestow it on thieves and foes, but not with the aid of a single coin of it will

he be able to retrieve men's loyalties and avert destruction: such is the extremity to which one is brought by the accumulation of wealth. These things surely argue a deficiency in the policies of those who advocate accumulation.

The Empire's wealth is of itself sufficient to meet the Empire's needs.[10] Delay does not entail superfluity, promptitude does not entail insufficiency. There is a reason for this. When wealth is abundant men's expectations from it are extravagant, but when wealth is meagre then men's trust in it is realistically-based. The one who sees there is a surplus is in constant fear lest it vanish away; the one who sees that there is not enough develops an attitude of self-reliance. When gain is on my side then I have something I prize but my enemy something he covets. When gain is not on my side then I seek gain from my enemy, but my enemy has nothing to covet.

Supposing the Sung founder had taken advantage of the circumstances in which he first established his rule, when the soldiers were inured to warfare and revelling in plunder, and supposing he could have managed to cast aside his suspicions and place his confidence in his chief commanders, he would have visited death on the Khitan and the capture of Yen and Yun could have been contrived.[11] But instead of concentrating on this he painstakingly accumulated gold and silk in his treasuries and dismissed his officers to outlying areas, saying "I shall wait until my wealth is overflowing and only then seek out valiant officers to retrieve frontier territory that has lain neglected for a century." Was he not mistaken in this?

It is old wives' wisdom for a man to save up his wealth in order to bestow it on his children, so that he incurs the criticism of his neighbours and becomes the laughing-stock of intelligent men. Of what good is it to reason in this fashion when one is founding and transmitting his line with the longing that it will accomplish great things?

(xii) On Correct Social Usage

When the Sung first established standard etiquette,[1] in the K'ai-pao reign period,[2] the ancient documents had been lost and not transmitted. Generally speaking, standard usages, going back from those of the K'ai-yuan reign period[3] of the T'ang to those of Chou, all provided for a balance of the functions of giving and receiving within human relationships.[4]

In the third year of the Ch'ien-te reign period[5] a law was introduced that a wife should wear three years' mourning[6] for her husband's parents, in compliance with memorials by Yin Cho[7] and others in the Court of Appeal.[8] In the fourth year of the Ch'un-hua reign period[9] an edict relating to the bestowal of honours on one's natural parents, either during their lifetime or posthumously, was granted in answer to Li Fang's[10] request that his natural father, Ch'ao, be entitled "Grand Preceptor to the Heir Apparent" and his mother, of the Hsieh clan, "Great Ancestral Mother".[11] Following on this, in the first year of the T'ien-hsi reign period[12] of Chen Tsung it was decreed that one's parents by adoption should not receive titles in the manner of natural parents. This accordingly became the established system. In each of these two instances the ancient system was changed, and the gains and losses this involved may be examined.

In etiquette there are things which may not be changed, and others which may. Those things which are unchangeable were established as laws for all time by the Former Kings,[13] after they had given consideration to current circumstances and the principles involved,[14] and knowing in what respects posterity would be no different from men of their own time. To change such would be to contravene the standard principles of the great social relationships.[15] But in the age of the Former Kings, the variable aspects of etiquette were revealed in the changes

undergone by all the ways of giving honour where it was due and showing love to one's relatives. The duties entailed in the system established by one king applied to his reign alone, and one's practice had to be consistent with this principle. When the Times change, then the Tao changes in accordance. To hold on to an old way and refuse to change is to clash with current circumstances and the principles involved.[16]

There are five great human relationships.[17] Those of ruler and minister, father and son, and husband and wife,[18] represent the closest ties of love and duty, and mourning is the heaviest. Mourning in the case of a brother lasts only a year. In the case of a friend, it is only the heart that mourns. All other relationships are derived from those of ruler and minister, father and son, and husband and wife. Although the husband's parents are honoured by the wife, this derives from her position as a wife, and is not one of the cardinal relationships. The wife does not wear heavy mourning twice.[19] Since when she marries she attaches herself to her husband, the Yin and the Yang principles[20] unite, and Earth is set within Heaven, so husband and wife are joined in one body, and the wife's affliction at her husband's death is severe. When the husband dies, the wife attaches herself to her son.[21] Although the duties of the relationship are the same, the secondary sons do not wear full mourning for the eldest son, nor, by the same token, do their wives: for if they did not refrain from full mourning for the eldest son, they would not be giving due prominence to the attachment of a wife to her husband. Though the husband is dead, it makes no difference: in one name-group there are not two heavy mournings. This being the case, the wife's duties are fulfilled by treating her husband as she would her father. The extension of the relationship to the husband's parents must of necessity be on a lower plane. When different families unite then the tao of host and guest comes into operation. Therefore the newly-married

wife takes her basket and presents herself to her in-laws;[22] her salutations are returned by them. In life they return her salutations, and after their death she mourns for a year.

The superior man does not contravene correct social usage when he pays respect to those who are close, and in this way he makes manifest the distinctions in human relationships. The modern husband and wife are just like their counterparts of ancient times. Consequently, going back from the T'ang era to the time of the consolidation of the Chou dynasty, the tao of marriage has rested unaltered and the feelings attached to it have remained in a state of natural quiescence. How then can changes be permitted in this matter? Take the case of Yin Cho's assertion that:

> "when the husband uses his mat of dried grass and a clod of earth for his pillow,[23] for the wife to wear fine silk [is wrong]: husband and wife are one flesh, and they ought to conform to each other's sorrow and joy."

This remark is in poor taste. Sorrow and joy are things which issue from the affections[24] and depend upon human nature;[25] each person expresses it on his own account,[26] and so how can the wife assimilate her own experience to that of her husband? Why should the wife's attitude to her husband match his attitude as a son to his father? Does the fact that a father is mourned for three years and a son for one permit us to say that the difference in the expressions of the emotions is an offence against the tao of father and son?

When a son is in mourning, except when he visits his mother he does not enter the house, so that the wife does not see much of her husband. Though she does not wear the hemp of mourning, she

lives plainly, and since she does not sacrifice there are no k'uei 餽簣 vessels,[27] nor cups for the second of the three offerings,[28] nor sumptuous clothing. If indeed it is a household where the rules of propriety are observed, how could it happen that fine silk should be worn at variance with the hemp of mourning? When a wife is mourning for her parents, the husband does not start to rejoice at her side, but reacts naturally to the circumstances by living frugally. While the mourner grieves, the partner whose grief is but temperate will certainly not intrude upon the other's sorrow by displaying joy, but neither will he (or she) force his grief to such a pitch as would constitute a second full mourning inappropriate to the circumstances.

This error, committed since the time of the Sung, has been passed down to our own day and caused the laws of propriety to be violated. This part of etiquette which permitted of no change has been changed and has lost its cardinal nature.

In the matter of adopted sons, the Rites of Chou[29] dictated that they should regard their adoptive parents as their natural father and mother and not lavish honour on their natural relatives. But Chou did not impose this as an unalterable rule to apply uniformly to all the generations of the Empire. Chou, on the contrary, had a liberal Tao. Hence the Emperor and feudal princes had their hereditary charges, and the chief ministers their hereditary emoluments; it was by inheritance from one generation to the next that they received their offices and rendered service to the ancestral shrines.[30]

The possession of ancestral clan-heads, whether reaching back for a hundred, or for five, generations, encourages family discipline by welding the clan together. Therefore when the head of the senior line is childless, before his death one of the heirs to

baronies or to high position from the cadet branches who is of the correct generation, closely related and also worthy in character, must be selected to become his heir. A man in high position is surrounded by spies, and when he is ill there will be eavesdropping. If preparations have not been made in advance then strife and upheaval will break out. Emperors Huan and Ling of the Han and Wu and Hsuan of the T'ang[31] brought dishonour on themselves[32] by letting this matter be abandoned to the control of women and eunuchs.[33]

When men adopt sons to continue the succession, there is no division of principle as to where honour is to be bestowed: blood-relationship cannot interfere with it, and the object of one's regard is manifest. But latterly social status, except in the case of the Emperor, has been inconstant; men have thrust ahead in self-assertive fashion, so that the ancestral temples have fallen into neglect and the clan-heads have not been honoured. The adoption of heirs has been settled for the sake of personal favour and arranged with a view to profit. We have never yet seen noblemen adopted as heirs of poor homes, nor the offspring of plutocrats become the heritors of humble families. How very evident were these evils in the disastrous violation of human relationships that occurred when Tseng was extinguished by Chü,[34] or when Chia was overturned by Han,[35] and continuous strife ensued: by giving strangers the names of "father" and "mother" they severed the bonds of love which were part of their natural endowment, that they might strive for a prize they had no right to expect. What has this to do with honouring one's parents? - by clutching at ancient customs as a means of managing the present, they carried the selfish appropriation of favour beyond all bounds: was this not perversity indeed?

As for Li Fang, I do not understand why he became the adopted heir of another, and attained the noontide of official

advancement with his fame reaching to the uttermost parts of the world, or why he should have opened his heart to blandishment and favour, forgetting to be grateful for the love of natural parents, and did not consider from which family had come the person who held the position of Third Duke of Chin. How indeed could this be borne! But it was not too late[36] to repair the error he had previously committed in accepting fame and honour for reasons other than continuing hereditary emolument, and becoming an adopted son without the motive of maintaining the ancestral sacrifices.

Now in ancient times no worthwhile men concerned themselves with adopting heirs, and in consequence the Rites prescribed sacrifices for natural and not for adopted sons. If non-clansmen share in hereditary emoluments, then the ancestral line will not survive or perish on its own account. Nephews can be used to continue the family succession. Whether or not one has children is up to Heaven. Men may not simulate Heaven's work and forcibly impose "joined toes and extra fingers."[37] The reckless creation of adopted heirs is unlawful. Those whom intense cupidity leads to neglect their own parents and become the heirs of other men are not true men; the ancients did not dare to tolerate such proceedings. How can men be justified in treating those who gave them birth meanly on the pretext of ancient rites? The heirs of today are not like the heirs of the past. The changes made by the system of the T'ien-hsi reign-period in answer to Li Fang's request were correct. This means that both conformity and change are in accordance with one Tao. What they have in common is Timeliness, and that which remains unaltered from antiquity is the enduring[38] element in Timeliness. What differentiates between them is Timeliness, and the dissimilarity of past and present is the yielding aspect of Timeliness. If we examine the Three Kings[39] and throughout the ages, close investigation of the essential meaning of these things by an objective standard is all dependent on the Way.[40]

(xiii) On Establishing the Succession: An Instance of Man's Inability to determine the future

Supposing one wants to treat the Empire as a commonwealth and not turn it to the private interests of his children[1], then it is only his own impartiality that is at issue - other people are not the subject of his plans. Supposing one wants to set up a ruler to reign in his stead, and to entrust a worthy man as a protective measure for the well-being of his domain, then it is only the man he knows personally on whom he bestows his inheritance, and he cannot make plans as to which persons his successors will in their turn bestow it upon.

Therefore Yao bestowed the Empire on Shun, but did not plan that Shun should bestow it on Yü. Shun bestowed the Empire on Yü, but did not plan that Yü should bestow it on Ch'i.[2] When it was bestowed on Yü, the virtue of giving it to the worthy did not decrease, but when it was bestowed on Ch'i, the system of giving it to one's children was permanently established. Shun and Yü each acted according to what was timely and carried into effect their aspirations, so that, on the upper level, they were of one mind with the Emperor whom they served and, on the lower level, they complied with the aspirations of the people. How could Yao and Shun have determined this beforehand?

In contrast, Shou Meng of Wu planned ahead for four generations, but Liao was killed by Kuang[3]. Duke Mu of Sung planned ahead for three generations, but Yü I was killed by Feng[4]. These confused public and private interest in carrying out their desires. Upon the birth of disorder, evil was wrought amongst kinsmen that could not be stayed.

It was permissible for Sung T'ai Tsu to take warning from the Ch'ai family's policy of entrusting the Throne to a minor[5], and to transmit it to T'ai Tsung[6]. But he wanted to have it transmitted in

the next instance to his younger brother, T'ing-mei, and in the third instance to his son, Te-chao[7]. But in the end he only caused an internecine struggle and the severance of the greatest human ties.[8] How could this be considered as anything but folly? If I were bestowing the throne on T'ai Tsung, I would have a personal knowledge of the individual concerned; but I could not be sure that T'ai Tsung would bestow the inheritance on T'ing-mei, nor T'ing-mei on Te-chao. Nor could I be sure that the ministers and people would withhold allegiance from T'ai Tsung's sons and serve T'ing-mei and Te-chao. Yao and Shun could not determine the course which would be adopted by Shun and Yü. And yet T'ai Tsu for his part wanted to rely on the solitary person of Chao P'u[9] to determine the course taken by his successors down to the stage following the second transmission of the throne!

The uncertain element in change consists in the permutations of Heaven.[10] The attachment of every person to things which he cannot be forced to relinquish is a matter of human feeling. When one uses men to wrest the determination of things from Heaven, or uses a single person to wrest the determination of things from the uncommitted ministers and people, then one is failing to observe the proper balance between Heaven and men, and is only following one's own desires. It is by refraining from this that the Sage serves Heaven and complies with men.[11]

If I were in T'ai Tsu's place, it would not be worth my trouble to hope that T'ai Tsung might set aside his own sons in order to transmit the throne to his younger brother and nephew. As for the impossibility of such an event, my bones would already be decayed, and my words cold, and Chao P'u himself, who heard the "testamentary charge",[12] would laugh at me for my mistake. And how much more the courtiers nursing gratitude for honours

received from T'ai Tsung? In binding men in advance to his own desires, T'ai Tsu was showing partiality even though acting on grounds of the common weal. Because his vision was not sufficiently far-reaching, his apparent wisdom was turned to stupidity. Was not his failure to protect his son and younger brother therefore to be deplored?[13]

(xiv) An Evaluation of Sung T'ai Tsu

Since the time of the Three Dynasties,[1] there have been three instances of "Good Government"[2] so designated. The Government of Emperors Wen and Ching[3] of the Han was transmitted a second time and no more.[4] The Government of the Chen-kuan Emperor (T'ai Tsung of the Tang)[5] gave way to disorder by the time of his son.[6] Under the Sung the people were brought to peace and safety, down from the ending of the dreadful crises of the Five Dynasties period by T'ai Tsu in the Chien-lung reign-period,[7] until the Hsi-ning reign-period[8] and after, when laws were abrogated and the people given no ease. Judging from this, I am of the opinion that the Sung era was the most flourishing of these three.[10]

It was not essentially that the Sung founder's descendants were fit to continue his line, or that the numerous scholars contributed effective assistance,[11] but it was rather a case of dynastic law[12] holding his descendants to an honourable course,[13] and sound teaching influencing the numerous scholars to loyalty.[14] Indeed, setting apart Kuang Wu Ti of the Han,[15] when we look for honour and Virtue, who was there of surpassing eminence, if not Sung T'ai Tsu?

The qualities for which the people depend on their rulers for nourishment are:- Compassion, Frugality and Simplicity - three things precious in the Tao.[16] The man who strains his purpose[17] towards the accomplishment of these cannot plumb their excellence; unless his effort to attain the Way is relaxed,[18] it will not succeed in plumbing their excellence. If he starts taking pains without having laid a foundation on whose effectiveness he can rely, the imperfection of his desires[19] cannot be long concealed. Emperors Wen and Ching spared no efforts in the cultivation of these three virtues. Hence their Compassion consisted in storing capital punishments within their hearts and patiently restraining them.[20] Their Frugality consisted in setting

their hopes on well-filled treasuries and sparing use thereof.[21] Their Simplicity consisted in keeping an eye on disturbances in the Empire and making cautious[22] plans for reconstruction. According to Lau Tzu's[23] technique the key to possession of the Empire lies in this approach.[24] But neither Heaven nor man will accept such a counterfeit way. Therefore the impurity of learning was responsible for the lapse in the Kingly Way after it had reached the Han.[25]

T'ang T'ai Tsung set his whole heart on Compassion and Frugality but he did not harden his will. Therefore he did not go to extremes in his conduct and so make a show of his inner secrets, and in this he was near to the Way. Nevertheless in his conduct of affairs he followed the precedents he inherited; his words differed from his true feelings; those who had in the past received favours enjoyed his kindness, and those who had not received an equal share of favour continued to suffer his rebuffs.[26] As to Simplicity he did not have it in the measure for which he has hitherto been famed. He multiplied ill-founded remarks, and bamboozled men by his glib distinctions; by his many schemes he caused the officials and people to be troubled; because he clung to a fondness for over-activity Compassion was exhausted and anger sprang up, Frugality got short shrift and extravagance arose. Tranquillity could in no way be secured for men's respite.

These three rulers possessed Lao Tzu's technique of keeping a lowly place in their efforts to hold fast to the Mean.[27] Since they maintained an attitude of profound secrecy, their conduct of affairs was inevitably deceptive. Those who rely on military power[28] wear borrowed plumes of Humanity in order to show off to the outer world. But their Virtue is slight and their <u>tao</u> therefore empty. If such a one is not personally brought low, yet even though his own resources are sufficient to forestall such a fate, he cannot hope this will also be the case for

his posterity. This is quite as it should be.

The Sung founder was unaffected by two things which could have troubled him. He came from the ranks, but advanced to high position. His Confucian scholarship was still shallow, but it was not confounded with heterodoxy. At heart he was awed by the impermanence of Heaven's Mandate;[29] also he sensed when the limit of the people's sufferings had been reached.[30] As to his generous treatment of the Ch'ai family, his courtesy towards the princes who came to terms, his practice of leniency and toleration, his restraint upon excessive punishments, his increasing of official salaries and his elevation of those Confucian scholars who had integrity[31] - in all these things he took warning from practices which had oppressed the people and insulted scholars, and dealt with the things which troubled his peace of mind. By gradually reducing and getting rid of these tendencies he relieved a tense situation. He did not anxiously try to seek out profit and promote it, or to seek out harm and remove it, so as to procure ease for the helpless masses for a brief space, without a care for their permanent fate.[32] He was neither artful nor opportunistic. With due regard to the possibilities within his power he showed gentle forbearance and guided the Empire harmoniously, nor did he lay empty claim to the name of being himself a Yao or a Shun, boasting of his perfections and making harsh demands on others.

Therefore when we examine his words, there was none of T'ang T'ai Tsung's babbling of Humanity and Righteousness; when we consider his conduct of affairs there was none of Wen and Ching's forgiveness of unforgivable actions and toleration of intolerable deeds.[33] And so the tangled skein of circumstances in the Empire was gradually restored to order, and the tumbled bricks of prevailing tendencies were one by one duly restored to their place. That was all there was to it.

The Sung founder's goodness all flowed from the heart. The intents of his heart were drawn forth and grew ever greater. The sincerity of his heart was given expression and did not prove false.[34] There was no other reason why this state of affairs lasted a hundred years with the lingering excellence still persisting. Fundamentally he was single-hearted in his disposition, and his conduct naturally had Simplicity. In Simplicity he practised Compassion; accordingly his Compassion was not a matter of benefit conferred by hawking favours. In Simplicity he practised Frugality; accordingly his Moderation was not a matter of miserly scheming. Since he did not model himself upon anyone, trifling defects did not mar his general purity. As he did not imitate anyone, he penetrated to the heart of circumstances and did not go into trivial details of form.[35]

The Master said,"If good men were to govern a country in succession for a hundred years, they would be able to transform the violently bad, and dispense with capital punishments"[36]. It is wrong that it should be thought Emperors Wen and Ching came up to this standard. They represented Lao Tzu's branch stream, which is not what the Empire wishes to see. T'ai Tsu came very near the mark.

But the essence of the difference was revealed in the way they laid the foundation of their dynasties.[37] A policy of tolerance is inadequate for those who deserve much and thence invalidates Compassion; prodigality takes a toll of others and thence invalidates Frugality. In Wen Ti's harsh treatment of the Prince of Huainan[38], in Ching Ti's seizure of territory in Wu and Ch'u[39], in T'ang T'ai Tsung's murder of his brothers by his own hand[40], the root was impaired so that the glory of the leaves and branches was all empty glory[41]. But when the Sung founder acted on the Empress Dowager's

bidding he knew that his brother would not be tolerant of T'ai Tsu's son, and in the meantime he could not bear to let Chao P'u's hypocritical promise come into the open but quickly hushed up all trace of it[42]. Detaching himself thus from the disposal of the imperial position and the fortunes of his descendants, he did violence to his personal feelings of tenderness, refusing to be governed by them, and magnanimously bestowed the Empire on the man who was providentially suited[43] for it. Nor did he in any way regret this "folly of Humanity" incurred by his filial obedience and brotherly love.[44] Whereas the rulers of Han and T'ang tolerated acts of which they were ashamed but in which they could not control themselves, T'ai Tsu transmuted to his own singleness of purpose[45] the things which had occasioned such a reaction, and proceeded to adjust them with no trouble. That it was so was simply a matter of his sensibility of heart[46], which caused the germination of the seed and the opening of the bud so that the leaves and branches achieved great glory.

In that he could not bear human death, herein lay his Compassion. In that he could not bear the destruction of material things[47], herein lay his Frugality. In that he could not bear the suffering of officials and people, herein lay his Simplicity. This Compassion and Frugality was carried out in Simplicity, and they were all merely a matter of his sensibility of heart. Although his grasp of affairs was rough, not refined, and approximate, not detailed, yet those who take pains over techniques of government offend the Tao and those who strive for a name stray far from truth[48], for the inner springs of action in the two cases lie far apart.

Humanity towards the people is an extension of one's love for relatives. Respect for material things is an extension of one's care for the people[49]. The superior man broadens the scope of his

Virtue by judicious[50] extension of these attitudes. The naturally good[50] man, needing to make no such extension, gives birth spontaneously to these feelings in his heart. In the case of T'ai Tsu, the blessings conferred by one man spanned a hundred years, without there being any need for his descendants to follow in his footsteps for that length of time.[51] Therefore I say that after Kuang Wu of the Han, T'ai Tsu was the most eminent of rulers.

NOTES

Notes to Introduction

1. Chang Ping-lin (1868-1936) was an anti-Manchu revolutionary who edited a compilation of Wang Fu-chih's works.
2. One of its members was Mao Tse-tung.
3. Tu T'ung-chien lun (hsu-lun ssu).
4. Balazs, 1965, p.40.
5. De Bary, 1960, p.598.
6. For all these, see Bibliography.
7. Benjamin Schwartz, Some Polarities in Confucian Thought, in Wright, 1964, p.15.

Notes to Chapter One

1. For short biographical accounts of Wang Fu-chih in English, see Bibliography: Hummel, 1943; Balazs, 1965, pp. 37-40. Hummel cites two nien-p'u: one by Wang Chih-ch'un in Ch'uan-shan hsueh-pao (Journal for the Study of Wang Ch'uan-shan), 1934-5, and one by Wang Yung-hsiang in Ch'uan-shan hsueh-p'u (Study of the scholarship of Wang Ch'uan-shan), 1934. Chang Hsi-t'ang, 1965, has some useful details, including a historical table of the main events of Wang's life.

2. Cf. Reischauer and Fairbank, 1958, pp. 333 foll. In general, the strength of the political system of the Ming is attested by the fact that it was taken over largely unaltered by the Ch'ing rulers.

3. Cf. Nelson I. Wu, Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1556-1636): Apathy in Government and Fervour in Art, in Wright and Twitchett, 1962, pp.260-293. Wu cites Meng Shen, Ming-tai shih (History of the Ming dynasty), (Taipei, 1957).

4. My account of the politics of this period is culled largely from Charles O. Hucker, The Tung-lin Movement of the Late Ming Period, in Fairbank, 1957, pp.132-162.

5. This dispute, in which the Emperor refused to declare his young son his heir, lasted from 1586 until 1601, when he finally yielded.

6. These were specifically the doctrines concerned with self-cultivation, in which, it was asserted, the most important element was introspective meditation leading to "sudden enlightenment".

Notes to Chapter One

7. The politicians who sympathised with the Tunglin Academy movement did not form a political party in any organised sense, being united chiefly by a desire to make the government conform to Confucian ethical and political standards.

8. Tu T'ung-chien lun (13).

Notes to Chapter Two

1. See pp.22-3.
2. On ke-wu, see D.C. Lau's Note in B.S.O.A.S. 30/ 1967.
3. See The Great Learning and also Ch'eng I's comment (printed in Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, pp.560-561).
4. Cited Needham II, 1956, p.199.
5. ibid p.466.
6. Yin 陰. Yang 陽.
7. e.g. Dubs, Needham.
8. I-ching, the Classic which held the widest appeal in China, and which contained, either in its Text or its Appendices, the philosophy outlined above.
9. For the generality of Chinese thought, that is. Confucianism and Taoism, for example, both incorporated this view.
10. The Hexagram Ke (Revolution) notwithstanding. This extreme measure was greatly hedged around with qualifications.
11. See J.T.C. Liu 1959, pp.25 foll.
12. Not only the "bird's-eye view" type of account (e.g. Lin Mou-sheng's Men and Ideas) commits this fault - it is found also in works of serious scholarship, to wit Wing-tsit Chan, Fung Yu-lan and others.
13. i.e. The belief that human misconduct evokes corresponding disorder in the natural world. This concept has nothing to do with the "Phenomenalism" of Western philosophy.
14. See pp.25-6.
15. Chinese philosophy characteristically shied away from too personalised a concept of Deity.

Notes to Chapter Two

16. Needham II, 1956, e.g. pp.280 foll.

17. e.g. "All things reject what is different (to themselves) and follow what is akin. Thus it is that if (two) ch'i are similar, they will coalesce; if notes correspond, they resonate. The experimental proof of this is extraordinarily clear. Try tuning musical instruments. The kung note or the shang note struck upon one lute will be answered by the kung or the shang notes from other stringed instruments. They sound by themselves. This is nothing miraculous but the Five notes being in relation .... When a great ruler is about to arise auspicious omens first appear; when a ruler is about to be destroyed, there are baleful ones beforehand. Things indeed summon each other, like to like ...." (Ch'un Ch'iu Fan Lu(57), translated in Needham II, pp.281-2). (Cf. the ch'iu-hsiang principle in I-ching).

18. Though not because he did not think it important. See e.g. Analects (X.5).

19. The Book of Documents.

20. See Needham II, p.292.

21. See Creel's article in JAOS 52/1932.

22. I-ching, The Great Appendix(V).

23. Philosophical idealism holds that matter depends for its existence on mind, the only "real" substance. Despite the difference between Chinese and Western dualistic formulations, it must be granted that the notion of "ought" appeals to an absolute principle not derivable from any facts of empirical experience; it is essentially intuitive. Indeed the very basis of philosophy, i.e. man's faith in reason, is intuitive; in this sense there never was and never could be a consistent philosophy of outright materialism.

24. Hsun Tzu(17); translated in Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, pp. 122-3.

25. Translated in Chan, 1963, pp. 69-70.

26. Unlike Taoism, of course, Confucianism held that participation in the cosmic harmony involved the performance of duties within the social and political spheres, by means of li 礼 ; whereas the Union with Nature envisaged by the Taoist was essentially an un-ordered, anti-ritualistic and mystical affair.

27. See the dialogue with Kao Tzu, Mencius (VI.a.1).

28. From Chung Yung(XX.17-19, XXI); translated by Legge.

29. It was not, of course, the only prescription for self-improvement; moral effort was also emphasised. It was furthermore readily acknowledged in the Classics that knowledge was easy, but action difficult. Nevertheless as Confucianism developed the dominant attitude was the one described above.

30. H. Wilhelm, 1960, pp. 5-8.

31. The term "non-being" was used to indicate that Tao had none of the limitations which any positive concept must involve: for example, it was the source of both strength and weakness, darkness and light, Yin and Yang.

32. Graham, 1958, p.122.

33. Demiéville and others argue convincingly that li originally spoke of arranging the fields. See Demiéville in Annuaire du College de France 40/1947 pp. 151-7.

34. Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, pp. 637-8

35. See e.g. Needham II pp.479-481.

36. Wing-tsit Chan, *1963, p.(xxxiii).

37. From Chou-i wai-chuan(5); translated by Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, pp.694-5. The bracket is Chan's.

38. Chang, 1957.

39. See p. 51-3 below.

40. Cf. Chang, 1957, pp.171-183.

41. See Needham II.

42. I am aware that this fact can be used in support of the naturalist argument (cf.pp.41-2 above). But I am not at all sure that "emergent morality" covers the bill.

43. The etymology of normative terms in the Chinese language provides an interesting subject for study. It is extremely difficult to find a single word in the language which expresses naked moral principle as unequivocally as our words "duty" and "ought". Candidates for consideration, such as 義 i, convey a strong sense of practical content, in this case "the duties of social relationships". Cheng 正 and hsieh 邪 are "upright" and "awry"; the classic case is perhaps shih fei 是非, basically "is" and "is not", commonly used as "rights and wrongs". Another indication of the Chinese dislike of void words.

44. See Graham, 1958, p.8 (The passage is from Lu-chai i-shu(1)).

45. ibid. p.12. See Ho-nan Ch'eng-shih i-shu(316).

46. ibid. pp.17-18. See Pei-ch'i tzu i(2).

47. Needham II pp.514-5.

48. According to Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, p.710.

Notes to Chapter Two

49. See pp.41-2.

50. Lucian W. Pye, 1968, p.148 foll. has an interesting discussion of the Chinese concern for objectivity.

51. I-ching, Hexagram 41 (Sun).

52. Ming-tao wen-chi(3); translated in Graham, 1958, pp.102-3.

53. Ho-nan Ch'eng-shih i-shu(232-3);translated in Graham, 1958, p.105.

54. See pp.58-61.

55. Chu Hsi rearranged the original version so that the investigation of things should precede the sincerity of the will.

56. I-ching, Treatise of Remarks on the Trigrams, (I).

57. Ho-nan Ch'eng-shih i-shu (16);translated in Graham, 1958, p.80.

58. Shu-ching (L.III p.258).

59. Mencius (VII.a.4).

60. The teaching of enlightenment through meditation was connected with a tendency in the writings of Wang Yang-ming and his followers to suggest that the original nature transcends good and evil. This was the doctrine which later Neo-Confucians attacked as Buddhist; in Wang Yang-ming's own thought, however, there seems little doubt that this notion took second place to his conviction that the nature was fundamentally good; or perhaps it would be truer to say that for him the goodness of the nature was absolute, transcending relative (mundane) goodness. (Cf. Chan, 1963, pp.688-9).

61. T'ing-lin shih-wen chi(3). Translated in De Bary, 1960, p.608.

Notes to Chapter Two

62. Cf. Tai Chen's complaints on this subject.

63. See pp.48-9 above.

64. Tu Ssu-shu ta-ch'üan shuo(8).

65. Chu Tzu ch'üan-shu(62). Translated in De Bary, 1960, p.490.

66. For a study of the controversy between Chu Hsi and Ch'en Liang see Chang, 1957, pp.309-331.

67. Eberhard, 1960, pp.263-4.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. B.C. 1122-255.

2. The main Classical source for the Mandate theory is Shu-ching. While it is true that many sections of this work are late forgeries, a certain core is generally admitted to have existed from early Chou times. Cf. Burton Watson, Early Chinese Literature, 1962, pp.21-36.

3. It does not appear in Karlgren's translation of the Documents (Karlgren, The Book of Documents, 1950).

4. Shu-ching (L.III pp.184-190).

5. Legends associated with the shan-jang tradition are recorded in Shu-ching (L.III pp.23-32 and 57-64).

6. Shu-ching (L.III pp.198, 213, 476 and passim).

7. Shih-ching (Karlgren, The Book of Odes, 1950, p.193).

8. Shih-ching (Karlgren p.191).

9. Shu-ching (L.III p.320).

10. I-ching, Great Appendix (II.2); cf. Shu-ching (L.III p.316).

11. Cf. Shu-ching (L.III pp.79-81).

12. Shu-ching (L.III pp.484-5).

13. Mencius (VII.b.14); translated by Legge.

14. Mencius (I.b.8); translated by Legge.

15. Pao Chao Hsieh, p.11.

16. Wittfogel, 1957, pp.103-4.

17. Cf. Levenson II, 1964, pp.11-13.

18. Cf. Needham II pp.518-583.

19. Mencius (V.a.5); cited in Chapter Two above, p.33.

20. The Tunglin era was a case in point. See Chapter One above.

21. Mencius (IV.a.3; Dobson 6.10).

22. Mencius (II.a.4); cf. Mencius (IV.a.8).

Notes to Chapter Three

23. Ch'un-ch'iu fan-lu (Sec.18, 6.5b.6a); translated in De Bary, 1960, pp.174-5.

24. Cf. De Bary, 1960, pp.175-6.

25. Ssu-ma Kuang, I Meng (Doubts about Mencius). Culled from Frederick W. Mote, Confucian Eremitism in the Yuan Period, in Wright, 1964, pp.279, 355-6.

26. Cf. Mote (ibid) p.280; also Charles O. Hucker, Confucianism and the Chinese Censorial System, in Wright, 1964, pp.50-76.

27. From De Bary, 1960, pp.193-4.

28. See Wolfram Eberhard, The Political Function of Astronomy and Astronomers in Han China, in Fairbank, 1957, pp.33-70

29. Biography of Ping Chi in Ch'ien Han shu; culled from Fung, 1953, Vol.II p.10.

30. (i) The Three Kingdoms period (220-265); (ii) The period of division between North and South (also known as the Former Five Dynasties period: 420-589); (iii) The Five Dynasties period (907-960).

31. See Liu, 1967, pp.111-2.

32. See De Bary, 1960, pp.504-7.

33. See De Bary, 1960, p.507.

34. Pao Chao Hsieh, pp.16-19.

35. ibid pp.20-22.

36. It is extremely doubtful whether Ch'un-ch'iu contained any esoteric meaning such as Confucianists firmly believed. G.A. Kennedy's suggestion that the author's geographic location dictated the scope of his record is more convincing. (George A. Kennedy, Interpretation of the Ch'un-ch'iu, in JAOS 62/1942 pp.40-48). See also Watson, 1962, pp.37-40

Notes to Chapter Three

37. See, for example, Ts'ao Tao-heng, Shih-lun Wang Ch'uan-shan ssu-hsiang-te erh-ko wen-ti (An examination of some aspects of the thought of Wang Ch'uan-shan), in Lishi Yanjiu 4/1964, pp.137-152.

38. The Hegelian comparison is suggested explicitly by Balazs, 1965, p.41 and Lin Mousheng, pp.200-214.

39. Huang Tsung-hsi's reiterated opinion that China's evils dated from the time of the Ch'in dynasty is an interesting contrast to Wang Fu-chih's view. See Ming-i tai-fang lu, (passim).

40. "trends": shih 勢 (prevailing tendencies, power). This is an important concept in Wang Fu-chih. The thought of motion seems to be inherent in it for him; for this reason I translate it by a word which apart from its brevity has little else to recommend it.

41. 順必然之勢者，理也。Balazs, 1965, p.41, renders, "... to obey necessary trends ... is reasonable". It might, however, be taken, "Principle is that aspect of trends which follows necessity". The particularised meaning of li 理 (principles, form of things) is not far from the surface throughout this section.

42. "allotted fate": shu 數 . It seems to mean explicitly the length of time during which a particular principle is allowed to flourish.

43. "aspirations of the masses": chung-chih 衆志 . It is tempting to render as "general will".

44. Sung lun (7. 1a-3a).

45. Ts'ao, in Lishi Yanjiu 4/1964, p.141.

46. Tu T'ung-chien lun (hsu-lun i, 2 b).

47. Sung lun (1.19a; Section (xi) below).

Notes to Chapter Three

48. There are isolated remarks which support the evolutionary interpretation. In a famous passage in Chou-i wai chuan(5) he says, "In the period of wilderness and chaos there was no Way to bow and yield a throne. At the time of Yao and Shun, there was no Way to pity the suffering people and punish the sinful rulers. During the Han and T'ang dynasties there were no Ways as we have today, and there will be many in future years which we do not have now". (Translated in Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, pp.694-5).

49. Tu T'ung-chien lun(24).

50. Wang I, 1956, p.30, on a phrase from Tu T'ung-chien lun(19.2b).

51. The conclusions reached in this and the parallel sentence which finishes the passage seem at first sight cryptic, but the clue seems to lie in the interpenetration of Heaven and the people. In this first case the people are abused by a specious concern with the supernatural, but they are no less abused by the direct flouting of Heaven, being so closely identified with Heaven. In the second case interest in the people runs to an unhealthy intimacy with all sorts of individuals and a complete disregard of Heaven; yet those who turn in disgust from any kind of contact with the people are likewise transgressing the laws of Nature (天之則).

52. Shang-shu yin-i(4, T'ai-shih chung).

53. See p.48 above.

54. See Chapter Two above.

55. Mencius (III.a.4).

56. Tu T'ung-chien lun,(hsu-lun i).

57. Sung lun(1, Section (iii)).

58. Shu-ching (L III p.59; cf. Index, p.704).

Notes to Chapter Three

59. Chuang Tzu, (Keng Sang Ch'u).

60. ibid. (Jen chien shih).

61. ibid. (T'ai-tsung shih).

62. Cf. the occurrence of the pair in Li--chi, (Hsueh chi).

63. I-ching, Great Appendix (I.1) (Wilhelm p.286).

64. ibid. (II.1; Wilhelm p.327). Cf. (II.12; Wilhelm p.353).

65. Sung lun (1, Section (xiv)).

66. For the former part of this summary I have made use of the translation in De Bary, 1960, pp.304-5.

67. See Section (ix).

68. See Section (xii).

69. See Section (xiii).

70. See Section (xi).

71. See ibid.

72. See Section (x).

73. See Section (v).

74. See Section (iii).

75. It differs from Western theories of laissez-faire in that it is specifically based on the moral need to develop the people's "sense of shame", i.e. to obtain their voluntary adhesion to the principles of morality. Measures of practical control are expected to be replaced not by a vacuum, but by moral and ideological persuasion.

76. Cf. J.T.C. Liu's paper in J.A.S.26/1967, pp.457-463.

77. See Section (xiv).

78. Huang Tsung-hsi argues similarly in Ming-i tai-fang lu

79. Tu T'ung-chien lun, (hsu-lun i).

80. See below, Section (ii) n.2.

81. Compare his emphasis on the activities of T'ien in Section (i), and in the passage from Sung lun (7) translated above.

Notes to Chapter Three

82. Huang shu(1)

83. Tu T'ung-chien lun(1), and Ssu-wen lu wai-p'ien; cited in Balazs, 1965, pp.41, 47-48

84. See De Bary, 1960, pp.598-602

85. See Section (viii)

86. Huang shu(1)

87. See Section (xi)

Notes to Text: Section (i)

1. From A.D. 960. The Empire had been divided since 907, when the T'ang era was succeeded by the "Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms Period". Under the Sung founder and his successor, North and South were completely reunited with the exception of the northern border territory, which remained in the hands of the Khitan Liao dynasty.

2. T'ien-ming 天命. A general philosophical term, meaning "decree of heaven", "fate", but used here with the specific political application of a heavenly mandate to rule given to the founder of a new dynasty. The success which crowned a new ruler's efforts to found a dynasty was said to be due to the favour of Heaven, which in its turn was given only to a man of proved worth. Similarly, the loss of the Mandate was due to the decline of dynastic virtue.

   The term T'ien 天, popularised by the ancient Chou dynasty as the name for their highest deity, variously connotes an ethical principle such as is contained in "Heaven" and a natural principle (as in our "Nature"). For T'ien, and for the history of the T'ien-ming concept, see Chapters Two and Three.

   By saying that we may further our knowledge of the Mandate from the circumstances attending the foundation of the Sung, Wang Fu-chih indicates that he is going to discuss the origins of success in dynastic matters: a topic of perennial interest to Chinese historians and particularly alive in the minds of scholars who lived during the transition from the Ming to the Ch'ing.

Notes to Section (i)

3. 天 難 諶 . This phrase is found twice in Shu-ching (L.III, pp. 213, 476). Both passages (the latter from Chou documents, the former ascribed to Shang but not now reckoned authentic) stress that the Mandate is not held in perpetuity by any one House: only te 德 (Virtue) ensures its preservation. For translation, see n. 6.

4. niu 扭 "bent, perverted".

5. i.e. Heaven abides by a constant principle in bestowing the Mandate.

6. 命 曰 不 易. This description of the Mandate appears several times in Shih-ching and Shu-ching; in one passage in the latter it is linked with the phrase previously quoted (n. 3): see Legge (III p. 476), where 天 命 不 易。天 難 諶。 is translated, "The favour of Heaven is not easily preserved - Heaven is hard to be depended upon". Cf. Karlgren (p. 59): "Heaven's mandate is not easy, and .... Heaven is difficult to rely on". The assertion that the Mandate is "not easy" is generally made as a warning against negligence on the part of descendants of dynastic founders.

7. Two points attract attention in this description of Heaven's ways. One is the reference to change, which is of central importance in Wang Fu-chih's thinking: therein he differs from the Sung Neo-Confucians, who, though fond of I-ching, emphasised the static rather than the dynamic element of change (Cf. H. Wilhelm, 1960, pp. 88-91). The other point concerns the manner in which change is wrought. It is "achieved by devious means", if this be the correct interpretation of ch'ü-ch'eng 曲 成 . See I-ching, Great Appendix (I.4), where the relevant passage is translated

by Sung p. 279 as "[The sage] comprehends ... the transformations of heaven and earth without any error; by an ever-varying adaptation he completes (the nature of) all things without exception". Cf. Tz'u-hai p. 648(v). It is only fair to say that R. Wilhelm, P.296 translates "... all things everywhere are completed ..." But "devious" seems more likely in our text, particularly in view of the accompanying chen-cho 斟酌 (to consult, deliberate, arrange). Regarding the translation of the latter phrase, it might be objected that something like "adjustment" or "adaptation" - more neutral than "deliberation", with its anthropomorphic flavour - would be preferable, but this would miss the true impact of the original. Compare other passages in Wang's writings, notably his assertion in Tu T'ung-chien lun, (1.2a) that Heaven could turn even Ch'in's selfishness to good.

8. te 德 . Its meaning is a compound of "efficacy" and "moral power", rather like the original sense of our "virtue", which I have used with the addition of a capital letter to signify its special meaning. It was by the force of his "te" that the ideal ruler in Confucian thought was expected to rule, and not by the outward display of military strength. See n.10.

9. Shang and Chou were two of the so-called "Three Dynasties" of ancient China. The Shu-ching represents their founders as men of outstanding virtue called to execute judgment on the wicked scions of the existing dynasties.

10. Kung 功 . Essentially "military merit", but comprehending "right" as well as "might". The attribution of te 德 to the Classical and kung 功 to the post-Classical dynasties was commonplace.

Notes to Section (i)

11. Han dynasty (B.C. 206 - A.D. 221). T'ang dynasty (A.D. 618 - 907). Both were popular with Chinese historians, but their greater distance from the Golden Age of the legendary past naturally allowed them less status than the earlier dynasties received.

12. Shih-ching, the earliest of the Classics.

13. See Shih-ching (L. IV p. 448).

14. This concept of Heaven lending its support to a man who first shows himself worthy and capable is perfectly orthodox Confucian theory.

15. Chao K'uang-yin 趙匡胤 (A.D. 927 - 976), the founder of the Sung. Like his predecessors of the Five Dynasties period, he won the throne on the basis of military power. For further details, see remainder of this Section and Notes, and p.95.

16. Ch'iu-min 丘民 . An important piece of political philosophy is enshrined here. The "people" are not just the passive object of Heaven's and the ruler's concern, but they are a political force to be reckoned with. In using the expression ch'iu-min Wang Fu-chih is almost certainly thinking of the passage in Mencius (VII. b.14) which says:

> "The people (min 民) are the most important element in a nation; the spirits of the land and grain are next; the sovereign is the lightest.
>
> "Therefore to gain the peasantry (ch'iu min) is the way to become emperor ..." (Legge's translation).

Cf. Mencius (V.a.5,6), where the people's acceptance is a necessary part in the making of an Emperor. But this is not democracy;

aside from the people's theoretical right to signify their approval of a change of dynasty, they have no part or lot in actual administration - save of course by the road of official advancement, which at once lifted the individual concerned above the ranks of "the people".

17. i.e. the N. Chou or Later Chou dynasty (951-60). Ch'ai 柴 was the family name of Kuo Wei (the founder)'s Empress, whose relatives succeeded to the throne.

18. i.e. the N. Han kingdom (951-979). Hotung is in Shansi province.

19. The Khitan Tartars were a group of tribes in the north of China, and a thorn in the flesh of Chinese rulers from the early 10th to the early 12th centuries. They held a claim to the Chinese Empire, founding the Liao dynasty which lasted from 937 to 1125.

20. In Anhwei; i.e. against the S. T'ang kingdom (937 - 975), which surrendered all its possessions north of the Yangtze 957-8.

21. Even the Sung-shih in its eulogy on T'ai Tsu (See Sung-shih (1. 7b - 8a)) does not linger over his achievements prior to taking the throne, and explicitly admits that he came to power in exactly the same way as the founders of "Chin, Han and Chou". But Wang Fu-chih is unusually caustic on the subject.

22. (A.D. 155-220). He gained complete military and political power towards the end of the Later Han dynasty, and helped his son to found the N. Wei dynasty. His fame as an outstanding but unscrupulous rebel became legendary.

Notes to Section (i)

23. Rebels at the close of the Later Han dynasty.

24. The events alluded to are briefly as follows: Tung Cho (d. A.D.192), an excessively harsh and arrogant general, had dethroned and murdered the existing Han emperor, putting the seven year old Hsien Ti in his place. After a series of indecisive battles he was murdered in 192 by his own lieutenant (on the persuasion of members of the opposing side). By 196 Ts'ao Ts'ao had got hold of the Emperor, and subsequently ended the danger from two other figures, Yuan Shao (d. A.D. 202) and Yuan Shu (d. A.D. 199), the latter of whom had proclaimed himself Emperor in 197.

25. (A.D. 356 - 422). Founder of the Liu Sung dynasty (420 - 479), which replaced the E. Chin on the "abdication" of its last emperor, for whose death and that of his predecessor Liu Yü was responsible.

26. The background to these events was a disunited China and a critically weak dynasty (the E. Wei) in the south; while still serving the latter, Liu Yü disposed of the representatives of three illegitimate dynasties - Yao Hung (A.D. 388 - 417), last ruler of the "Later Ch'in", Mu-jung Ch'ao (A.D. 385 - 410), last ruler of the "S. Yen", and Huan Hsuan (A.D. 369 - 404), founder of the abortive "Ch'u". Lu Hsun was a governor under Huan Hsun whose life was spared, but later forfeited through renewed rebellion.

27. This change of dynasties occurred when the N. Chou, the last of the Five Dynasties, was under the regency of the Empress Dowager, as the sovereign was a minor. While Chao K'uang-yin was away on a mission against the Khitan, his soldiers, with the connivance of

his brother and his intimate companion Chao P'u (and therefore almost certainly with his own knowledge) threw a yellow robe (symbol of sovereignty) over him as he slept. This was the formal inauguration of the Sung dynasty.

28. 天自謹也。 Alternatively (but less likely) "Heaven relied upon itself".

29. Certainly a disconcerting passage for those who would pin "materialism" too closely on to Wang Fu-chih. It does not even fit a naturalistic scheme, at least not overtly. Some (e.g. Ts'ao Tao-heng, 1964) settle for a "profound internal contradiction" in his social and philosophical attitudes, whereby the champion of the townspeople and of materialism is simultaneously the upholder of "feudalism" and "mysticism", and the latter attitude is supposed to emerge in such passages as this. It is said that the "mystical purpose of Heaven" here both replaces the objective principles of history and submerges human effectiveness, the dark underlying motive being the wish to "paralyse the people's revolutionary desires". But even discounting the ideological twists in such a view, one cannot readily take so literally the apparent personification of Heaven. Confucianists had for centuries used symbolic language for naturalised concepts. For fuller discussion, see Chap. Two.

30. Tutor and adviser to Wu Ting of the Shang dynasty. See Shu-ching (L.III p.259): "I, the little one, first learned with Kan P'an (台小子舊學于甘盤。)." In another passage (L.III p.478) Duke Chou gives Kan P'an credit for helping to maintain the virtue of the Shang.

Notes to Section (i)

31. tu-tien-chien, full title tien-ch'ien tu-tien-chien

殿前都點檢： "Commander of the Palace Corps". The Palace Corps was an innovation of the N. Chou intended to offset the power of the "Emperor's Army" (by then the main source of political instability). See Wang Gungwu, 1963, p.206.

32. 啓於形聲之表者。

33. Shang Ti 上帝. The chief deity of the Shang dynasty, originally (it would appear) the highest of the ancestral spirits. Karlgren translates "God on High". But by the Warring States period the term was almost as impersonal as T'ien 天, with which it was very interchangeable. Coming from the pen of a Neo-Confucian, however, it has a rather startling effect.

34. Thus drastically does Wang Fu-chih dispose of the orthodox interpretation of the rise of a dynasty. The palliatives that follow should not blind the reader's eye to the originality of Wang's thesis. The founder of the great Sung dynasty had no outstanding personal virtue or merit, he is saying. It was all bestowed on him by Heaven. And yet, in a sense Wang is still based on the characteristically Chinese premise that the ideal course of action is conformity with Heaven or Nature, and not "rugged individualism".

35. 非常. Probably in antithesis to the use of ch'ang 常 (constancy) at the beginning of the section: Wang's problem is to discover why Heaven has seemingly departed from its constant principle.

36. Chü 懼.

Notes to Section (i)

37. 乾龍之惕也 . The I-ching flavour of the whole paragraph is pinpointed by this allusion to the 1st Hexagram of I-ching (Sung p.2): 君子終日乾乾.夕惕若.厲.无咎。 "(We see ...) the superior man active and vigilant all the day, and in the evening still careful and apprehensive. (The position is) dangerous, but there will be no mistake". This is the Ch'ien 乾 Hexagram, which in R. Wilhelm's words speaks of "the primal power, which is light-giving, active, strong, and of the spirit .... Its image is heaven". He translates it as "The Creative"; my translation of the compound ch'ien-lung (heavenly dragon) abides by the more conventional rendering, but it is to be understood that "heavenly" denotes something dynamic. In similar vein, the dragon (which appears constantly throughout the text for this Hexagram) symbolises "the electrically charged, dynamic, arousing force that manifests itself in the thunderstorm". In human affairs the dragon symbolises the "superior man", and is commonly associated with the throne.

38. (A.D. 866-933). As the adopted son of the father of the man who founded the Later T'ang dynasty (923-936), Li Ssu-yuan himself became second emperor of the dynasty.

39. (A.D. 982-942). Founded the Later Chin dynasty (936-946).

40. (d. A.D. 948.) Founded the Later Han dynasty (947-950).

41. (A.D. 901-953.) Founded the Later Chou dynasty (951-960).

42. The point seems to be that whereas these three men at the time of their usurpation held military positions such as encouraged independence (being provincial governors or, in the case of Kuo Wei, commander of the so-called "Emperor's Army"), Chao Kuang-yin as Head of the newly-formed Palace Corps was under the direct command of the Emperor: his opportunity to strike free did not come until a minor

Notes to Section (i)

42. (Contd) sat on the throne.

43. 榷。

44. (A.D. 921-959.) Nephew of Kuo Wei's consort, and adopted son of Kuo Wei, when he succeeded.

Wang Fu-chih seems to be making rather a fine point when he attributes greater opportunism (or possibly "better opportunity") to Kuo Wei and Ch'ai Jung than to Chao K'uang-yin. The general pattern of events in the founding of the Later Chou and the Sung was the same: the accession of a minor, the despatch of the general concerned to ward off the Khitan and the insistence of the soldiery that their leader mount the throne.

45. Again, the contrast seems exaggerated. Chao K'uang-yin's record was not entirely blank: he was greatly trusted by Emperor Shih-tsung and highly rewarded for his military performance in Shansi (Li Chieh-pien 1961, p.18).

46. The readiness of ministers to change their allegiance to suit the prevailing winds of dynastic change during this period was a scandal in the eyes of later historians. Otherwise worthy individuals (such as Feng Tao - see next section) were dubbed as villains for this reason.

47. i.e. the states of southern China, which was divided from the north throughout the Five Dynasties period (907-960).

48. Here is a hint of the Confucian position which Wang Fu-chih takes up in opposition to Legalism. Government is primarily moral, and should not depend on the fear of punishment for infringement of laws.

Notes to Section (i)

49. wen 文 . An awkward term for the translator. It includes "culture", "civilisation", "refinement", "literary accomplishment".

50. i.e. 885-887. The first temporarily successful peasant rising of the T'ang, under Huang Ch'ao, had just been quelled at the cost of aggrandising the Sha-t'o Turk Li K'o-yung and summoning foreign aid. The effective end of the T'ang dynasty dates from here.

51. The high praise which is here subtly given to the Sung Founder should not be missed. What boots it that he had little of personal worth to recommend him, when he fulfilled the supreme virtue of depending upon Heaven? The Confucian (and the Taoist) "great man" was always distinguished primarily by his sympathetic response to a situation already in existence, and not by his ability to create ex nihilo, as it were, new situations. Wang Fu-chih is applying a basic Chinese concept in his own original manner.

Notes to Section (ii)

1. Han T'ung was a Deputy Commander of the Palace Corps under Later Chou (see Section (i) note 31) and had formerly served under the Later Han dynasty. As soon as he heard of T'ai Tsu's assumption of power, he prepared to raise a force against him but was killed by another officer before he could do so. The Sung founder subsequently honoured him with the title Chung-shu-ling 中書令 in recognition of his loyalty to the Later Chou. The personal qualities for which he is primarily remembered are his hot-headedness and complete lack of political shrewdness ("Han of the Staring Eyes") as evinced by his shocked reaction to T'ai Tsu's debut.

Notes to Section (ii)

2. The question of loyalty (chung 忠) to a defeated dynasty was one fraught with significance for generations of Neo-Confucians ever since Ou-yang Hsiu and Ssu-ma Kuang in the 11th century revived and redefined the ancient Confucian ideal (see n.15). To most Neo-Confucians, ministerial loyalty was incompatible with service under more than one dynasty (or even more than one emperor, according to the more extreme view): the classical instances of Po I and Shu Ch'i were cited (see Shih-chi (61.1a-6b)). Hence Wang Fu-chih himself was one of hundreds of Ming loyalists who refused to serve the Manchus (although a primary reason for Wang's refusal was the fact that they were Manchus and not Chinese). In this text he does not deal directly with the conventional aspect of the question (which dealt largely with the correct assignation of particular individuals to the category either of loyalty or of disloyalty); he rather attacks the basic idea of applying the concept of loyalty indiscriminately to periods of the past, without nuance as to time or circumstance. The case of Han T'ung provides him with an excellent example for his argument. There is an interesting passage in Sung-shih, introducing the biographies of "three servants of Chou" of whom Han T'ung is one. Allusion is briefly made to the fact that Han T'ung died before the actual accession of the Sung founder provided an acid test for his intentions of loyalty; it is also noted that the three individuals had served four dynasties in all - but (surprisingly enough) this circumstance is judged immaterial to the question of their final loyalty to the Later Chou. See Sung-shih (484.1a). It seems possible that this hint of a doubt on the subject may have been a starting-point for Wang Fu-chih's extended argument.

Notes to Section (ii)

3. See Section (i) n.24 and 26. The author's point is that premature death would have prevented these men from displaying the disloyalty which they did actually commit after their exploits on behalf of the dynasty.

4. Ts'ao Shuang (d. A.D. 249) and Ssu-ma I (A.D. 178-251) were joint regents for the Wei dynasty in the Three Kingdoms period. The former was executed by the latter after he had shown signs of rebellion - Ssu-ma I himself was said to have had similar intentions.

5. The last ruler of the Later Chou dynasty (Kung Ti) was a minor (see Section (i) n.27).

6. This hypothesis is in keeping with what seems to have been the basic pattern of events during the Five Dynasties period: the Emperors came under the domination of their generals, until the accession of a minor gave the most powerful general a chance to usurp the throne, only to set in motion the same circumstances; but the generals themselves were to a certain extent at the mercy of their loot-hungry troops.

7. See Shu-ching (L III pp. 357-361, 538-9, 573-4). Duke Chou was a celebrated early sage-figure, regent of the Chou dynasty (B.C. 1122-255) during the minority of his nephew King Ch'eng (r. B.C. 1115-1078). His brothers Hsien and Tu (entitled respectively Kuan-shu and Ts'ai-shu) because of jealousy spread a rumour that the Duke was disloyal; they were executed, and Heaven subsequently confirmed the truth with omens, according to the Shu.

Notes to Section (ii)

8. To "chase after the deer" is a common metaphor for seeking to take the throne. Ch'ai refers to the reigning House of Later Chou.

9. See Section (i).

10. chin-ping 禁兵 : cf. Section (i) n.31.

11. Contestants for power at the end of the Chin dynasty (A.D. 265-420). Liu Yü defeated Liu I, rising gradually to the position from which he founded the Liu Sung dynasty (A.D. 420-479).

12. Contestants for power at the end of the Liu Sung; Hsiao Tao-ch'eng emerged the victor and founded the S. Ch'i dynasty (A.D. 479-502).

13. This argument reveals, for a Chinese historian, an unusually sharp awareness of the principle that "circumstances alter cases". Rather than conclude that Han T'ung "was (or was not) ambitious by nature", Wang Fu-chih simply points out that Han T'ung was not in a position to be ambitious. In this section and others the author is at variance with the famous "praise and blame" approach to history (see Chapter Three).

14. fei-ch'ang 非常 : possibly "disloyal".

15. Precisely the same conclusion was reached by a later Chinese historian, Chao I (1727-1814): see Wang Gungwu, Feng Tao: An Essay on Confucian Loyalty, in Confucianism and Chinese Civilisation, ed. Wright (pp.188-210). Wang Fu-chih alludes here to an important part of the basis of the loyalty question. The writers who first made an issue of it were apologians of the Sung, concerned to justify the

Notes to Section (ii)

15. (Contd) Sung's position in the broadest possible terms. These included the claim of right: i.e. legitimate inheritance. But if the concept of legitimacy was to stand then it must be applied also to the foregoing period, hence five of the numerous dynastic claims were given historical sanction. It was in consequence of this that the Confucian ideal of loyalty became relevant in the minds of the historians. For Wang Fu-chih's opinion of the Five Dynasties period, see Section (vii), especially n. 19 and 21. It is obvious in the Section on Han T'ung that Wang is quite as much interested in the manner of the Sung's rise to power as he is in Han T'ung or the issue of loyalty per se.

16. These men had all served under a number of dynasties in the 10th century and lived on to serve the Sung, except in the case of Feng Tao who died in 954. The orthodox Neo-Confucian attitude to such behaviour is crystallised in Ssu-ma Kuang's reproach of Feng Tao, who "was Chief Minister to five dynasties and eight surnames, like an inn to many travellers" (Wang Gungwu, ibid.)

17. Again, "circumstances alter cases"; this time the differentiating factor is one of motive and psychology.

Notes to Section (iii)

1. sheng-te 盛德. As the phrase is found several times in I-ching, e.g. Great Appendix(I.5; II.11), and recurs fairly frequently in this text,I have used capital letters in translation.

2. 德之盛者，求諸己而已。

Cf. Analects(XV.20):

"What the superior man seeks, is in himself. What the mean man seeks, is in others". (Legge I p.164).

For what follows, cf. Analects(XV.14):

躬自厚而薄責於人，則遠怨。

"He who requires much from himself and little from others, will keep himself from being the object of resentment." (Legge I p.163).

3. The "Rectification of Names" ( ) was a famous Confucian doctrine according to which evils could be eliminated if names of things (such as "father" or "minister") were made to correspond with their reality, so that a clear standard of right and wrong would be set up. This idea was developed by Hsun Tzu. Taken to extremes it would acquire a Legalist flavour.

4. 涼德。

5. Shen Pu-hai (d. B.C. 337) and Han Fei (d. B.C. 233) were Legalist philosophers, the latter the most celebrated of the school. Since Legalist thought assumed human nature to be evil, good behaviour must be induced by the provision of a detailed and comprehensive code of laws, supplemented by plentiful rewards and punishments. Legalism was preoccupied with the externals of human behaviour. The Confucian ideal, on the other hand, insisted on the possibility and the necessity

5. (Contd) of reforming the inner being of a person through the moral influence of superior men. It is this idealistic position which Wang Fu-chih proceeds to develop, using terminology which bears a strong affinity to certain Taoist writings: cf. Lao Tzu, (LVII, LVIII et passim). But the spirit is not necessarily the same: whereas the Taoist sage would keep the people in ignorance, in a state of innocence precluding a recognised distinction between good and evil, the Confucian emphasis is more insistently moralistic. Even so, the possibility of a real admixture of Taoism in Wang's arguments must be admitted.

6. 己居厚。

7. 己居約。

8. i.e. Confucius.

9. Analects(II.3). The full passage reads:

"The Master said, 'If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame.

"'If they be led by virtue and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good.'" (Legge 1 p.10).

The "sense of shame" was one of the most precious possessions of a Confucian gentleman. It betokened his inner sense of right and wrong as opposed to the purely practical motives which induced the Legalist to conform to law.

10. Chih 治 generally implies good government, but to prevent cumbersome repetition in the translation of this oft-recurring word, I designate it simply "Government".

Notes to Section (iii)

11. King Wen was a sage-king and co-founder of the Chou dynasty.

12. Wang Fu-chih is possibly referring to Shu-ching (L.III p.383), if Legge's interpretation be preferred to Karlgren's (p.39). A slightly amended version of Legge would read:

"It was your greatly distinguished father, the King Wen, who was able to illustrate his virtue and be careful in the use of punishments. He did not dare to show any contempt to the widower and widows (1). He employed the employable (2), and revered the reverend (3); he was terrible to those who needed to be awed (4), and caused his Virtue to shine before the people (5)".

13. jen 仁 , variously rendered as benevolence, humanity, human-heartedness, altruism, virtue, goodness - and so on. A central concept in Confucius and Mencius, it was incorporated into the metaphysical structure of Neo-Confucian thought. It tends to denote not only kindness, but fellow-feeling, whence I translate it as "Humanity".

14. An echo of Chuang Tzu (Ch'i-wu lun)(Giles p.41).

15. i.e. in their treatment of the House of Ch'ai, scholars and peasantry.

Notes to Section (iii)

16. Wang Fu-chih is here giving an early indication of his attitude towards the great controversy which split the government in the 11th century and remained a very live issue in the memory of Confucians thereafter. The Ching-li reign-period of Emperor Jen Tsung lasted 1041-9; in 1043 Fan Chung-yen attempted to launch a comprehensive reform programme. The Hsi-ning reign-period of Emperor Shen Tsung lasted 1068-78; from 1069 to 1073 Wang An-shih embarked on a large-scale edition of Fau Chung-yen's programme. These reforms, affecting vested social and economic interests, were so radical that bitter and widespread opposition was aroused, until even those that had sympathised with the measures of reform agreed that Wang An-shih had erred in trying to force the issue. Appeal was made to the snug idea that people ought not to be reformed against their will: inward, moral adjustment must precede that in the outward sphere. In his disapproval of what Wang An-shih represented, Wang Fu-chih is to that extent aligning himself with conventional Neo-Confucian opinion.

17. The concept of "Simplicity" (<u>chien</u> 簡) is one to which Wang Fu-chih reverts in his final evaluation of Sung T'ai Tsu (see Section (xiv)). It demands very close attention by virtue of the place he gives it both explicitly in these sections and implicitly elsewhere; detailed examination of the idea belongs more appropriately, however, to Section (xiv), and also Chap. Three, to which the reader is referred.

Notes to Section (iv)

1. The Sung era marked a critical stage in the development of the role of scholars in the Empire. They were favoured as never before, being granted practically a monopoly of government, and enabled by this edict of T'ai Tsu's to exercise their remonstrative functions without fear of death: a privilege which they did not enjoy under the Ming.

2. (d. circa A.D. 1130). He was placed on the throne by the Chin Tartars in 1126, but replaced by the late Emperor's brother, who became the first emperor of the Southern Sung in 1127.

3. (A.D. 1046-1126). He went down to history as "Chief of the Six Traitors" for his harsh administration and financial mismanagement, aggravated by an aggressive foreign policy.

4. (d. A.D. 1276). Notorious for the ignominious peace he concluded with the Mongols but concealed from the Emperor, until a Mongol military victory lost him his rank in 1275.

5. The poor quality of literati in the early part of the Sung is attested by general history. See, for example, Li Chieh-pien 1961, pp.238-9.

6. Reigned A.D. 874-879.

7. Reigned A.D. 860-874.

8. Officials at the end of the T'ang dynasty.

9. Young scholars at the end of the T'ang. Ch'en T'uan lived on into the Sung era and paid his respects at court but refused employment.

10. These were officials under the T'ang who were disloyal at its close.

11. Compare the comment on "turncoat" ministers near the end of Section (ii). There Wang Fu-chih's attitude is not so openly condemnatory as here, where he allies himself more closely with the

11. (Contd) orthodox Neo-Confucian position. It is probable that, although he disengaged himself sufficiently to appreciate that loyalty to one dynasty was not a clearly-formed concept in the 10th century, yet he had no doubt of its ultimate validity: the behaviour of men like Feng Tao was a failure in enlightenment, though not deliberately criminal.

12. Achieved prominent positions in the Five Dynasties period; Ho Ning, for example, was Chief Minister under the Later Chin. Ho Ning and Han Hsi-tsai had a considerable reputation for scholarship.

13. This was the period of the "Hundred Schools" (from the 5th through the 3rd centuries B.C.), when philosophers of various persuasions courted and were courted by the Princes of an increasingly divided Empire. As the state of Ch'in, which had adopted the Legalist approach to government, grew more powerful, the other six major states - Chao, Wei, Han, Ch'i, Yen and Ch'u - tended to combine in an alliance against Ch'in, but were defeated between B.C. 318 and B.C. 221. Note the typically Confucian argument that political failure lies at the door of the scholars - a theme which was constantly in the minds of those scholars who witnessed the fall of the Ming.

14. The Ch'in dynasty (B.C. 221-206) was detested by later historians above all for its coercive methods of thought control, signalised by the "Burning of the Books" (the destruction of all books save those of a utilitarian or politically favourable nature) and the accompanying persecution of literati.

Notes to Section (iv)

15. Intense factionalism, caused partly by the ambitions of relatives of empresses, the increasing use of eunuchs by the emperor to oppose the imperial clansmen, and finally the banding together of the literati against the eunuchs, were the main features of court politics at the end of the Later Han dynasty (A.D. 25-220). The hint of a parallel to the close of the Ming is even stronger here.

16. Ts'ao Ts'ao (see Section (i) n.22) was one of the military generals into whose lap the Empire of the Later Han finally fell. Ts'ui Yen and Mao Chieh were two of the most outstanding officials whom he promoted in his efforts to purify and re-invigorate the government.

17. Ssu-ma Yen, a servant of the Wei dynasty set up by Ts'ao P'ei, founded the Chin dynasty in A.D. 265; the Ssu-ma line was perpetuated in the E. Chin dynasty (A.D. 317-420). The E. Chin court was luxurious but its government under the shadow of unruly generals; the intellectual mood of this post-Han period of unrest has been well captured in Balazs, 1964. Hsuan-hsueh (dark or abstruse learning) was the vogue, described by Fung Yu-lan as "Neo-Taoism". The libertarian spirit that was born of pessimism was epitomised in the club known as the Bamboo Grove, of whose "Seven Worthies" Wang Chieh was one. P'ei K'ai, however, cut a somewhat more respectable figure. Both served as officials under the Chin.

Wang Fu-chih tends to favour Ts'ao Ts'ao more than other Chinese historians do, apparently because of his determined effort to rid the government of pests like Tung Cho (see above, Section (i)).

Notes to Section (iv)

18. i.e. Scholars should be encouraged and influenced by the shining example of the ruler, rather than made the direct objects of a deliberate policy (either of neglect or interference). "Nurturing": yang 養. "Controlling": chih 治.

19. Shih-ching (L.IV p.445). Both Legge and Karlgren (p.191), however, give the 3rd line as 豈弟君子: "Easy and self-possessed was our prince", (Legge) or "Joyous and pleased is the lord", (Karlgren). Karlgren renders the 4th line as "is he not a man indeed!" The "King" is Wen of Chou.

The Ode seems to be in praise of effortless accomplishment. Compare the 20th century thinker Hsieh Yu-wei's allusion to the first two lines, which are quoted in Chung yung (XIII.3): "By respecting these [natural, moral and judicial] laws in my conduct I respect the nature of my authentic self. But to know one's nature and be true to it, is in all one's actions to imitate the bird that flies and the fish that swims - which is what the Chung Yung calls 'following Nature'. Now to follow nature is freedom; not to conform to it, is non-freedom". (Briere, 1956, pp.93, 102n.35.) Compare also the use of the "fish in the ocean" metaphor in Tao-te-ching (XXXVI) where the fish refers to the ruler and the ocean (the "deep") to his power.

20. Lao Tzu: Tao-te-ching (LXXIV). The point is that relentless oppression kills the desire to live.

21. The general sense of this paragraph is that all men have a "sense of shame", which especially in the scholar's case is sufficient guarantee of good behaviour.

22. Celebrated advisers of the Shang dynasty: see Shu-ching, passim.

Notes to Section (iv)

23. On "categories and laws" (ming-fa 名法). Cf. Section (iii) n.3. One of the ways by which a Legalist theory supposed a ruler to set up an impersonal standard of efficiency was by accurate definition of things (i.e. of the duties of office), after which performance could be tested according to its degree of correspondence with the "name".

24. The whole trend of this section is quite clearly anti-Legalist. Government is not an impersonal, coercive affair. Equally clear is the Confucian ideal of the ruler effortlessly influencing his subjects by the appeal of his own Virtue to their "sense of shame". The stress laid on "being natural" (like the hawk in the sky, or the fish in the ocean - said both of the ideal ruler and of T'ai Tsu's down-to-earth assistants) bears some affinity to Taoism, but not to Taoism run riot as in the years following the collapse of the Han.

Notes to Section (v)

1. I.e. it is not solely the ruler's Virtue to the exclusion of creditable performance on the part of others. But in the ultimate sense (as is shown by what follows, as well as by other passages in the book) the ruler's Virtue should ideally be responsible. In this section, however, Wang Fu-chih's object is to highlight still further the importance of the role of scholars in the Empire - a central theme of Confucian thought.

Notes to Section (v)

2. See Shu-ching (L.III p.292; cf. p.287).

The lines form part of "The Great Declaration" made by King Wu of Chou to his men on the eve of battle against the last sovereign of the Shang dynasty, Shou or, as history has it, Chou 紂 (descriptive of his cruel character). "Effectiveness" seems the best rendering of te 德 in view of an earlier passage (L.III p.287): 同力度德。同德度義 : "Where the strength (li 力) is the same, measure the te (power? effective virtue?) of the parties; where the te is the same, measure their righteousness (i 義)". Legge, while translating "virtue", recognises the difficulty of too close an approximation to "righteousness".

3. ta-ch'en 大臣 . The chief ministers of the executive.

4. shih-ju 師儒 . Local educational officials, whose duties included the teaching of the "Six Arts" (Rites, Music, Archery, Charioteering, Writing, Mathematics).

5. chang-li 長吏 . A general term for government officials, excluding the "petty officials" or under-clerks, who were chosen on a different basis from that of the rest of the bureaucracy.

6. The appointment of all officials (including under-clerks) was theoretically in the hands of the Emperor, but practical necessity dictated that the task should be shared by the Civil Service Department (in the case of intermediate officials) and by the individual departments (in the case of lower officials). The theory that officials should be not only able, but morally worthy, was, it need hardly be said, fundamental to Confucianism.

7. An apt metaphor for this Confucian concept of virtue spreading from the few to the many, from the top downwards. Let the Emperor be sure of the men he appoints to office, and he need have no fear of

7. (Contd) failing to attract all the good men of the Empire to his side.

8. Appointment upon recommendation was a common mode of selection; recommendations were made both by departments and by the immediate superior of the official concerned.

9. At last Wang Fu-chih is coming to the point. The question at issue is that of patronage and academic liaisons, which formed a highly controversial feature of the Chinese civil service system. Successful examination candidates felt beholden to their examiners, with whom they developed what was ostensibly a "teacher-pupil" relationship, but this and other literary associations could carry a political significance given the absence of any legitimate opportunity for political faction. Legalist and Confucianist opinion clashed sharply over the issue. Favouring complete centralisation and impersonal efficiency, the Legalist condemned the practice as politically subversive. See, for example, Han Fei Tzu (VI) (Watson, 1964, pp.22-24). For the Legalist, in any case, appointments should be made on the basis of law rather than by personal choice. But for the Confucian, government was very much a matter of human relationships; the real issue was not, as Ou-yang Hsiu pointed out (in his Essay on Factions) between parties and no parties, but between good parties and bad parties. Wang Fu-chih upholds the Confucian ideal, which is also in some senses a feudal ideal. To this extent, then, he is against centralisation. But in general, unlike most of his predecessors and contemporaries, he had no wish to see the bureaucratic system of government (the chün-hsien system introduced by the Ch'in) replaced by a revived feudal system.

Notes to Section (v)

10. Graduates of the metropolitan examination, which was the highest one qualifying for entrance to government service.

11. The equivalent of the chü-jen: a graduate of the provincial examination, which was the second of the state examinations; a pass in this constituted the minimum qualification for official appointment.

12. i.e. as for a father.

13. Cf. Han Fei Tzu (VI) (Watson, 1964, p.23)
"Categories and laws": ming-fa 名法. Sometimes used as a contraction for ming-chia fa-chia 名家 法家 (School of Names and School of Laws). Here used to refer to the methods of Legalist administration. Cf. Section (iv) n.23.

14. The historical instance of this par exemple is the Ch'in dynasty, which alone of the Chinese dynasties adopted an undiluted Legalist system.

15. From Chung Yung (XX.17); quoted in Mencius (IV.a.12).

16. The gibe with which this spirited attack on Legalism is concluded is only partially deserved. The bureaucrat in office might well find himself adopting Legalist techniques in the interests of sheer efficiency.

17. It is interesting that Wang Fu-chih should have upheld the value of such fraternisation, in view of his personal experiences. He had seen the part played by faction in the fall of the Ming, he had been personally warned by his father against attaching himself to a party and he had known two years of disastrous factional strife at the court of the Ming pretender. The remainder of his life was spent in relative isolation. (see Chap.I). Evidently his faith in human nature persisted undimmed.

Notes to Section (v)

18. 拔茅茹以其彙 . See I-ching, Hexagrams 11 and 12. The 11th Hexagram is the relevant one. It is T'ai 泰 (Peace), denoting social harmony in the human context. Wilhelm (p.49) translates: "When ribbon grass is pulled up, the sod comes with it. Each according to his kind." He comments, "In times of prosperity every able man called to fill an office draws like-minded people along with him, just as in pulling up ribbon grass one always pulls up a bunch of it, because the stalks are connected by their roots." Slightly different is Cheng K'ang-ch'eng's comment (quoted in Yao P'ei-chung's edition): "The ribbon grass is a metaphor for the ruler having pure white Virtue, and from his ministers on down drawing up men of his own kind and giving them office ..."

Note that the text of this same Hexagram warns against factionalism but sanctions the spontaneous association of like-minded people (Wilhelm, pp.49-50).

19. i.e. in position of closest intimacy and trust.

20. The organic unity of human affairs could not be stated more clearly. Here is the crux of the most characteristically Chinese thinking (such as is contained in I-ching): every part of the universe is related to all other parts, and each part is most truly in conformity with the whole when it is most truly faithful to its own nature. Order is induced by mutual influence, and not by artificially imposed laws.

21. This was in 973, the first palace examination to take place.

22. i.e. The ruler cannot personally control every part of government, whether by fair means or foul.

Notes to Section (vi)

1. Cited from the Sung-shih, which records further allusions made by T'ai Tsu to his trust in destiny: e.g. "The rise of emperors is naturally governed by Heaven's Mandate" (帝王之興自有天命).

2. 5th century A.D. Son of Wu Ti, founder of the Liu Sung dynasty (420-479).

3. Compare Section (iii) above, where Wang Fu-chih contrasts "Abundant Virtue" and "meagre Virtue". See also n.6 below. For fuller historical treatment of this subject, see Section (xiv) below.

4. 有涯 . Normally this expression implies limitation (cf. Chuang Tzu (Yang sheng-chu): 吾生也有涯 "My life has a limit"), but the context here seems to demand that ya 涯 be taken in a more positive sense (cf. Tz'u-hai, 2nd meaning: 方也。).

5. 溢美溢惡 : from Chuang Tzu (Jen chien shih).

6. On the necessity of the ruler gaining an unbiassed view of facts by consulting a wide variety of opinion, cf. Mencius (I.b.7) where the ruler is warned that he should make official appointments and execute criminals not on the advice of his courtiers only, or even his courtiers and ministers, but on the advice of the whole kingdom, subject to his own approval.

   For a somewhat similar analysis of the ruler's problem of keeping his finger on the pulse of national affairs see Han Fei Tzu (VI) (Watson pp. 26-8), where, however, the solution proposed (i.e. the absolute rule of law) is radically different from the one Wang Fu-chih goes on to propound.

Notes to Section (vi)

7. The doctrine that the employment of good men at the top of the official hierarchy would ensure good government all down the line was of long ancestry in the Confucian tradition: see, for example, the Analects (XII.22), the relevant section of which is translated by Legge (Vol.I, p.125) as follows:

"Shun, being in possession of the kingdom, selected from among all the people, and employed Kao-yao, on which all who were devoid of virtue disappeared. T'ang, being in possession of the kingdom, selected from among all the people, and employed I Yin, and all who were devoid of virtue disappeared."

This aspect of Confucian theory was of a piece with the general conception of a moral hierarchy in which reform was always from above, moral worth and political power being united in equal proportions. Wang Fu-chih's version of the theory is a particularly elevated one: all is to depend upon about three men, who in their turn owe their position to the sole exercise of the ruler's enlightened intelligence (聰、明) (see above). Compare Section (v) above for the general hierarchical conception.

8. 服其容光之照 . The allusion is to a passage in Mencius (VII.a.24), the usual interpretation of which is reflected in my translation (above): Legge (Vol.II, p.339) accordingly renders the passage 日月有明。容光必照焉. as "The sun and moon being possessed of brilliancy, their light admitted even through an orifice illuminates" (i.e. knowledge is to be acquired in stages, leading from the elementary to the advanced). Dobson (6.74) however includes the previous sentence in his translation, which runs very plausibly as "There is an art in

8. (Contd) looking at water. One must look at the ripples of the waves. If the sun or the moon is shining, their form and light are reflected in them". Either view would fit the passage in our text. The former emphasises the hierarchical nature of the political structure; the latter merely indicates the polarity of "above and below", but contains the additional allusion to water, a typical metaphor for "the people".

9. Common designation of the Emperor. The Tzu-yuan Dictionary shows the full meaning to be "Eldest Son of Heaven", since all are Heaven's children. The phrase is a constant reminder that the political function was inseparable from its ethical and metaphysical roots.

10. 垂旒紘廣. Alluding to a famous classical metaphor for the effortless government of the sage-ruler. Cf. Shu-ching (L.III p.316): 垂拱而天下治。"He (i.e. Emperor Wu) let fall [his robes] and folded [his hands] and the empire was governed". Also cf. I-ching, Great Appendix (II.2): "The Yellow Emperor, Yao and Shun allowed the upper and lower garments to hang down, and the world was in order". (Wilhelm p.332).

11. See Shih-ching (L IV p.501): 先民有言.詢于芻蕘。 "The ancients had a saying:- "Consult the grass and firewood gatherers." See also Shu-ching (L.III pp.163-5): 工執藝事以諫...瞽奏鼓. "Ye workmen engaged in mechanical affairs, remonstrate on the subject of your business." .....[Describing the evil results of certain ministers' neglect of their calendrical duties] "The blind musicians beat their drums ..."

12. chün-tao 君道.

Notes to Section (vi)

13. General Note. - A strong similarity exists between this conception of rulership and that found in certain representative writings of the Han dynasty. De Bary (1960, pp.173-5) prints extracts from two of these (the Huai-nan Tzu, a syncretist, largely Taoist, work, and the Ch'un-ch'iu fan-lu by the Confucian apologian of the Han, Tung Chung-shu) under the heading "The Quietude of the Ruler and the Delegation of Power". The basic idea in all the passages is that the ruler's sole function is to choose ministers on whom he is thereafter entirely dependent for information and administration. This limitation of autocracy is shrouded in allusions to the mystical grandeur of the imperial position. The whole conception was obviously to the advantage of the scholar-official class, and it is not surprising that it should be restated after the period of Ming autocracy, when dissenting scholarly opinion was consistently and severely quashed. It must not be assumed, however, that the ruler's possession of a "transforming te (Virtue)" was merely a polite fiction on the lips of Wang Fu-chih: his ideal ruler was more than a figurehead - and necessarily so in the case of the Sung Founder, who was singularly lacking in effective ministers (see Section (iv)).

Notes to Section (vii)

1. 晉 (A.D. 265-420)

2. A.D. 207-267. Son of Lui Pei who founded the Shu Han Dynasty, which fell with Liu Ch'an in 263. The Shu Han was one of the dynasties of the Three Kingdoms Period, and occupied modern Szechwan.

3. A.D. 242-283. Last Emperor of Wu (in S.E. China), one of the dynasties of the Three Kingdoms Period. Like Liu Ch'an, after his dynasty had fallen (in 280) he lived out the remainder of his life in Loyang.

4. i.e. Liu Pei, the army commander who founded the Shu Han in A.D. 221, immediately after the ending of the Later Han and the rise of the Wei dynasty in 220. He founded his claim to legitimacy on a somewhat dubious descent from an older generation of the Han imperial family. The early years of Shu Han were indeed promising, as policy was in the hands of the able Chu-ko Liang.

5. i.e. Sun Chien, father of Sun Ch'üan who founded the Wu dynasty.

6. A disloyal general under the Later Han; it was he who had Loyang burned. He was defeated in battle by Sun Chien in A.D. 191.

7. The founder of Wu was succeeded in turn by two sons and a grandson.

8. Wu, being a relatively weak state in terms of natural resources, relied on diplomacy insofar as it played any part in inter-state rivalry; it concentrated on building up its internal strength. The period of peace outlasted the Wu dynasty as the Chin reunited the Empire and ordered demobilisation, which was of more effect in the South of China than in the North.

9. Founder of the Chin dynasty.

10. Last rulers of three of the ten southern kingdoms in the Five Dynasties Period (907-960). Li Yü (d. A.D. 978) ruled the S. T'ang (937-975), Meng Ch'ang (10th century A.D.) the Later Shu (935-963), and Liu Ch'ang (10th century A.D.) the S. Han (915-971)

Notes to Section (vii)

11. The allusion is to Chuang-tzu (Ch'i-wu lun); the translation of p'eng-ai chih chien is Giles'.

12. Matsui concurs in what seems the most likely gloss on the allusion to the "white horse", a noted feature of the expeditions of Kung-sun Tsan, a general under the Later Han, against frontier tribes.

13. This verdict on the southern kingdoms is of a piece with traditional historiography, in its blithe disregard of historical facts. The phrase from Chuang Tzu seems an unfair epitaph on an area which in absolute terms, and especially in comparison with the north, had made considerable progress in terms of peace and order, economic prosperity and cultural achievement. Szechwan, for example, was easily the best-off state economically. But militarily - and to Wang Fu-chih this is a critical factor - the south was not robust: hence the reference to the "white horse".

14. Lit. Shu, Yueh and Kiangsu 蜀粤江左. Shu, of course, refers to the Later Shu, Yueh, to the southern coastal strip occupied by the S. Han, and Kiangsu to the S. Tang.

15. 奉正朔於汴雒(Pienliang (i.e. K'aifeng) and Loyang, capitals of the Five Dynasties). 正朔, literally "1st day of the 1st (lunar) month", means also "correct beginning", alluding to the practice whereby each new dynasty calculated afresh the date for the beginning of the year.

16. In A.D. 907.

17. Founders of the Five Dynasties of the north which covered the period between 907 and 960, and which were recognised as legitimate by traditional historiography.

17. (Contd) Chu Wen (854-914) founded the Later Liang (907-923) Li Ts'un-hsu (d. A.D. 925) founded the Later T'ang (923-936) Shih Ching-t'ang (A.D. 892-942) founded the Later Chin (936-946) Liu Chih-yuan (d. A.D. 948) founded the Later Han (947-950) Kuo Wei (A.D. 901-953) founded the later Chou (951-960).

18. Not an unfair estimate, allowing for the period of greater expansion between the Later T'ang and Later Liang. The area north of the Yellow River was for the greater length of time beyond the control of the "northern" dynasties, and the Yangtze formed a permanent barrier to the south.

19. "Legitimacy": cheng-t'ung 正統, literally "true line of succession". According to this theory each Chinese dynasty not only reigned by virtue of the specially conferred Mandate of Heaven, but by virtue of its inherent right to a place in the unbreakable succession of dynasties. This right was partly a matter of descent (the founder of a new dynasty had to furnish a genealogy dating back to an earlier ruler) and partly a metaphysical affair, depending on correlation with the supposed cyclical changes of the universe. Since the line of succession was unbreakable (t'ung 統 speaks of unity) at any time in Chinese history there must be one, and only one, legitimate dynasty. The idea of legitimacy dates from the Han period, developing in the philosophical writings of Tung Chung-shu and others, in Pan Piao's justification of the Han founder's accession, and in the propaganda of the Ts'ao and Ssu-ma families who in turn usurped the throne after Han. The early Neo-Confucians Chu Hsi and Ssu-ma Kuang set their seal to it. (For further details, see pp. 84 - 90). Wang Fu-chih's offhand disposal of the

19. (Contd) question is a marked contrast to the traditional treatment of the 10th century dynasts. Like Wang Fu-chih, other Chinese historians had little good to say of the short-lived Five Dynasties; they centred their attention on the problem of working out the true line of succession. True to his basic denial of the validity of such a concept (see Tu T'ung-chien lun (hsu-lun i) discussed elsewhere), Wang Fu-chih concentrates on the realities of the historical situation as it appears to him.

His contempt for the northern dynasties is even more sweeping than that of his predecessors: he baldly states that during the whole period under survey "the Empire had no ruler". Undoubtedly his rigid belief that no barbarian is fit to rule helps to determine this departure from orthodox opinion. The mere attitude of disapproval, however, is not itself original. It has taken a much later generation of historians to uncover anything that was good or important in the period (Examples are Naitō Torajirō and Wang Gungwu).

20. Associated with the founding of the three southern kingdoms already mentioned. Hsu Wen (d. 10th century A.D.) was adoptive father of Hsu Chih-kao who founded the S. T'ang. Meng Chih-hsiang (d. A.D. 935) founded the Later Shu. Liu Yen (d. A.D. 942) founded the S. Han.

21. This favourable comparison of the south with the north is a startlingly unusual one, even although its value as an index to the basic quality of Wang Fu-chih's thinking is compromised by the presence of the "barbarian factor", since any regime controlled by a non-Chinese leader was ipso facto the object of his disapproval. But the originality of his conclusions is due in

21. (Contd) part to an undeniable historical realism which (in the case of the northern dynasties) emerges even more clearly in the section of Tu T'ung-chien lun dealing with the Five Dynasties period. In 28.2b he goes so far as to suggest that Ch'in itself had more right to recognition as a dynasty than any of the so-called Five Dynasties. In his treatment of the southern kingdoms Wang Fu-chih seems to have grasped the important principle that revolutions and rebellions are not always the deliberate, planned creation of the men involved, and that the need to fill a political vacuum can be as potent a cause of insubordination as the rampant political ambitions exhibited by such as Chu Wen, etc.

22. i.e. unlike the southern kingdoms, nearly all of which surrendered fairly quickly to the Sung founder.

23. Lit. 王者之誅 "punishment such as kings inflict." Cf. Shu-ching (L.III p.166), where excessive negligence on the part of officials is deemed worthy of "the death appointed by the former kings" (先王之誅), which is "without mercy".

24. The classification of so-called rulers according to behaviour and motive, and not according to any such theoretical criterion as "legitimacy" (for less supernatural omens) distinguishes Wang Fu-chih as a more sensitive psychologist than most Chinese historians permitted themselves to be. Compare Tu T'ung-chien lun(28.1b), where the true ruler (chun 君) is one who can actually rule, or who, if circumstances prevent the operation of the "way of the ruler", has at least his resolve fixed on this goal. In a sense Wang Fu-chih, while breaking away from tradition, is simply returning to the basic position of Confucius and Mencius, for whom terms like the "chün-tzu" and "wang" were not merely titular, but representative of a moral ideal.

Notes to Section (vii)

25. (B.C. 233-202). The main rival to Liu Chi (Emperor Kao Tsu, founder of the Han dynasty).

26. B.C. 33 - A.D. 23. He dethroned the infant sovereign of the Former Han dynasty, and made an attempt to found a dynasty which lasted from A.D. 9 to 23 and was replaced by the Later Han (A.D. 25). He was invariably classed as a usurper by the historical sources.

27. Liu was the family name of the ruling house of Han. On the outbreak of a popular rising against Wang Mang in A.D. 18, various members of the Liu family formed rival factions with the aim of reviving the fortunes of their house; one of these, Liu Hsiu, was the founder of the Later Han dynasty.

28. Military leaders, one of them (Kung-sun Shu) a self-titled "emperor", who refused to accept the domination of Kuang Wu Ti, the new emperor of the revived Han dynasty.

29. Yang Ti of the Sui, who reigned A.D. 605-616, is one of the most execrated characters of Chinese history.

30. Rebels at the close of the Sui dynasty. Their conduct does not seem to have been quite so reprehensible as Wang Fu-chih asserts. Tou Chien-te, for example, established a regular government over a large area of the north and ruled comparatively mildly; Hsiao Hsien yielded his capital to the T'ang out of consideration for the inhabitants.

31. These generals flourished in the period of disorder at the end of the Sui dynasty (i.e. early 7th century A.D.). Liu Wu-chou was not brought to terms until the second T'ang emperor ascended the throne. Liang Shih-tu set himself up as King of Liang, but, like the others, fell before the new T'ang dynasty. Hsueh Jen-k'ang was noted for his cruelty.

Notes to Section (vii)

32. Western frontier tribes.

33. Wang Shih-ch'ung (d.A.D. 621) received military appointments under the first two emperors of the Sui, whose favour he obtained by a mixture of cunning (it is alleged) and military prowess. He compelled the last of the Sui rulers, Kung Ti, to abdicate, had him assassinated, and set himself up in his place until he was elbowed out by the forces of the T'ang.

34. Ch'iu-min 丘民 : literally "peasantry".

35. Lit. Kao-chieh 豪街.

36. See above, n.14. Kiangnan was the name of the S. T'ang state from 971 until its submission to the Sung in 975.

37. 王者. The term is used with all its Confucian force, implying an ideal as well as a de facto ruler.

38. See n.20 above.

39. Pi Shih-to and Ch'in Tsung-ch'üan were two of the rebels at the end of the T'ang dynasty; Yang Hsing-mi was the governor of Huainan. He would have subsequently declared independence himself but died in 905, whereupon his son carried out this move. Hsu Wen continued to serve the family; his adopted son Hsu Chih-kao took over the imperium in 936.

40. Liu Yen (see n.20) originally called his "empire" "Ta Yueh" 大越 (Great Yueh) after its geographic location. It is interesting that Wang Fu-chih ignores Liu Yen's repeated preparations for an invasion of the State of Min (Fukien) in 922 and 924; in the latter case he was stopped by actual military defeat. Presumably Min is considered too small, or its rulers too corrupt, for it to carry weight in this kind of historical argument.

Notes to Section (vii)

41. Meng Chih-hsiang, governor of Szechwan under the Later T'ang dynasty, had thrown off his allegiance in 934, two years before the fall of the dynasty. The new dynasty, that of the Later Chin, was in reality set up by the Khitan, who accepted the bribes of the "sixteen northern prefectures" and an annual tribute in return for enthroning Shih Ching-t'ang. As soon as the latter ceased tribute, the Khitan destroyed his dynasty (946) and asserted the claims of their own Liao dynasty, which was however thrust back to the north; meanwhile yet another military general - Liu Chih-yuan - claimed the throne, founding the Later Han in 947; the Later Chou (last of the Five Dynasties) was founded in exactly the same way four years later.

The Chienko Pass led northwards from Szechwan into Shensi.

42. 仁有不可施.義有不可襲 ("receive", hence "cause to receive").

43. In other words, the Sung founder's was true generosity because it did not err on the side of either of two extremes: the southern princes got more than they deserved, but they were not such thoroughly bad types that they must of necessity be exterminated.

It will be noticed that although the ostensible theme of the whole section is the generosity of Sung T'ai Tsu, the real substance is concerned with the historical status of the main figures in the Five Dynasties period. Perhaps what emerges most clearly is the author's substitution of imaginative, realistic and critical historical judgment for the doctrinaire classifications of traditional historians.

Notes to Section (viii)

1. This phrase is borrowed (in inverted form) from the Analects (V.4):
"Some one said, 'Yung is truly virtuous, but he is not ready with his tongue'.
The Master said, 'What is the good of being ready with the tongue? They who encounter men with smartnesses of speech for the most part procure themselves hatred. I know not whether he be truly virtuous, but why should he show readiness of the tongue?'".
(L.I p.38).

2. A distinguished general under T'ai Tsu and his successor T'ai Tsung.

3. The province of Yuchou 幽州 comprised nine of the sixteen border prefectures given to the Khitan in 936 by Shih Ching-t'ang, founder of the Later Chin, in return for their support. Peking, which the Khitan Liao dynasty used as their capital, was situated in Yuchou. It had historically been a troublesome area, difficult for the central government to control, and after it passed into the hands of the Khitan it remained lost to the Chinese throughout the Sung dynasty. T'ai Tsu's reign was critical for Chinese military and political history. Instead of proceeding against the north he concentrated on subduing the southern states. Whether he might not have won back the north also is a debatable question (and one discussed at length by Wang Fu-chih in this passage); by his successor's reign, however, when the attempt was actually made to take Yuchou it failed disastrously despite the valour of Ts'ao Han (986).

Notes to Section (viii)

4. (A.D. 916-992). Famous counsellor of Sung T'ai Tsu and his successor. His position was founded largely on an intimacy with the Founder developed before the latter's accession. During his life he incurred unpopularity for his share in drastic reform-measures; he has since been censured for his policy towards the north, his part in the matter of the imperial succession (see Section (xiii), and ridiculed for his narrow-minded, secretive disposition and the poverty of his learning, which apparently stopped at the Lun-yü (Analects). (See Li Chieh-pien, 1961, pp.36-7, 41.)

5. i.e. after fruitless discussion - which he should have avoided.

6. Two adjacent prefectures respectively about 70 and 100 miles S. of Yuchou, and within the Chinese frontier.

7. Denoting the S.W. corner of Hopei.

8. i.e. the area of Yench'ing (modern Peking), the Liao capital.

9. This whole argument seems entirely reasonable.

10. Consort of Emperor Kao Tsu, founder of the Han (r. B.C. 206-194). The Empress Lü played a prominent part in the politics of the early Han.

11. "Chief ministers": 安社稷臣, literally "ministers who bring peace to the altars of the spirits of the land and grain". One of the classes of minister mentioned in Mencius (VII a.19), translated by Legge (Vol.II p.334) as "ministers who seek the tranquillity of the state". In the Analects (XVI.1) the phrase 社稷之臣 is rendered (L.I p.171) as "a minister in direct connection with the sovereign".

Notes to Section (viii)

12. Li was one of the central Confucian concepts, whose rendering presents such problems that it is sometimes best left untranslated. Often rendered "ceremonial, ritual, etiquette, propriety etc." it in fact connotes a more deeply felt mode of behaviour than these English words suggest. It refers to the manner in which correct feelings are correctly expressed throughout the whole range of social and religious experience. It was the Confucian answer to the Legalist fa 法 (laws), reflecting the basic difference in approach to human nature (see Needham II, 1956, pp.544-6, 578-9). The recipe provided by Wang Fu-chih for future success is a classic Confucian one, savouring of passages such as Mencius (I.a.5) where the exercise of Humanity (jen 仁) is supposed to enable the ruler to get the better of his enemies.

13. i.e. his arguments were nullified by their own internal inconsistency.

14. Not, perhaps, without reason. The critical weakness of the central government since the end of the T'ang had been linked with the power of the military generals: those placed as governors over northern provinces were traditionally unruly. The usual way in which a dynasty was founded in the Five Dynasties period (907-960) was usurpation of the throne by one of these generals; the Sung founder himself was no exception. This was the historical basis of the Sung dynasty's policy in abolishing regional military power and taking a generally soft line on military affairs.

15. i.e. A.D. 742-755.

Notes to Section (viii)

16. Fanyang (the T'ang name for Yuchou) was under the governorship of An Lu-shan (A.D.? - 757), one of the most famous of Chinese rebels. He revolted in 755 and declared himself Emperor the following year. The T'ang never really recovered from the blow it received at this time.

17. Pinglu was east of Yuchou.

18. The point must be that although Chao P'u admitted to the Emperor his suspicion of Ts'ao Han in particular, he would not admit to similar distrust of all the generals. According to Sung-shih chi-shih pen-mo (2) he did strongly advise T'ai Tsu to dissolve the military power of the provinces, and when the Emperor replied that he had no fear of rebellion from generals such as Shih Shou-hsin, Chao P'u assented but pointed out that they might be forced into this situation by their subordinates. It was a convincing enough argument, historically speaking, and it was apparently responsible for persuading T'ai Tsu to disband the regional armies.

19. Lu Wan and Ch'en Hsi figured at the beginning of the Former Han dynasty (B.C. 206-A.D.25), P'eng Lung and Lu Fang at the beginning of the Later Han (A.D. 25-220).

20. Liu Jen-kung and his more infamous son Liu Shou-kuang were two of the rebels at the end of the T'ang dynasty. They threw in their lot with Chu Wen, founder of the Later Liang, but subsequently Shou-kuang proclaimed himself Emperor of the Great Yen State. Both were put to death by an emissary of the Later T'ang in A.D. 912.

Notes to Section (viii)

21. An original and not strictly accurate opinion. True, regional separatism was only one of a whole complex of factors involved in the decline of a dynasty - such as financial and administrative weakness, factionalism and so on; also, rebellions occurring while the dynasty was young and strong (such as those mentioned for the Han dynasties) were not serious. But given initial dynastic insecurity, such a rebellion could have more far-reaching results. From the time of An Lu-shan's revolt, for example, the northern provinces slipped increasingly beyond the government's control, until the throne was finally usurped by a northern general, Chu Wen. Nevertheless, it might fairly be argued in favour of Wang Fu-chih's thesis that such an event was only the finishing stroke to a dynasty that was already collapsing of itself, and indeed that the collapse was not obviously effective for well over a century. But Pulleyblank 1955, pp.v, 1 treats the rebellion as critical.

22. For Chu Wen and Li Ts'un-hsu, see Section (vii) above. For Liu Shou-kuang, see n.20 above. The point is that the barbarian could make no inroad until the border generals turned against one another.

23. i.e. K'aifeng (situated in Honan province).

24. An impressive argument for the decentralisation of military authority in contrast to the settled policy of the Sung and Ming dynasties. In refusing to admit that the downfall of the T'ang was related to the undue strength of the provinces Wang Fu-chih aligns himself with the characteristic trend of thought in the early Ch'ing. Ku Yen-wu and Huang Tsung-hsi argued similarly. The effect of the Manchu invasion on their thinking is clear.

Notes to Section (viii)

25. i.e. the general fear which Chao P'u dared only couch in particular terms (against Ts'ao Han) communicated itself indirectly to others. Cf. n.18. Naturally it was impossible for any Confucian gentleman to suggest that it was on principle difficult to ensure loyalty amongst the Emperor's servants.

26. An allusion to an expression in the Tso-chuan (Hsuan's 宣 15th Year) signifying inability to carry out an enterprise: "However long the whip, one cannot reach the horse's stomach" (雖 鞭 之 長 不 及 馬 腹).

27. Lack of candour between ruler and minister is a question to which Wang Fu-chih reverts, e.g. Sung lun (6. 4b foll.), where he discusses the ministers' inability to perceive Shen Tsung's desire to prepare for war. More generally, secretiveness was out of harmony with the values upheld by Wang Fu-chih, such as sincerity, simplicity, singleness of heart (see Section (xiv)).

28. About 40 miles N.W. of K'aifeng.

29. A military general under Ch'ai Jung (2nd emperor of Later Chou, r. 954-959).

30. Ts'ao Pin (A.D. 93-999) and P'an Mei (A.D. 921-987) were celebrated generals who played a leading part in the consolidation of the Empire in the decades following Chao Kuang-yin's accession.

31. kung-ch'en 功 臣 . Commonly used of an official who has performed valuable military service for the State. Cf. "meritorious statesmen" (Section (viii)).

32. See n.11 above.

Notes to Section (viii)

33. Of which he himself was, of course, a member. Note the emphasis: the policy of Chao P'u and the Sung was harnessed to dynastic rather than national interests; to Wang Fu-chih, unlike many historians, dynastic overthrow was a small matter in comparison with barbarian conquest.

34. The separation of the civil and military functions was formally instituted in the Sung.

35. Cf. Section (xiii). After the accession of T'ai Tsung (T'ai Tsu's brother) Chao P'u poisoned the Emperor's mind against Chao T'ing-mei (a younger brother), Chao Te-chao and Chao Te-fang (T'ai Tsu's sons), with the result that T'ing-mei and Te-chao (both in the line of succession to the throne in accordance with T'ai Tsu's express will as witnessed by Chao P'u) committed suicide. See Sung-shih chi-shih pen-mo (10). Chao P'u was driven to this extreme by the danger of being left out of T'ai Tsung's counsels.

36. Founder of the Later Han dynasty, and Wang Fu-chih's favourite ruler (see e.g. Section (xiv)).

37. Celebrated examples of "good ministers" who combined a high standard of military ability with their other virtues.

38. Tou I and Lu Yü-ch'ing, two of T'ai Tsu's most respected officials, appear to have spoken for Chao P'u when everyone else vied to topple him after he had disobeyed the Emperor.

39. See Section (vii) n.25.

40. He set himself up as Emperor of Shu in A.D. 25. See Section (vii) n.28.

41. See Section (vii) n.30.

Notes to Section (viii)

42. He set himself up as Emperor at the end of the Sui; his son was defeated by the T'ang armies.

43. The main events of the war against the Khitan were these: in 979 Emperor T'ai Tsung was defeated in battle, but the following year saw some recovery. In 986, however, the Chinese were decisively defeated, although it was not until 1004 that they formally submitted to the loss of the northern prefectures.

44. The Han founder was besieged for a week in this mountain (in Shansi) while attacking Mao-tun of the Hsiung-nu Turks.

45. Wu Ti the Warrior-Emperor of the Han, reigned B.C. 140-86; the dynasty in many ways reached its peak under him.

46. "The area S. of the Great Desert" i.e. Inner Mongolia - home of the Hsiung-nu.

47. Kao Tsu's son, Li Shih-min, warded off an attack from the Turks by signing a treaty in 624.

48. i.e. Li Shih-min, who succeeded his father on the throne. Like Wu Ti of the Han, T'ong T'ai Tsung achieved outstanding fame. In his reign the Turks were decisively defeated (630).

49. Kou Chien came to the throne of Yueh in B.C. 496, and conquered Wu only after an initial attempt and failure. For 生聚之。教訓之。卒以沼吳 see Tso-chuan (Ai's 哀 1st Year).

50. Counsellors of long-standing.

51. The classic Confucian position. Note that Wang Fu-chih does not undervalue military strength; he merely puts a very high value on morale.

Notes to Section (viii)

52. Ti Ch'ing (d. A.D. 1057) and Wang Te-yung (A.D. 979-1058) were outstanding military officials. The former distinguished himself in repeatedly suppressing rebellion; the latter fought against the Khitan, and also achieved high office in government. Both were scholars.

53. Ch'in Kuei (A.D. 1090-1155) was notorious for his cession of the northern half of China to the Chin 金 Tartars and his treatment of the general Yueh Fei. He intervened in the latter's victorious campaign in Honan and subsequently murdered him (1141). "Shied from war" - lit. 叩馬 "reined in their horses" - an allusion, presumably, to the incident related in Shih-chi (Biography of Po I), according to which "Po I and Shu Ch'i reined in their horses and remonstrated, 'To take up arms even while our father remains unburied would be most unfilial conduct.'"

Notes to Section (ix)

1. The Li-chi (Record of Rites) was one of the Confucian Classics, compiled 2nd century B.C. out of earlier materials. The whole of the section which follows is steeped in this Classic, particularly in the chapters Li yun and Li ch'i (see below). For li 禮 , see Section (viii) n.12. Nowhere is Wang Fu-chih's Confucianism shown more strongly than in his preoccupation with this question, which receives further treatment in Section (xii). The main sources for the material

Notes to Section (ix)

1. (Contd) in Section (ix) are the Li yun 禮運 and Li ch'i 禮器 chapters of Li-chi (i.e. "The Development of Rites" and "Rites in the Formation of Character" - the latter is Legge's translation, in Müller, 1885). Both chapters contain a noticeable admixture of Taoism (See Legge, ibid).

2. 禮從其朔 . Cf. Li-chi (Li yun); 皆從其朔 (speaking of various practices initiated by the sages of old). Shuo 朔 simply means "beginning". The principle of reverence for the past is deeply rooted in Confucianism.

3. kuei-shen 鬼神 . The rendering "spirits" may be justified in that this section deals entirely with sacrificial customs, but it should be borne in mind that the term was used in Neo-Confucian philosophy to signify "positive and negative spiritual forces behind events"; in Chang Tsai's words, "The negative spirit (kuei) and positive spirit (shen) are the spontaneous activity of the two material forces (yin and yang)." (Wing-tsit Chan, 1963, pp. 789-790).

4. 禮時為大: quoted from Li-chi (Li ch'i). The concept of shih 時 (the times, seasonableness) vital in Wang Fu-chih's thought. Although it can be traced to the early Confucian classics, and especially to the more syncretic texts such as I-ching, Wang Fu-chih's stress on it is rather exceptional. Later Neo-Confucians, however, took up the thought of adaptation to the present as opposed to blind adherence to the past: an 18th century example was Chang Hsüeh-ch'eng (see Nivison, 1966, pp. 165-8). In the Li ch'i passage, the illustration of the statement quoted is the legendary cession of the throne by Yao to Shun and Shun to Yü, and the overthrow of the Hsia and Shang dynasties.

Notes to Section (ix)

5. i.e. development from the simple to the complex. For the "three wines" see Chou-li (V).

6. Simplicity: chih 質 . I have taken the risk of using the same translation for chih as is used for another concept in Section (xiv). There need be no confusion between the two as this rendering is adopted for chih only when it occurs in conjunction with wen 文 (Refinement); note also that "Simplicity" in the two cases does not have precisely the same meaning. In the chih-wen contrast, chih refers to the basic substance of a thing, and wen to its outer form or adornment. Cf. Analects (VI.16): "Where the solid qualities (質) are in excess of accomplishments (文), we have rusticity; where the accomplishments are in excess of the solid qualities, we have the manners of a clerk. When the accomplishments and solid qualities are equally blended, we then have the man of virtue". (LI p.54). The terms were used by the Han Confucianist Tung Chung-shu to describe alternating tendencies in successive dynasties. Cf. also the use of pen 本 (root, origin) and wen 文 in Li-chi (Li ch'i). Wang Fu-chih's description of their role seems at first sight self-contradictory, but in fact he is highlighting the subtle interfusion of values. Simplicity and Refinement appear together in both conservation and change, since both conservation and change can arise from dual motives. "Love": ai 愛 - contrasted with Reverence (ching 敬), which includes the sense of "care, attentiveness".

7. fruit and meat: lit. "bamboo and wooden (baskets for offering these foods in sacrifice)".

Notes to Section (ix)

8. Cf. Analects (III.9, 14), where Confucius upholds the practices of Chou in view of the lack of evidence for those of the former two dynasties, and also in view of the fact that Chou was in a position to choose the best of the ancient customs.

9. i.e. in a period intermediate between ancient and modern times.

10. Lit. "things heard and seen".

11. The meaning of this is that the Emperor did good spontaneously from the proper feelings, and not by conscious, slavish adherence to the goals of conservatism or seasonableness. The point may seem rather a subtle one, but it is embedded in Chinese thought. In Mencius, introspection is compared to the well-meant interference of the farmer who thinks to advance his crops by pulling them up by the roots. The notion of spontaneity is basic also in I-ching: see especially the material around Hexagram 25 quoted below in Section (xiv) n.36.

12. Cf. I-ching, Great Appendix (II.5) (Sung pp. 316-17).

13. i.e. people gave differently according to their social status.

14. "Sacrifices" (chi 祭) were more imposing than "offerings" (chien 薦), in which no animal was involved.

Notes to Section (ix)

15. The "corpse" was an impersonator of the dead person to whom sacrifice was offered.

16. Because "their essence is ... a matter of Timeliness" (see text, above).

17. In particular, he had not grasped the fact that he was further destroying the balance already tilted against the use of ancient practices.

18. The Mean (chung 中) - which is what Wang Fu-chih has really been talking about - was peculiarly valued in Chinese thought. As the universe was envisaged in terms of the interaction of opposites (see Chap. Two) the ideal position was one of harmony and balance; to be one-sided (commonly expressed in terms such as p'o 頗) was a correspondingly serious evil.

19. Two points emerge here. One is that ideally action is very much a matter of instinctive, willing response to a situation: it depends upon the person concerned. But action must not only be sincere (i.e. expressing the person's basic desires); it must also be correct in accordance with an external standard, and so the onus is on the ruler both to act according to settled inclination and according to propriety. This of course is only possible if the individual is conceived of as basically in harmony with the universe, his deepest instincts and standards of value corresponding to the nature of reality as a whole. The belief that action should and could be simultaneously spontaneous and correct was a hallmark of early Confucianism and particularly of I-ching philosophy; it received great development at the hands of the Ch'eng brothers and other Neo-Confucians.

Notes to Section (x)

1. This Statute was passed in A.D. 70. "Good of its kind" is a necessary gloss for shan 善 in view of the succeeding argument.

2. i.e. Legalist values. For the attitude to office, cf. Han Fei Tzu (VIII and IX).

3. "district-commanderie". This was the centralised system created by the Ch'in Empire in place of the feudal order. The commanderie was the larger unit, serving both civil and military purposes; the district was a sub-division. Despite subsequent modifications, this system of centralised bureaucracy remained the dominant feature of Chinese government to the end of the Empire.

4. The normal period of tenure was three years, but this could be extended for a further term. The basic reason for this regulation was, of course, to prevent the official "digging himself in" to his place of employment and so shaking off his dependence on the central government.

5. chang-li 長吏 : lit. "senior officials" - in contrast to petty officials outside the scholar class.

6. These are the hsiao-li 小吏 - the petty officials or under-clerks whose familiarity with the locality and technical expertise provided a necessary complement to the administration of the higher officials.

7. chin 進 : lit. "advanced" (for promotion) - which almost automatically ensured appointment.

8. Tzu 子 , Nan 男 : the two lowest of the five degrees of nobility in the feudal system. See Mencius (V.a.2).

9. According to Mencius (ibid.), 50 li square.

Notes to Section (x)

10. shih 士.

11. kung 公, hou 侯 : the two highest degrees of nobility.

12. Shih-ching (L.IV p.429). Karlgren renders 濟 濟 (numerous) as "stately".

13. 體天成物 . The vital function of the Confucian monarch was to mediate between Heaven and earth: he was the executor of Heaven's will towards the people. By including the political importance of the scholar in this framework Wang Fu-chih is adducing an ethical and metaphysical sanction for the scholar-official ideal.

14. I-ching, Hexagram 10. The translation is Wilhelm's (p.45), except that for the sake of consistency I substitute "aims" for "thinking". (chih 志)
The commentary reads: "Heaven represents what is highest, the lake represents what is lowest; these differences in elevation provide a rule for conduct and moves. Thus the superior man creates in society the differences in rank that correspond with differences in natural endowment, and in this way fortifies the thinking of the people, who are reassured when these differences accord with nature". (Wilhelm p.437).

15. The classic Confucian distinction between the rulers and the ruled. Cf. Mencius (I.a.7; III.a.3,4), where the people are supposed to require adequate material provision before they will cultivate propriety and righteousness, whereas the scholar can if need be dispense with this prop. For the well-worn theme of "righteousness versus profit" see the locus classicus in Mencius (I.a.1).

Notes to Section (x)

16. kou 苟 : i.e. blind to other considerations.

17. Again chih 志、 (as "aims" above).

18. A concrete example of the extreme to which this Confucian idealism could go is given in Tu T'ung-chien lun (13), where Wang Fu-chih argues eloquently for "undying resistance" to a barbarian dynasty through the generations.

19. chiu-te 舊 德、 : not only implying former personal Virtue, but alluding to the Virtue associated with the scholar's profession from ancient times.

20. According to the Rites of Chou.

21. Cf. Rites of Chou, also Shu-ching (L III pp.528-30), which relates the assignment of six ministers to (1) Premiership, (2) Rites, (3) Education, (4) War, (5) Crime and (6) Works.

22. "Nine shepherds to ten sheep" - a well-known metaphor for an unfavourable ratio of officials and population, used by a provincial governor of the T'ang dynasty: see T'ang-shu, (Biography of Wei Yuan-chung).

23. i.e. according to li 禮 , the Confucian means of regulation, and not by legalistic measures.

24. Cf. Section (xi).

25. /General note/. The problems of official redundancy and pluralism against which Sung T'ai Tsu legislated were the subject of further reform under Shen Tsung of the Ming in 1522. Wang Fu-chih's concern over the reduction of officials is shared by his contemporary Ku Yen-wu in Jih Chih-lu (VIII. Sheng kuan): Ku, however, relates the issue to the practical exigencies of contemporary administration, whereas Wang Fu-chih discusses it in the more exalted terms of Confucian idealism and to a great extent from the point of view of the officials themselves.

Notes to Section (xi)

1. "Yen and Yun" refers to the sixteen border prefectures given to the Khitan by the founder of the Later Chin dynasty (see Section (viii) n.3, 8).

2. In 1004 the Sung resigned their claims to the northern border region; in 1126 the capital of the N. Sung was captured by the Chin 金 and the Sung rule was thereafter confined to S. China.

3. Chen Tsung (r. 998-1022) was the emperor under whom the northern border territory was finally relinquished (see n.2). In 1008, with the help of his minister Wang Chin-jo he set up claims to be the recipient of gifts directly sent from Heaven. The Jade Emperor, one of the most popular of Chinese gods, was Chen Tsung's invention.

4. Shen Tsung's reign (1068-85) was distinguished by the attempted reforms of Wang An-shih, whose "New Laws" placed a major emphasis on financial and economic matters.

5. Hsieh Yuan 元 i.e. Hsieh Hsuan 玄 was a general of the late 4th century A.D. under the Chin dynasty, on whose behalf he was responsible for repulsing attacks from the Former Ch'in state (an illegitimate dynasty 351-394 centred in Honan). The Liu Sung succeeded the Chin in A.D. 420.

6. An Lu-shan (see Section (viii) n.16), whose rebellion occurred during the reign of Hsuan Tsung of the T'ang (r. 713-756), was killed in the 2nd year of Su Tsung (r. 756-779) by his own son. Kuo Tzu-i, one of China's most famous generals, was amongst several who helped to curb the rebellion.

7. pai-chan 百 戰 : part of a phrase in Sun Tzu's Classic The Art of War, the whole (百 戰 百 勝) meaning "ever-victorious

Notes to Section (xi)

8. The author shows a keen sense of the importance of psychological factors in warfare, though of course the emphasis on morale rather than on material benefit is a typically Confucian attitude. The sense of timeliness is also distinctive of Wang Fu-chih: he is particularly conscious of the process of change and of the need to move with, act in, the present: cf. n.9.

9. The danger of trying to commit posterity to any particular course of action is reiterated at length in Section (xiii).

10. An important remark, since on its truth depends the validity of the whole argument. Here is the concrete basis of Wang Fu-chih's urge to follow the Times, to live neither in the past (like most of the Neo-Confucians) nor in the future (like those who would bind their descendants in advance) but to trust implicitly in the present.

11. See Section (viii).

Notes to Section (xii)

1. 通禮. For li 禮, see Section (viii).

2. A.D. 968-975 (T'ai Tsu).

3. A.D. 713-741 (Hsuan Tsung).

4. 皆有所損益 (sun-i) 矣. Sun and I are the names of the 41st and 42nd Hexagrams of I-ching, meaning literally "Decrease" and "Increase". The former represents a sacrifice by the people on behalf of their rulers; the latter means the reversal of this trend. See H. Wilhelm (1968) pp. 158-165.

5. i.e. A.D. 965.

6. lit. "heaviest mourning garments" - worn nominally for 3 years (in effect 27 months) by children mourning their parents, or wives their husbands.

Notes to Section (xii)

7. Yin Cho was an eminent scholar and a conscientious adviser who had undertaken editorial work on the Later T'ang History, and was given high office under T'ai Tsu of the Sung.

8. ta-li-ssu 大理寺.

9. i.e. A.D. 990 (T'ai Tsung).

10. A minister under T'ai Tsung, noted for his integrity.

11. The bestowal of titles on the parents of distinguished sons was commonly practised, being an aspect of Confucian deference to parents.

12. i.e. A.D. 1017.

13. i.e. the sage-rulers of early Chinese history and legend.

14. "Current circumstances and the principles involved": ch'ing-li 情理. Often an abbreviated form of jen-ch'ing T'ien-li 人情天理 (human desires and the principle of Heaven or Nature) - an antithesis pursued at length in Neo-Confucian philosophy. The meaning of ch'ing 情 is ambiguous here as elsewhere in Sung lun. Probably something of both meanings ("desires" or "feelings" and circumstances") is included.

15. The "great social relationships" (ta-lun 大倫) were the famous Five Relationships of Confucian society. They were those between father and son, ruler and minister, husband and wife, old and young, and friends. See e.g. Mencius (IIIa.4)

16. These two sentences contain one of the most vital concepts of Wang Fu-chih's philosophy. For the general notion of timeliness, cf. Section (ix) and Notes (above). The Tao here simply means "correct way of action" and in attributing

16. (Contd) change to it Wang Fu-chih is not arguing for "relative morality", as is proved by the first half of the paragraph (where there is no doubt admitted as to the eternal validity of the Five Human Relationships). But there is nevertheless a much greater degree of iconoclasm in Wang than in most of his Neo-Confucian predecessors insofar as he was prepared to recognise when an ancient custom was a dead letter incapable of providing a standard by which to judge contemporary ways.

Note the distinction stated between "things which may not be changed, and others which may": a classic preoccupation of Confucian thinkers.

17. See n.15.

18. i.e. the Three Bonds (san-kang 三 纲) of Confucian society.

19. i.e. for her husband's parents as well as for her husband.

20. The two generative forces of the universe, Yin denoting the negative, female principle, and Yang denoting the positive, male principle. The concept was largely developed in post-classical times, although it is central in I-ching. See Chap. Two above.

21. i.e. treats him, by and large, as she would her husband - this despite the somewhat conflicting Confucian principle of filial obedience to one's mother.

22. Cf. Li-chi (Hun i).

23. i.e. in mourning. Cf. Li-li (Chi hsi li).

24. ch'ing 情.

25. hsing 性.

26. More literally "Each person expresses himself" (人 各 自 致): cf. Analects (XIX.17), rendered by Legge (Vol.I.p208), "Men may not have shown what is in them to the full extent, and yet they will be found to do so, on occasion of mourning for their parents."

Notes to Section (xii)

27. Used for presenting food.

28. See Tz'u-hai p.17 (v).

29. One of the Confucian classics, purporting to describe customs of the Chou period.

30. Cf. Li chi, Li yuan: "The son of Heaven has his domain that he may settle there his sons and grandsons; and the feudal princes have their states; and great officers their appanages that they may do the same for theirs." (Legge, in Müller 1885, p.375).

31. Reigned respectively A.D. 147-167, 168-188, 841-846 and 847-859.

32. Lit. "their clear mirror was no more" (其火同鑒已).

33. 女謁寺 . A derogatory term occurring in the Odes (L.IV.p561). Court politics during these periods were marked by the attempts of empresses' families to gain control of the imperial succession and the employment of eunuchs by the Emperor to off-set the aristocratic power.

34. The extinction of Tseng by Chü is recorded in Ch'un-ch'iu (IX.6). Tso-chuan merely attributes the event to Tseng's reliance on bribes paid to Lu for protection. The Kung-yang Commentary, however, interprets "extinction" as the passing of the inheritance to the ruling house of Chü via a princess who married the son of a princess of Tseng.

35. Chia 賈 and Han 韓 were states of the feudal period, but I cannot find any account of the incident here referred to.

36. i.e. when he requested honours for his natural parents: see beginning of section.

37. A phrase from Chuang Tzu, from the chapter called "Joined Toes" (Pien mu).

Notes to Section (xii)

38. chen 貞 . Cf. its meaning in I-ching where it appears as the 4th character. Sung (p.1) renders "correct and firm"; Wilhelm (p.5) "perseverance".

39. i.e. the founders of the Three Dynasties, Hsia, Shang and Chou.

40. 精義以中權．存乎道而已矣． I.e. the correct balance between conformity and change can only be struck by reference to the Way, which here clearly constitutes an abiding "principle of correctness".

Notes to Section (xiii)

1. The contrast of "public" (kung 公) and "private" (ssu 私) actions in the realm of political behaviour was very deeply rooted in the Chinese consciousness. Political theorists continually insisted that the Empire existed for all, and was not the private cache of the ruler.

2. See Shu-ching and the Bamboo Annals for the well-known accounts of these transmissions of the throne, made in every case but the last to one who was unrelated but of proven worth. Yü inaugurated the dynastic system by leaving the throne to his son.

3. I have not located the account of these events of the Ch'un-ch'iu period, but a parallel with the next illustration may be inferred.

4. Duke Mu's plans included the immediate succession of Yü I, the son of Mu's elder brother and predecessor, Duke Hsuan. He accordingly sent his own son, Feng, off to the state of Cheng. Yü I, however, was subsequently murdered by his chief minister, who secured he return of Feng and installed him in the dukedom.

5. A policy which had lost the Later Chou the throne within six months. See Section (i).

6. T'ai Tsu's younger brother and successor.

Notes to Section (xiii)

7. All of these arrangements were made according to the dying instructions of T'ai Tsu's mother, the Empress Dowager. There is in addition some highly debatable evidence of undue pressure from T'ai Tsung. See Li Tao: Hsu Tzu-chih t'ung-chien chang-pien (2.8b-9a).

8. Chao T'ing-mei was degraded as a result of Chao P'u's accusations of him to Emperor T'ai Tsung. T'ai Tsung's nephew, Te-chao, was rumoured to have been the focus of a military plot against the Emperor during the attack on Yuchou, with the result that he was rebuffed by T'ai Tsung when he requested a reward for his services. He thereupon committed suicide.

9. Chao P'u according to certain of the sources witnessed the agreement between T'ai Tsu and his mother regarding the disposal of the succession, and was put on oath to uphold the arrangement.

10. 變不可知者。天之數也。

11. Cf. Shu-ching (L.III p.290): 惟天惠民。惟辟奉天。 Legge renders "Heaven loves the people, and the sovereign should reverence the mind of Heaven."

12. ku-ming 顧命 : a familiar phrase from the Shu-ching (L.III p.544 foll.) where King Ching of Chou on his deathbed commits his son to the care of his ministers. For Chao P'u's part in events, see n.9 above.

13. This whole section is an interesting illustration of Wang Fu-chih's concern with "following the Times": as the Times change, so there must be continuous adaptation on men's part to harmonise with them. There must be no force, no artifice, but only general compliance mixed with judicious intervention in the situation as each stage unfolds. Descending to the historical plane, it is possible that the author had in mind the famous "Root of State" controversy of the Ming period, in which the Wan-li Emperor refused between 1586 and 1601 to nominate one of his young children as heir apparently

Notes to Section (xiii)

13. (Contd) on the Confucian ground taken in this Section by Wang Fu-chih.

Notes to Section (xiv)

1. Shang, Hsia and Chou, each of which provided an example of model government.

2. chih 治. See Section (iii) n.10.

3. Wen-Ching-chih-chih 文景之治 is a standard phrase alluding to the reigns of the Former Han emperors Wen (r. B.C. 179-157) and his son Ching (r. B.C. 156-141). The chief merit ascribed to the latter is that he followed in his father's footsteps (see eulogy in Ch'ien Han shu (5.10 b); Ssu-ma Ch'ien however denies him any praise whatsoever. Cf. Dubs, 1938, Vol.I, p.301). Emperor Wen was one of the most celebrated monarchs of post-classical history, on account of his mild rule and personal frugality directed towards the welfare of the people.

4. i.e. to Emperor Wu (r. B.C. 141-87), under whom Confucianism gained official recognition over the rival schools.

5. Tang T'ai Tsung, second emperor but effective founder of the dynasty (r. A.D. 627-649). He was famous both for his decisive dealing with the threat to national unity at the end of the Sui dynasty and also for the general brilliance of his reign, which was nonetheless marked by the same sort of leniency and economy as had characterised the reign of Wen Ti of the Han.

6. In 653 under the reign of T'ai Tsung's son Kao Ti (r. 650-683) two of his brothers and a sister were executed for plotting rebellion, and a third brother was banished. Subsequently

Notes to Section (xiv)

6. (Contd) the government came under the domination of the Empress Wu, whose acts were reputed to include the murder of her own son, the crown prince.

7. A.D. 960-962.

8. A.D. 1068-77 (Emperor Shen Tsung).

9. See Section (iii) n.16.

10. The Sung-shih (3.8a) allows the Sung an equal place with the Han and T'ang for the general excellence of its government.

11. Tsan-hsiang 贊 襄 : cf. Shu-ching (L.III p.75, but following Karlgren p.9) 思 日 贊 贊 襄 哉.
"I wish daily to assist in achieving (sc. the government)."

12. chia-fa 家 法 : the precedents established by the founder of a dynasty, considered binding on all his descendants.

13. Literally "As for the goodness (令) of his descendants, it was a case of dynastic law binding them like the support of a crossbow".

14. This singling out of T'ai Tsu himself for praise is an important part of Wang Fu-chih's whole analysis of the greatness of the Sung. One of the surest signs of a ruler's Virtue was his ability to influence those with whom he did not have direct contact - whether the masses of ordinary people in his own day, or men removed from him by distance of time.

15. Kuang Wu Ti, the founder of the Later Han (r. A.D. 25-57) is not commonly assigned the place of honour he enjoys in Wang Fu-chih's estimation. The author does not here specify the reasons for his choice, but the general grounds of Kuang Wu's fame were (a) his revival of a strong, centralised government in the place of large-scale rebellion and (b) his favouring

15. (Contd) of civil rather than military officials. But the dynasty he founded was, viewed as a whole, a relatively weak one, for a variety of political, social and economic reasons.

16. Compassion, Frugality and Simplicity: tz'u 慈 , chien 儉 , chien 簡 . Cf. Tao-te-ching (LXVII). D.C. Lau (p.129) renders:

> "I have three treasures
> Which I hold and cherish.
> The first is known as compassion (慈),
> The second is known as frugality (儉),
> The third is known as not daring to take the
> lead in the empire."

The three qualities mentioned by Wang Fu-chih were prized both by Confucianism and Taoism, which had their birth in a period characterised by a singular lack of restraint. Out of the good ruler's compassion for his subjects was born his moderation, or frugality, which kept financial burdens to a minimum. Although I render chien 儉 "Frugality", it implies (as the passage goes on to show) an inner attitude as well as outward show of thrift. As for chien 簡 (Simplicity), it is important to determine the precise meaning of this term, since it is given prominence over the other two. As a full exploration of the concept demands more than a footnote, suffice it to say that the idea is probably very much akin to Lao Tzu's third "treasure", but with the additional notion of simplicity in the sense of ease (cf. the use of this term in Chuang Tzu and I-ching, and also in the writings of Mencius and Confucius where the notion of restraint is entirely lost in that of negligence

16. (Contd) or impulsiveness). For full discussion, see pp.104 foll.

17. k'e-i 刻意 . Couvreur (p.86) gives "résister à ses propres inclinations". The objection to this is again reminiscent of Taoism. K'e-i is the title of the fifteenth chapter of Chuang Tzu; this chapter and the next (which share the same theme, as Wang Fu-chih points out in his Exposition of Chuang Tzu) are well worth reading in conjunction with the Sung lun passage. Their emphasis is on the need to keep one's nature pure and simple, passive and tranquil, free from anxious striving and preoccupation with detail. Compare also Lao Tzu's phrase "blunt the sharpness (jui 銳)": Tao-te-ching. (LVI).

18. pu-chien 不堅 : "not hard; flexible".

19. Desires: huai-lai 懷來 . See Morohashi 4625 (i).

20. i.e. a negative approach.

21. For the author's views on this subject see Section (xi).

22. "Careful" i.e. hsu 余 : compare its frequent appearance in the text of the K'un 困 Hexagram in I-ching, where it speaks of the rather hesitant attempts of a well-to-do man to alleviate the troubles of the lower classes (cf. R. Wilhelm, pp. 184, 627-8).

23. This is the first explicit mention of the Taoist philosopher commonly believed to have lived during the 6th-5th centuries B.C.

24. The implication must be that Lao Tzu's prescription is too negative and narrowly confined.

25. This would seem to be a reference to the early Han reaction in favour of the laissez-faire policies of Taoism, illustrated, for example, in Kao Tsu's wholesale abolition of the laws of Ch'in, or in Wen Ti's great admiration for the "learning of Huang

Notes to Section (xiv)

25. (Contd) (the Yellow Emperor) and Lao (Lao Tzu)" i.e. Taoism. But the policy which Wang Fu-chih is criticising is not simply one of deficient action; it is attended by a wrong basic attitude of strained concentration on detail and of mental rigidity, instead of the Simplicity which should form the ground of outward action.

26. In other words he was a conventionalist and hence a hypocrite.

27. The author is being satirical.

28. A hard hit at the aforesaid rulers.

29. Cf. Section (i)

30. Alluding to the dualist concept in Chinese metaphysics whereby when one trend has reached its peak the opposite one sets in. The opportunity for the sage to act decisively comes just at the turning-point.

31. For all these policies see preceding sections. The active encouragement of Confucian scholars in administration is germane to the distinction between Sung T'ai Tsu and the other three monarchs, under whose reigns or those of their near successors Taoism received great prominence, accompanied by Buddhism under the T'ang dynasty. The resulting superstition and other extravagances would account for much of Wang Fu-chih's spleen.

32. Cf. previous sections, especially Section (iii). Here the classic Confucian belief is restated: the application of purely external, ad hoc remedies can never meet the people's inner need, which is moral and not material.

33. Wang Fu-chih's lack of respect for the three emperors of Han and T'ang may be compared with Chu Hsi's condemnation of Han and T'ang rulers on the grounds of motive. Wang, however, did not accept Chu Hsi's general thesis that all the post-classical rulers were divided from the ancients by the espousal of jen-ch'ing rather than T'ien-li. See Chap. Two, and Carsun Chang 1957, pp.315-328

34. 惟心之忱.出之而不妄. See n.36.

35. Clearly this passage brings us to the heart of Wang Fu-chih's view of the qualities required of a ruler. The basic thing seems to be sincerity, genuineness, integrity (the character used is ch'en 忱, which is synonymous with ch'eng 誠) - a natural corollory of the belief that human nature is essentially good. Ch'eng 誠 was from the beginning a central ideal of Confucianism, and remained so in Neo-Confucian thought. Ch'eng I equated it with Wu-Wang 無妄, following Hexagram 25 of I-ching (无妄) (see Ho-nan Ch'eng-shih i-shu, Basic Sinological Series, 100.7). Since pu-wang 不妄 occurs in conjunction with ch'en 忱 in our passage (see n.35), the Hexagram is worth investigation. According to Z.D. Sung, Wu-Wang is "Freedom from Error", though he consistently translates it as "freedom from insincerity". A.C. Graham, 1958, p.68 explains it as "No Irregularity": "Wang is licence, arbitrariness, irregularity - a course not in accordance with any principle". R. Wilhelm gives "Innocence (The Unexpected)". The main theme of the text and its commentaries is the natural goodness of human nature. "When ... movement follows the law of heaven, man is innocent and without guile. His mind is natural and true, unshadowed by reflection or ulterior designs. For wherever conscious purpose is to be seen, there the truth and innocence of nature have been lost. Nature that is not directed by the spirit is not true but degenerate nature ... However, not everything instinctive is nature in this higher sense of the word, but only that which is right and in accord with the will of heaven ..." (Wilhelm pp. 100-1). The

35. (Contd) political scientist of the West may feel perplexed by a prescription for good government that insists most long and loudly on thepsychological soundness of its ruler - but the essence of Confucian political thought is that man is a whole creature whose activities cannot be compartmentalised and that in consequence matters of external action and practical administrative detail cannot be treated in a separate category from their inner motivating springs.

36. Analects(XIII.11)(translated by Legge I p.131).

37. The foundation laid (立 本) speaks both of the literal founding of a line and of its moral or spiritual basis. The author reverts now to the question of the succession, one aspect of which he dealt with in Section (xiii). The historical background is as follows. The orthodox account, given in Sung-shih (3.7b, 242.2a), represents the transmission of the throne to T'ai Tsu's brother as having been made expressly in obedience to the dying instructions of his mother, who pointed out that the accession of a minor would prove as fatal to his dynasty as it had to the Later Chou before him. Present at the bedside was Chao P'u, who recorded the arrangement together with his own oath to uphold it - after which he deposited the document under lock and key. Sung-shih also mentions T'ai Tsu's love for his brother, citing the famous incident in which the Emperor is supposed to have cauterised himself to share his brother's pain. Li T'ao, normally a much more reliable source, takes up this latter point and argues extensively that T'ai Tsu had independently planned to make his brother his heir, so that brotherly love and filial obedience played an equal part in his

37. (Contd) decision. But against Li Tao's reliability in this case is the fact that his account is based not on the original but the revised version of the Veritable Records (Shih-lu) of T'ai Tsu, and that, according to a different story, far from receiving the throne as a token of love the younger brother seized it by force, murdering T'ai Tsu in the process. Additional matters of information in some sources are that T'ai Tsung was also present at the Empress' bedside at the fateful occasion; and variously that the Empress required the throne to be transmitted after T'ai Tsung to the other surviving brother (T'ing-mei) and thence to T'ai Tsu's son (Te-chao). The ages of the three prospective heirs at the time of the Empress Dowager's death were respectively, according to Li Tao, 23, 14 and 10 sui. Whatever the facts of the matter, Wang Fu-chih adopts the view that T'ai Tsu, acting with the utmost magnanimity, deliberately passed the throne to his brother while knowing that this made the chances of his own issue ever succeeding him exceedingly remote. (For Li Tao's account, see Li Tao (2.8b-9a)).

38. The Prince of Huainan was Liu Ch'ang, Wen Ti's brother, who was banished on the charge of plotting rebellion and starved himself to death on the way to exile. He was accorded a marquis' funeral, and several officials were executed for negligence (B.C. 175-4).

39. During Wen Ti's reign China was divided into a few large fiefs under the control of imperial clansmen. In his later years and under the reign of his son, Ching Ti, it was felt that the rulers of such large states constituted a potential menace to the throne and a policy of paring and sub-dividing was

39. (Contd) adopted. The Prince of Ch'u was deprived by Ching Ti of territory on the pretext of infringement of the rules of mourning (it had also been rumoured that he was planning to rebel), two other Princes were similarly treated, and the Prince of Wu, anticipating a like fate, organised a coalition. This was the origin of the "Seven States' Rebellion", in which Wu and Ch'u bore the brunt of the fighting. The rebellion failed and the Prince of Wu was beheaded; the Prince of Ch'u committed suicide. The vassal states were never again allowed such a strong position. (For this and the preceding note, cf. Dubs, 1938, Vol. I pp.250, 292-6, 313-15).

40. Li Shih-min (T'ang T'ai Tsung) was the second son of the T'ang founder, and mainly responsible for the setting up of the dynasty. His older brother, the Heir Apparent, along with another brother, attempted to poison him, justly fearing that he might obtain the succession himself; Li Shih-min consequently carried out a coup d'état in which the Heir Apparent was killed by Shih-min and the younger brother by one of Shih-min's followers. The Emperor formally approved his action and within two months abdicated in his favour - with what degree of willingness is not clear. (Cf. Bingham, in JAOS 70/1950 pp. 89-95, 259-271).

41. Chih-yeh 枝葉 (branches and leaves) probably means the scions of these dynasts; it could, however, imply the outward show of splendour in contrast with the rottenness of the core.

Notes to Section (xiv)

42. The sense of this seems to be that T'ai Tsu forbad Chao P'u to let the arrangements concerning T'ing-mei and Te-chao become public knowledge, and trusted Chao P'u to reveal the full details only when it became necessary. In the event, the document relating the affair was produced at the beginning of T'ai Tsung's reign either at the Emperor's request or on Chao P'u's own initiative (according to conflicting accounts in Shih-lu and Li Tao); furthermore the death of T'ing-mei was largely due to the slanderous report of Chao P'u (see Section (xiii) n.8). But this interpretation of the sentence referring to the hushing-up of Chao P'u's promises is quite tentative, as I have not found sufficiently detailed evidence in the sources. An alternative (though grammatically less likely) reading would be: "(T'ai Tsu) knew that his brother would not be tolerant of his son, and that he would (且) not allow Chao P'u's hypocritical promise to come into the open but would quickly hush up all trace of it."

43. T'ien-jen 天人.

44. The author does not reintroduce the terms kung 公 and ssu 私, but obviously such conduct as is attributed to T'ai Tsu was an outstanding example of action for the common good.

45. 以一心涵之 : lit. "submerged them in his undivided heart" - "bore them with equanimity" or even "took them in his stride". The affinity of i hsin 一心 (single-heartedness) to ch'en 忱 and ch'eng 誠 (sincerity, genuineness, integrity) need not be laboured.

Notes to Section (xiv)

46. 不忍之心 . Compare the well-known recurrent phrase in Mencius (IIa.6): 不忍人之心 - the heart which cannot bear others' suffering - which Mencius says is common to all men and is the root of Humanity (仁).

47. wu 物 : often inclusive of living things.

48. ch'eng 誠 : cf. n.36 on ch'en 忱 .

49. The idea of "extension" (t'ui 推) is frequently found in Neo-Confucian thought. On the grounds "that a single principle runs through all things" a man may "extend the principle" of one thing to other things, or "infer by analogy" that the principle of one thing exists in others. Cf. Graham 1958, pp. 9-12

50. The character used in both cases is shan 善 , which means both "good" (virtuous) and "good at" (skilful); even if the former is meant in both instances, there is no suitable single English word to cover them.

51. See text above, and n.14.

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