material as well as Western t[illegible] and studies. While admittedly an original piece of research, the book is written in a simple literary style.

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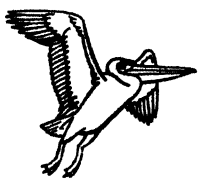
A SHORT HISTORY OF CONFUCIAN PHILOSOPHY

LIU WU-CHI



A Short History of Confucian Philosophy

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Preface

CONFUCIANISM, the subject of this book, is unique among the world's great teachings in that, unlike Christianity, Buddhism, and Mohammedanism, it remains to this day a philosophy pure and simple. Perhaps it is also due to its non-religious nature that Confucianism is the least aggressive of all the doctrines. This of course does not mean that it is static. On the contrary, Confucianism still spreads and conquers by dint of argument and conviction as it did in ancient China, and later in Korea and Japan, making the Orient of the Middle Ages a virtual home of the big Confucian family.

The distinguishing features of Confucianism are many. First of all, it is a moral system which is both practical and practicable. Without any trace of the metaphysical and the supernatural, its contents are readily understood by the man in the street; and its ethical teachings, replete with wisdom and common sense, can be applied in daily life. Furthermore, Confucianism excels in its adaptability to varying circumstances and in its magnetism, which attracts whatever is good and useful. In this way, Confucianism, ever growing with time, has become a treasure house of the age-old experiences of the Chinese people. Hence the chief strength of Confucianism is its flexibility, a remarkable quality that enables it to resist all pressures and to face all adversities. For this reason, though suffering eclipse from time to time, it has always emerged with renewed brilliance.

As a matter of fact, these virtues of Confucianism are also the virtues of the Chinese people. It is a moot question whether it is Confucianism that has moulded the Chinese character and made it what it is, or whether it is the Chinese genius that has created the kind of philosophy that is Confucianism. But, whatever it be, it is obvious that the Chinese are essentially Confucian in their outlook, and that except for some Buddhist and Taoist trends in the arts and letters, Chinese culture and Confucianism are almost synonymous, if not identical.

But what, after all, is this thousand-year-old-dogma that has so strangely, and yet so strongly, welded the Chinese nation? What, for instance, was its origin; how did it develop; and who were its great exponents? Moreover, what was its relation to the other

philosophical schools of ancient China, which were then so numerous that a hundred of them are supposed to have existed; and how, in spite of them, did it succeed in dominating Chinese thought, the history of which is not much more than the history of Confucianism?

All these are pertinent questions, to which, unfortunately, no definite answers have so far been given in the English language. This neglect is also reflected in the treatment Confucianism receives in a number of books on the story of philosophy. It is therefore our hope that the present work will not only supply the much-needed information on this important subject, but also claim for it a place in world philosophy, where, in our opinion, it properly belongs.

LIU WU-CHI

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Chapter One

K'UNG CH'IU, FOUNDER OF THE JU SCHOOL

1. *On the Greatness of Ju Philosophy – A Prelude*

THE Ju philosophy that has dominated Chinese thought for the last twenty-five centuries had its beginning in the teachings of K'ung Ch'iu (551–479 B.C.), commonly known as Confucius, founder of the Ju school. Because of its long, eminent tradition, Ju philosophy also exerted the greatest influence on Chinese life. It moulded the national character; it touched every corner of human activity; it permeated life in all its aspects, whether moral, political, or social. It also gave continuity to a remarkable old civilization which, far from becoming extinct or stunted in its growth, showed rather a wonderful vitality in its struggle for survival and supremacy.

For one thing, the greatness of Ju philosophy is due to its power of adaptation. Phoenix-like, it has been constantly reborn and reorientated. Like the Chinese race, which conquered not by force, but by assimilation, the Ju philosophy also eliminated its rivals by virtue of absorption until all that was good and useful in the other doctrines became incorporated in its grand melting-pot, which was Chinese culture itself. Originally, these were separate systems of thought like Mohism, Legalism, Taoism, and Buddhism, but they were all pressed upon to contribute generously to the Ju stock, thus saving it from exhaustion.

As a result of this process of development, Ju philosophy to-day is just as different from the original teachings of K'ung Ch'iu as the latter is, for instance, from the teachings of Christ. To be sure, the words of K'ung Ch'iu still form the kernel of the Ju concept, but in the course of its evolution it has acquired so many novel ideas and interpretations that the main bulk of Ju philosophy to-day would

be hardly recognizable to its great progenitor himself. This transformation, of course, was obviously healthy. Though there have been many complaints by the orthodox against this admixture of foreign elements, yet considered as a whole, these additions are really what gave impetus and animation to an ancient system of thought, which, but for these injections of new blood, would certainly have become anaemic long ago.

Important because of its tremendous impact upon Chinese life, the evolution of Ju philosophy is as complicated as it is interesting. To trace the various stages of this development and the main ideological trends with which it has come into contact is in fact to write a history of Chinese thought itself. But before we start on this long and arduous historical journey, let us pause first to have a look at the origin of the word Ju as well as at the Ju profession that flourished in the feudal society of the Chou period.

2. *Scholars or 'Weaklings'?*

In current usage, the word Ju means a scholar of the K'ung school. As such he is to be distinguished from the Buddhist or Taoist teacher, who holds an altogether different view of life. The close association between Ju and K'ung has also led Western writers, after they smugly transformed K'ung-fu-tzŭ, or Master K'ung, to Confucius, to call the Ju teaching Confucianism and the Ju followers Confucianists. Though this is un-Chinese, yet in the sense that K'ung Ch'iu was the protagonist of the school, the translation is by no means entirely unacceptable.

But originally, there was also another meaning to the word Ju. Etymology tells us that Ju is a combination of two radicals, 'man' and 'weakness'. Hence the question naturally arises as to who these 'weaklings' were, if there was ever such a class of people. This is indeed a most intriguing question, to which, unfortunately, no clue has been given by the early Chinese writers. It is only in recent

years that critics have begun to delve into the subject with apparently rich findings.

So far, two theories have been advanced.[1] According to the first, these 'weaklings' were actually descendants of the Shang people, whose dynasty had been overthrown by the Chou people in the twelfth century B.C. Being the survivors of a subjugated race, they extolled the virtue of weakness, or rather, the strength of weakness, as the best means of self-preservation. Degraded and dispossessed, but nevertheless rich in ceremonial knowledge, they made a living among their conquerors by assisting in funerals, marriages, and other occasions in the households of the Chou overlords. Because of their humble manners and occupation, so it is asserted, these Shang descendants earned for themselves the contemptible name of 'weaklings'.

Another theory, which we hold, is that these 'weaklings' were not the remnants of the once great but now degenerated Shang race, but disinherited members of the Chou aristocracy, who, in spite of their blue blood, had drifted into commonalty during the long centuries of the Chou dynasty. They were either offspring of the cadet branches of some noble family far removed from its great founder, or aristocrats who had been degraded into commoners. In either case, they had lost their rank and revenue as well as their special privileges. Though not as helpless as the ignorant peasants, who toiled all their lives on the soil, they were nevertheless so reduced in their circumstances that they had to employ whatever talents they might have acquired in the good old days to make a living. They thus became a new middle class between the patricians and the plebeians.

The number of such dispossessed nobles increased rapidly in the decades shortly before the advent of K'ung Ch'iu in the sixth century B.C. The feudal structure of Chou society built up by the great Duke of Chou [2] had been steadily crumbling since the removal of the Chou capital eastward to Lo in 770 B.C., but the process of deterioration did not assume alarming proportions until a century later. There emerged from this social transformation a new group

of people, intelligent, resourceful, and eager to carve out a worthy career for themselves. But their inborn nobility and ambition notwithstanding, they were poor and powerless, and the best they could do was to become potential office-seekers.

What kind of talents did these people possess with which to earn a living? As former aristocrats, they must have been familiar with some or all of the six arts that were the hallmark of a noble education, namely, ceremonials and music, history (or writing) and numbers, archery and charioteering. As we can easily see, these were also good practical subjects, a knowledge of which would render a man useful to his feudal superiors. A knowledge of archery and charioteering, for instance, would qualify one to be a military commander or governor of a walled town, while a knowledge of writing and numbers would make one a good steward in the ministerial families. Likewise, as an expert in music and rituals, one could either become a tutor to the fledgling aristocrats or serve as a functionary on solemn ceremonial occasions. The rôles indeed were many in which these impoverished, disinherited nobles could employ their parts to advantage.

At the same time, their rank and file was further swelled by a large number of diviners, historiographers, and ceremonial and music masters, who were originally attached to the court, but who had lost their positions because of the dissolution of the feudal system and the decline and fall of the small principalities. Since their offices were formerly hereditary, they had been for many centuries custodians of Chinese culture, which, like the Promethean fire, had been jealously kept from the common people. But now, commoners themselves as a result of the great social upheaval, these forlorn intellectuals began to dole out their Olympian knowledge to all and sundry who had the means and the desire to learn. Thus was ushered in a new era noted for its wide diffusion of learning.

In the very beginning, we suspect, no name was given to this intellectual professional group. Apparently, their inter-

ests were greatly varied, and their jobs, now no longer hereditary, of a miscellaneous nature. No one word, indeed, could cover the multitudinous activities in which they were severally engaged. But for one of these professions a term had been coined, though it was by no means frequently used in K'ung Ch'iu's time. This was the word Ju, denoting a soft-spoken, genteel intellectual, whose job it was to assist at the ceremonies in the noble households. As the aristocratic society of the Chou period was extremely ritualistic, and its code of etiquette, known as *li*, highly elaborate, no ordinary man could conduct with propriety and proficiency such family ceremonies as capping and coiffure, marriage and funerals; or such stately entertainments as banqueting and archery contests; or the elaborate religious observances in the ancestral temples. Experts were needed for such occasions, and there soon appeared a group of people who specialized in all these branches of ritual and who were at the beck and call of any noble patron. To distinguish themselves, they were dressed in special costumes that bespoke their profession. Thus, wearing broad-sleeved robes girdled with silk sashes and trimmed with jade tablets, high round feather hats and square shoes, these men of *li* must have walked demurely, bowed deeply, and acted decorously – all of which earned for them the nickname of 'weaklings'.

3. *A Great Ju Rises in the East*

JUST about this time there rose in Lu, one of the eastern states in the Chou kingdom, a remarkable young man by the name of K'ung Ch'iu. He was one of those disinherited nobles who claimed their ancestry from the ducal house of Sung, and thence from the fallen house of Shang. But by this time the royal blood had been so diluted that little of it was left in him except that which showed in the superior intelligence of the young man. This was in fact the only patrimony he had received from his great ancestors, or from his own father, a minor military official, who had died a few years after the boy's birth, leaving him and his mother to

take care of themselves as best they could. Faced with the problem of making a living, young K'ung Ch'iu first took office as overseer of the granary and later of the herds.

This was in line with the tradition of his people, who, as dispossessed aristocrats, had to seek miscellaneous jobs for a living. Since he had had no formal instruction in the useful arts, what else could K'ung Ch'iu do but take up this mean employment? Just as his father before him had become an army officer, so K'ung Ch'iu became a state employee. As such, he was known to have been a hard, conscientious worker, who always kept a correct account of the grain and fed his oxen and sheep so well that they grew fat and strong and multiplied. It was no doubt in recognition of these services that, when a male child was born to K'ung Ch'iu, the Duke of Lu sent him the ceremonial present of a carp. One can well imagine the excitement which the gift created in the humble K'ung family. Indeed, in token of this great honour, the boy was named Li, or carp!

But, if circumstances had forced him to accept these petty positions, the ambitious and idealistic K'ung Ch'iu was by no means satisfied. He was looking forward to employment more congenial to his nature and worthier of his talents. The break came when his mother died and he was forced to go into seclusion for three years in accordance with the prevailing custom. Great thoughts, it seems, were then agitating his breast, and he began to make preparations for launching out into a brave new world hitherto unexplored.

4. *The Brave New World of Education*

WHEN at the age of thirty-four K'ung Ch'iu next emerged into public notice, he was already a distinguished teacher of ceremony. We know practically nothing about his life in the intervening years except that during this period he had been exploring all the avenues of learning in order to improve himself. There is no doubt, however, that he became, through sheer diligent study, an expert in the code of *li*. The period of mourning over, this self-made scholar soon started

as a public teacher, gathering to his door young men interested in acquiring training for a profession. Even though his father had been an army officer and he himself was familiar with archery and charioteering, K'ung Ch'iu, it seems, did not include military science in his curriculum. What he taught was *li*, his main subject, as well as writing, numbers, and oratory. All these qualified his students for government jobs and stewardships in aristocratic households.

There was nothing startling in this educational programme. But what was original was the way in which K'ung Ch'iu enlisted his students. In former days there had been official teachers, whose duty it was to educate the scions of the overlords in the six arts. These hereditary pedagogues were part of the aristocratic appanage, and their learning was available only to the rulers and their sons. Besides, there might have been in K'ung Ch'iu's time private tutors who could be hired by anyone. But, to set up a sort of school for young men of all classes was something unheard of in history; at least, there is no record of such a practice before the sixth century B.C. It was a daring experiment first made by K'ung Ch'iu, and his success led to the rapid development of the system in the decades after him.

The new schoolmaster, moreover, was a man of great vision. Tuition, of course, he had to charge in order to carry on his work, but it was so nominal – just a bundle of dried meat – that it was within the means of the humblest. Scions of noble families, who were able to pay liberally, were welcome, but no intelligent young man who had the desire to learn ever found the door of the K'ung school closed to him. This democratic basis of admission was the more remarkable when we remember that K'ung Ch'iu lived in the feudal period when there was still a great dividing line between aristocracy and commonalty. But to K'ung Ch'iu, the first teacher, such distinctions did not exist; certainly, they were overlooked in his school-room. Very proudly he announced to his students: 'There is no class in education.' [3]

Master K'ung's educational policy being such, all sorts of young men flocked to his schoolroom. There was Tzŭ-lu,

once a swashbuckling bravado, who died a loyal official and a martyr to the cause of *li*; there was Yen Hui, a poor but industrious scholar, who was satisfied with his bamboo bowl of rice and his gourd cup of water; there was Ssŭ-ma Niu, in constant fear of persecution by his elder brother, a wicked minister of Sung; there was Kung-yeh Ch'ang, who, while studying with the Master, was thrown into jail; there was Tsai-yü, who fell to day-dreaming during the Master's lecture; there was Fan Chi, who seemed to be more interested in gardening and farming than in literature and politics; there was Kung-hsi Chih, a ceremonial expert in the great ceremonial school; and many others from every walk of life, equally rich and diversified in their personality. What a galaxy of wits these were that enlivened the happy atmosphere of the K'ung school!

As a result of Master K'ung's indefatigable teaching, a number of his students became ritual experts, stewards of ministerial families, governors of walled towns, officials, courtiers, as well as teachers. By this time, K'ung Ch'iu, who had started as a teacher of ceremonies, had greatly widened his scope of instruction to include in his curriculum history and poetry, ethics and politics, all of which were essential to a successful public career. The importance of historical knowledge to government officials is readily understood; but, in those days, poetry too played a vital part in diplomatic intercourse, in which ancient odes were often quoted not only to show the speaker's good breeding, but also to illustrate and support by subtle implication the argument to be advanced. Especially among his younger students, both these subjects were studied with increasing interest, and the literary tradition of the K'ung school was thus established.

In the meantime, Master K'ung had grown more experienced in human affairs, just as he had become more advanced in learning. Desiring to study its culture at first hand, he had visited Lo, the Chou capital. There he had learned from Lao-tan, the great ceremonialist and keeper of the royal archives. Next, he had visited Ch'i, where he had

become acquainted with its divine music, which so engrossed him that he is said to have forgotten the taste of meat for three months. He had also filled responsible administrative positions in Lu, first as magistrate, then as minister of crime and, possibly, as acting premier. He had taken part in the diplomatic conference between Ch'i and Lu, in which his supreme knowledge of ritual had won for his state a great moral triumph. Later, when he had had to give up his office in Lu, he had spent thirteen or fourteen years abroad, travelling, teaching, and visiting the feudal rulers of his time. When at last he was recalled to Lu, he was already an old man, an elder statesman, whose advice was constantly sought after by both the reigning duke and his chief minister. The humble overseer of herds, who had turned schoolmaster, was now the most honoured man in his native state; he was also the most learned scholar of the Chinese world.

5. *A Happy Innovation*

A NEW inspiration seized K'ung Ch'iu in the last years of his life. He must have then realized that his days were fast running short, and that, if he had successfully initiated a noble profession, he was by no means sure that his doctrines would be handed down intact through mere oral tradition. Something, it seemed, should be done to insure their preservation in future years. Hence, thoughts like these led ultimately to his becoming a literary editor and anthologist.

K'ung Ch'iu, an authority on Chou culture, was also its preserver. For many years he had industriously gathered all the literary materials that he could lay his hands on. In this attempt he was more than fortunate, for at that time many of the official documents formerly kept in the court archives and ancestral temples had begun to leak out to the public. In addition, he must have obtained a large part of his materials through his connexions with the feudal courts. In Lu, which had long been the centre of Chou culture, he had had direct access to valuable sources hitherto not available to the common people. His trip to the Chou capital must also

have yielded a rich harvest, as undoubtedly did his visit to the other states. What he had collected, however, was mostly unedited material in bundles of bamboo tablets that had to be strung together with leather thongs. Books in the modern sense of the word did not exist; and Master K'ung, the pedagogue, soon became China's first book-maker.

K'ung Ch'iu's contribution to Chinese literature can never be over-estimated. He it was who first brought together the Chou classics under the name of his school. It is possible, of course, that portions of the *Classic of Poetry* and the *Classic of History* had been in circulation long before K'ung Ch'iu's time. But it is doubtful whether they ever existed in the form left to us by him, who was in this sense their 'sole begetter'.[4] To be sure, what he actually did was merely to collate and edit, but even so, this work that seems so conventional and simple to us, was in those days certainly an epoch-making innovation.

Unfortunately, Anthologist K'ung's labour on rituals and music has been lost to posterity. The *Record of Rites* that we have is a compilation of the Han dynasty, though it may retain much of the original material as well as many of the Master's observations on these subjects.

The *Classic of Change*, a manual of divination, said to have been written by King Wen, founder of the Chou dynasty, and the Duke of Chou, is probably the earliest Chinese book extant. Its mysterious contents seem to have fascinated K'ung Ch'iu in his last years, but his share in this work is rather uncertain. According to some critics, even the philosophical interpretation given it in the ten 'Wings' or 'Appendices' traditionally attributed to Master K'ung might have come from another pen.

So far, in all the works we have mentioned, K'ung Ch'iu was satisfied to play the rôle of a transmitter.[5] It was a great rôle without doubt, for what he transmitted was none other than the main bulk of ancient Chinese culture. But that was not all. To K'ung Ch'iu also belonged the honour of being the first Chinese author, a great honour indeed.

As a writer, K'ung Ch'iu is chiefly remembered for his

Spring and Autumn, annals of Lu covering the reigns of its twelve dukes from 722–481 B.C. It was probably the last literary work that he undertook. As the first Chinese book written by a private individual,[6] it had an immense historical interest. As a matter of fact, K'ung Ch'iu himself entertained such a high opinion of this unprecedented adventure that he staked his reputation on it. Said he: 'If anyone recognizes my greatness in future generations, it will be because of the *Spring and Autumn*. If any one condemns me in future generations, it will likewise be because of the *Spring and Autumn*.' [7]

Such being the author's opinion of the *Spring and Autumn*, it comes as a surprise that the book contains merely a list of dry, uninspiring entries under the reign of each of the twelve dukes. But we have an explanation for this. In K'ung Ch'iu's time the Chinese language, as we know, had not attained that flexibility, eloquence, and richness which characterize the historical and philosophical writings of a later period. K'ung Ch'iu's style, therefore, was simple, straightforward, and factual. This, too, was natural enough, because it was only the facts, the bare historical events of his native state and the confederated Chou world, in which he was primarily interested. But even here little credit was due to the writer, who did not first record these events, but took them from the official chronicles of Lu. Hence K'ung Ch'iu's originality consisted merely in his arrangement of the entries, his wording, his style, and his purpose, which was to use the past to mirror the present and the future.[8] If this first historical book by a private individual fails to meet our expectation as a great work of literature, we must bear in mind that it is after all only an innovation.

6. *Short of a Miracle: the Professionals turned Philosophers*

WHEN K'ung Ch'iu died in 479 B.C. at the age of seventy-three, his mission of embodying in himself and his school the best of orthodox Chou culture had been accomplished. As we remember, he started his career as a ritual expert, vaguely known in those days as Ju, but soon became famous

as a scholar of wide learning. Though a Ju by profession, he seemed to have used the word rather gingerly in his recorded sayings. In fact, only once did he mention it, and that was when he advised Tzŭ-hsia, one of his younger pupils, to become a noble, and not a lowly, Ju. Here, however, the meaning is somewhat equivocal. Since Tzŭ-hsia has never been known as a ritual practitioner, we might infer that the Master was using the word in the broader sense of a scholar rather than in its original sense of a mild-dispositioned man of *li*. Anyway, the Ju class, from which K'ung Ch'iu sprang, and of which he was the greatest representative, had been so closely identified with him that Ju and K'ung soon became synonymous. Meanwhile, the word Ju began to assume its new meaning, as Master K'ung had used it in reference to Tzŭ-hsia, as a scholar of the K'ung school. And, most important of all, amidst all these changes, a Ju philosophy had been developed.

It all came about like this. While basing his teaching on the authority of the sage kings of antiquity [9] and the orthodox feudal concepts of his time, K'ung Ch'iu, the great originator, soon evolved a new ethical and political philosophy of his own. In politics he contributed the idea of paternal government, in which the ruler should govern his people benevolently, as a patriarch his family. And just as a father is bound to his children by the tie of blood, which accounts for their attachment to one another, so should a prince be bound to his subjects by the same inalienable tie of love and kindness. Hence to a ruler the most important consideration was the welfare of the people. To summarize, according to Master K'ung, the three fundamental requirements of a state are that its sovereignty be safeguarded by adequate military strength, its welfare by sufficient food, and its government by the confidence of the people; of which the last is the most important. When we remember how the peasants of those days were oppressed by the autocratic rulers, we can see very well why Master K'ung's principle of benevolent government, though to us trite and old-fashioned, was, when viewed historically, highly significant.

But K'ung Ch'iu's real greatness lies in his transforming the feudal code of rites and etiquette into a universal system of ethics. It is wonderful that the humble practitioner of *li* should have become ultimately the greatest teacher of morality; but what is even more wonderful is that that morality, though 2,500 years old, is in its fundamental concept strikingly up to date and still aspiring. Here we are not referring to his observations on family relationship, which have failed to harmonize with modern trends owing to the great social changes of the past centuries. But what impresses us most is his lofty conception of the basic virtues of *chung* (faithfulness to oneself and others), *shu* (altruism), *jen* (human-heartedness), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (propriety), *chih* (wisdom), *hsin* (realness or sincerity), all of which the Master preached so forcibly and exemplified in himself so worthily that they have since become an ethical creed of the Chinese people. In fact, it was this insistence on man's moral cultivation, irrespective of rank and class, that has made K'ung Ch'iu such an immortal teacher. Thus, though living in the medieval society of the sixth century B.C., he was able to transcend the limitations of his age and profession to develop a far-reaching philosophy with moral perfection as its ultimate aim. As he himself had constantly asserted, he was all his life championing a way of life, or truth, which he called *tao*; and he would not be satisfied until it had been adopted by mankind.

The pursuit of this *tao* was therefore the greatest endeavour of Master K'ung's life. He also taught it to his pupils, no matter what personal ambitions they might have. In studying with him, they might seek training as ritual functionaries, family stewards, courtiers, governors, or teachers, but no one could leave the door of the K'ung school without being instilled with a lofty sense of morality. The Master's enthusiasm was so intense that a number of his devoted disciples were fired by it. Thus these men who had come to him to learn a profession turned out to be the torch-bearers of a grand new philosophy, the Ju philosophy, whose ultimate achievement was the superior man.

Chapter Two

THE TRANSMISSION OF TAO

1. *The Diffusion of Master K'ung's Teaching*

THE spread of K'ung Ch'iu's doctrine began not long after his death in 479 B.C. After having mourned together their Master's death, the disciples separated and went each his own way to carry on the orthodox teaching of their school. Probably those who had decided, like their Master, to make teaching their profession each took with him a copy of the ancient classics, which they had severally received from their Master, and which they in turn handed down to their students with their own expositions and comments. Thus there grew an ever-widening circle of scholars who took up the study of the old classics collected by Master K'ung; and as time went on these ancient writings sank deeper and deeper into the minds of the Chinese people.

The other followers of Master K'ung took up administrative positions in the feudal governments and became honoured guests in the princely courts. These, too, wherever they went, and in whatever capacity they served, zealously preached the Master's views on government and ethics. Though their advice was never actually followed by the princes, it was nevertheless heard with a willing ear. At least, it was pleasant to hear such lofty ideas and to believe that an application of them some day would lead to wonderful results, perhaps a revival of the sage government of olden times.

In this way did the great tradition of the Ju school grow and prosper. Indeed, so deeply imbued were the disciples with the Master's spirit, and so strongly impressed were they by his words of wisdom, that they kept alive the Master's memory by basing all their discourses on ethical and political subjects on what the Master had said. They even

went so far as to open their discussions with the words 'The Master said'. Thus it came about that a large body of Master K'ung's sayings were collected and transmitted to posterity as the best testimony to the sage's abiding greatness.

2. *Eight Divisions of the K'ung School*

THOUGH the disciples all revered their Master's words, it was but natural that they should each lay particular emphasis on certain aspects of his teaching. We have already seen how they 'majored' in different subjects while attending the Master's lectures. Gradually their differences grew greater as they developed their respective systems of thought in accordance with their own interests and convictions. So some went deeper into politics, others considered the cultivation of one's nature the goal of all endeavour, while still others became absorbed in the study of *li* and recommended it as the best remedy for the moral degeneration of the times.

Especially among the younger generation, who carried on the task of preserving and propagating the Master's doctrines, was there a great deal of rivalry and dissension. In consequence various groups emerged, though there was no clear indication of the way in which the school of K'ung was actually divided. According to one source, there were as many as eight divisions; but the classification, as made by Han Fei, a Legalist philosopher of the third century B.C., was both confusing and arbitrary. It included not only the Master's immediate disciples like Yen Hui, Tzŭ-chang, and Ch'i-tiao K'ai (Tzŭ-k'ai), but also later followers like Tzŭ-ssŭ, the Master's grandson, and Meng K'o and Hsün Ch'ing, both great champions of the Ju school. As to the others mentioned by Han Fei, one was practically unknown, there being no record of him anywhere in the ancient writings, and the other was in fact a student of Meng K'o.

In the opinion of posterity, however, the most important of the K'ung scholars was Tseng Ts'an, the arch filial-pietist. There is, for instance, the anecdote of his stripping

himself naked before his death to show that he had kept intact the body his parents had bestowed on him at birth. Being such a paragon of filial virtue, Tseng Ts'an has been credited with the authorship of the *Classic of Filial Piety*. This, however, was apparently a later compilation, though its material might have been gathered from the teachings of his school.

In a famous passage in this *Classic* Tseng Ts'an is represented as having a *tête-à-tête* with his great Master, who taught him that the duty of children to parents is the fountain-head of all the virtues. 'The body and the limbs, the hair and the skin, are given one by one's parents,' said Master K'ung, 'and to them no injury should come. This is where filial piety begins. To establish oneself in the world and to promote *tao* is to immortalize one's name and thereby to glorify one's parents. This is where filial piety ends.' [1]

In other words, filial piety was the acme of human conduct according to Tseng Ts'an, who stressed moral cultivation rather than the observance of ritual as the basis of human endeavour. It was he who further developed the Master's ethical principles and, in contradistinction to the ceremonial, established the ethical school as the K'ung orthodoxy. One of the famous sayings of Tseng Ts'an was that he examined himself every day on three points: had he been self-interested in what he had done for others? had he been unfaithful in his intercourse with friends? and had he failed to embody in life the Master's teachings? As we can easily see, it was the flowering of one's moral self that was the goal of Tseng Ts'an's investigation.

3. The Analects – *The Master's Testament*

THE first of the 'Four Books' that bore the imprint of the school of Tseng was a collection of the Master's sayings known as the *Analects*. Properly speaking, it was the testament of the K'ung school, from which all later scholars, no matter to which group they belonged, gladly drew the

source of their inspiration in thought and conduct. It is also here that we gain an intimate glimpse into the life and character of the Master himself.

It is now difficult to reconstruct with exactness the manner in which the *Analects* was first compiled. Tradition has it that it was started by the Master's disciples at the time of his death. This is quite feasible, for while lingering by the Master's grave these devoted mourners would have little else to do than to recall his words and deeds, which were still fresh in their minds. And nothing could have been more natural than for them to embalm those treasured words of the sage, which they had severally recorded, in a permanent form that would preserve for ever the memory of their much revered teacher.

But the work as it stands to-day has many later interpolations. It contains not only the discourse between Master K'ung and his pupils, but also numerous passages by Tseng Ts'an, Yu Jo, Tzŭ-yu, Tzŭ-chang, and Tzŭ-hsia, all of them young students of language and literature keenly interested in keeping alive the Master's great tradition. Thus, though evidences are meagre, it is safe to assert that the original *Analects* was mainly a composite work of the immediate disciples of Master K'ung, especially of the younger set just mentioned. The book, however, did not reach its present shape until many years later in the hands of their students, who were two generations removed from the great Master. Chapter nineteen, for instance, which records the words of Tseng Ts'an, Tzŭ-yu, Tzŭ-hsia, and Tzŭ-chang, as well as their older colleague Tzŭ-kung, was certainly a later addition. Our belief is that the anonymous editor of the book, who ultimately sorted and bound together the bamboo strips on which these discourses were inscribed, was probably a follower of Tseng Ts'an, who, alone of the Master's disciples, was called by the honorary title of 'Master', while the others, with one exception,[2] were only mentioned by name.

4. The Great Learning

THE second important book of Master Tseng's school was *The Great Learning*, traditionally attributed to Tseng Ts'an himself. Modern scholars, however, tend to discredit his share in the book because of several passages which contain phrases and references definitely of a much later origin. But, whoever its author may be, the book was undoubtedly a product of Tseng Ts'an's school and represented his mature interpretation of the Master's political and ethical views.

A unique feature of *The Great Learning*, which argues for its later appearance, is the connected logical reasoning it shows in support of a general thesis. Its prose, too, is much more articulate than that of the *Analects*. The author's ideas develop smoothly and cogently as he expounds step by step the text attributed to Master K'ung that 'the way of Great Learning is to illustrate illustrious virtue, to renovate the people, and to abide in the sovereign good.' [3] 'The ancients,' continued the passage, 'who wished to illustrate their illustrious virtue throughout the great world, set themselves to govern their own states well. Wishing to govern their states well, they started by keeping their families in order. Wishing to order their families well, they cultivated themselves. Wishing to cultivate themselves, they rectified their hearts; wishing to rectify their hearts, they sought to be sincere in their thoughts; wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they extended their knowledge to the utmost. Such extension of knowledge consists in the investigation of things.

'Things having been investigated, their knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts became sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were well governed. Their states being well governed, then the whole world enjoyed peace and tranquillity.' [4]

Here again we have a perfect example of the blending of

ethics with politics, characteristic of the Ju philosophy. According to it, no matter what the present trouble was and how much the state had fallen, moral cultivation was the panacea for all social diseases, because it was the foundation of society. It was the root of everything: a well-balanced individual, a well-ordered family, a well-governed state, and a happy and harmonious world. It was also the goal of every one from the Son of Heaven down to the lowliest person.

5. *Tzŭ-ssŭ, a worthy Heir of the K'ung House*

THE GREAT LEARNING has also been attributed to Tzŭ-ssŭ (K'ung Chieh), the Master's grandson and a disciple of Tseng Ts'an. Since Master K'ung's son Li had little to distinguish him, the mantle of the K'ung family fell upon Tzŭ-ssŭ, who proved to be a worthy heir. From the meagre account of his life remaining to us we learn that Tzŭ-ssŭ was apparently just as badly off in worldly affairs as was K'ung Ch'iu. Though highly honoured by the rulers of Wey and Lu, the young scion of the K'ung house seems to have led a life of privation, for the patrimony left him by his bookish grandsire appears to have been inadequate for a comfortable living. But, though poor, he would not accept gifts that were not properly offered. He declined, for instance, a friend's present of a fur coat, when the only clothing he had was a tattered unlined robe, because he resented being told that the gift was made at random. 'You give so haphazardly,' he told his friend, 'as if you were casting your gifts into a ditch. Poor as I am, I cannot think of myself as a ditch.' [5] The fur coat, consequently, was returned to the donor.

The same account reveals that when Tzŭ-ssŭ was in Lu, its duke was most assiduous in inquiring after his health and in sending him presents of meat from the ducal cauldron. But Tzŭ-ssŭ hated the idea of having to bow like a footman every time the gift came with a message from the duke. So at last he refused it on the ground that he would not be foddered like a dog or horse. On another occasion, Tzŭ-ssŭ had a talk with the duke himself. The latter inquired politely

what Tzŭ-ssŭ thought of feudal princes who befriended scholars. Again Tzŭ-ssŭ was displeased. He replied grumpily: 'The ancients have said that a scholar should be served, not befriended,' for Tzŭ-ssŭ believed: 'With regard to our stations in life, Sir, you are my lord, and I am your liege. How dare I be friends with you? But with regard to virtue, I am superior to you, and you should serve me, Sir. How can we be just friends?'[6]

This assertion of the scholar's dignity and independence was certainly more than Master K'ung could ever make. Perhaps the times had changed and the scholar class, of which Master K'ung was an epitome, had gained in honour and prestige in the course of two generations. Or perhaps it was due to the spirited temperament of Tzŭ-ssŭ himself, who had such a high opinion of himself that he insisted on exalting virtue and learning above all worldly advantages. In any case, Tzŭ-ssŭ stood out among his compeers as a distinguished member of the K'ung school and, following in the footsteps of Master Tseng, his tutor, made morality the highest of human attainments.

6. The Doctrine of the Mean

IT is rather doubtful whether Tzŭ-ssŭ had anything to do with *The Great Learning*. But to his claim as author of the *Doctrine of the Mean*, another of the four important books of the K'ung school, there is little disagreement.[7] There is a suspicion, however, that some of its passages, especially those in the second half, might be interpolations by a follower of his school. Like *The Great Learning*, the book begins with a chapter stating the general theme, supposedly handed down by Master K'ung. It reads: 'To have no emotions of pleasure and anger, sorrow and joy, surging up, is to be described as being in a state of equilibrium. To have these emotions surging up, but all in due time, is to be described as being in a state of harmony. This state of equilibrium is the supreme foundation of the great universe, and this state of harmony, its universal path. Once equilibrium

and harmony are achieved, Heaven and Earth maintain their proper positions, and the myriad things are nourished.' [8]

The quest for equilibrium and harmony, or the 'mean-in-action', is therefore the main purport of this book. But, instead of developing the subject in a systematic way with words of his own, Tzŭ-ssŭ was satisfied with invoking sanctions from his grandfather. In this way the *Doctrine of the Mean* is not much different from the *Analects* as a collection of the Master's sayings. But Tzŭ-ssŭ's innovation lay in the numerous explanatory passages he inserted after or in between his quotations from Master K'ung. These comments became eloquent towards the end of the work when he discourses brilliantly on reality (*cheng*) in Heaven and realness (*cheng*) in Man. 'It is the way of Heaven to be the real. It is the way of man to attain the real. To be real is to hit the mean without effort, to possess it without the exercise of thought, and to be centred in the way with a natural ease – this is to be a sage. To attain the real is to choose the good and hold fast to it. This involves a thorough study of what is good, inquiring extensively about it, cogitating over it carefully, making it clear through contrast, and earnestly putting it into practice.' [9]

In particular, the book stresses 'human realness in action.' with its capacity to transform and to give full development to man's nature. This realness to oneself also transcends the material end and is linked to the great virtue of Heaven. 'It is only the individual possessed of supreme realness who can make the warp and woof of the great fabric of society, who can establish the great foundation of the world, and who can understand the transforming and nurturing processes of Heaven and Earth. Can there be anything beyond himself on which he depends? His human-heartedness, how pervading! His depth, how unfathomable! His heavenliness, how overwhelming! Who is there who can comprehend this unless he possess superior intelligence and sagely wisdom, unless he reach out to the spiritual power of Heaven!' [10]

In many respects Tzŭ-ssŭ seems to be more of a philoso-

pher than his sage grandfather. It is obvious that in these passages he was searching for a true way for the individual, and found it in man's realness to himself as well as in the 'doctrine of the mean'. The path, moreover, was the same for the little fellow as for the princely man. The latter, so his grandfather believed, acted according to the course of the mean, to which he consistently held fast; whereas the former acted contrary to it because he had no sense of moral caution. But to Tzŭ-ssŭ the distinction between the two was not so absolute. 'The way of the princely man,' he asserted, 'is widely apparent and yet hidden. Thus the ordinary man and woman, ignorant though they are, can have some inkling of it; but, in its perfection, even a sage finds something there which he does not comprehend. The ordinary man and woman, however much below the standard of virtue, can still walk in its path; but in its consummation, even a sage finds something there which he cannot put into practice. ... Such is the way of the princely man: its simple beginning is to be found in the intercourse of the common folk, but in its ultimate reaches it may be examined only in the light of Heaven and Earth.'[11]

To conclude, we can easily see that, just as Master K'ung had paved the way for a system of ethics for peasants and nobles alike, so had Tzŭ-ssŭ, his worthy successor, found a universal and inexhaustible way for all men. This was the path of centrality, which the common people could attempt to follow, but which even nobles and scholars could hardly attain in its final stage. And if Master K'ung had created the ethical man, so had Tzŭ-ssŭ discovered to himself, while elaborating on his grandfather's ideas, 'the reasoning, metaphysically-minded individual'.

With the appearance of the *Analects*, *The Great Learning*, and the *Doctrine of the Mean*, the evolution of the Ju philosophy was well on its way. The great *tao* of Master K'ung was being transmitted and enlarged. It was only a matter of time before it was made the orthodox doctrine of the Chinese people. But before this was accomplished, the followers of the K'ung school had to fight their way to

supremacy against the increasing opposition of the rival philosophers who had risen in the wake of Master K'ung. It is to these unorthodox teachers that we shall now turn in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

RIVAL SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHY

1. *The Period of the Warring States*

INSTEAD of progressing towards the ideals of a Great Commonwealth as conceived by the K'ung scholars, the Chinese kingdom further degenerated in the days of Tseng Ts'an and Tzŭ-ssŭ. The Chou sovereign remained on the throne, but his authority was disregarded and his prerogative as the Son of Heaven was confined to religious matters alone. In consequence, even his nominal kingship was challenged by the feudal lords of the great states. In the course of time these rulers assumed one after another the presumptuous title of king, thus making themselves equals of the Chou sovereign not only in fact but also in name. What a severe blow it would have been to Master K'ung, the feudal torch-bearer, had he lived on to these unruly times!

The period after Master K'ung is known in history as that of the Warring States. An appropriate name, it speaks eloquently of the turbulent conditions of the age. As a result of the continuous wars the political situation in China was greatly changed, and seven big states now emerged to overrun practically the whole country. These were Ch'i in the east, Ch'u in the south, Ch'in in the north-west, Yen, a new power, in the north-east, and Han, Wei, and Chao, offspring of the mighty Tsin, in the north. At the same time, those small principalities that had flourished in Master K'ung's time had been either eliminated from the scene or squeezed between their strong neighbours with barely any space for a lingering existence. The entire history of the period was therefore one of endless struggle for supremacy among the great powers.

In an age where might was right, the rulers of these contending states all strove to build up a powerful army for the

pursuit of their selfish ends. Their desire for conquest was insatiable; their ambitions were overwhelming. Wars, moreover, were no longer governed by a feudal code of honour as in the olden days, but fought to a finish in the most devastating manner possible with a great deal of bloodshed. Lands were annexed and subjects enslaved, while enemy soldiers were massacred by the thousands. On the debris of fallen cities and the mounds of the dead there rose to eminence and power intriguing politicians, ruthless generals, and autocratic rulers, who all wallowed in wealth at the expense of the common people.

With increasing riches and power, the kings of the Warring States indulged themselves to such an extent that their lusts and dissipations belittled even the licentious excesses of the earlier days. In almost every state the rulers lived in great pomp. They wore gorgeous garments ornamented with pearls and jade; owned carved boats and embroidered carriages; lived in magnificent palaces with porches and pavilions. They also indulged in feasting and carousing. The lord of a large state was served with a hundred courses, so much so that 'eyes could not see all the dishes, hands could not handle them all, and the mouth could not taste them all.'[1] Even the minister of a small principality like Wey, according to a contemporary witness, had in his house hundreds of decorated vehicles, hundreds of horses fed with grain, and several hundred concubines clothed in finery. From these stories the extravagance of a great king can be well imagined.

The above picture affords a striking contrast to the sad plight of the peasants, who were weighed down by the triple burdens of war, taxation, and conscription. Their miseries were graphically described by Meng K'o, who, speaking of his time, asserted that while there was fat meat in the lord's kitchen and there were fat horses in the lord's stable the people were a picture of hunger and privation. Meng K'o further stated that in times of plenty immense stores of provisions were consumed by armies engaged in war, while in calamitous years the old and feeble died by the thousands in valleys and

ditches, and the able-bodied were scattered about to the four quarters of the globe. Such disorganization of the rural community constituted a serious threat to the very fabric of feudal society. Under these circumstances insecurity bred discontent, which in turn brought disorder; and in their wake came the final dissolution of the battered Chou system.

2. *The Battle of Minds*

ANOTHER disruptive force that hastened the process of deterioration came from the intellectuals who threatened to supplant the orthodoxy of the K'ung school with their new heterogeneous teachings. This was an age of great mental activity, in which all kinds of original ideas spread unchecked. The Chinese mind, hitherto long confined to tradition, seemed suddenly to burst forth from its trammels and riot in its new freedom. Thus, with his inhibitions gone, man was free to look at life anew from any angle he chose and to draw whatever conclusion he liked. With renewed zeal and curiosity he began to explore all the highways and byways of thought.

During the long Chou dynasty the individual Chinese had gradually come of age. Then as he matured his mentality began to unfold and expand. But at the same time life became more complicated. Finding himself in the midst of a great upheaval, he was more than ever puzzled by the myriad questions confronting him. These he was determined to solve. In fact, the more chaotic the conditions were around him, the more alert he became and the more receptive he was to those new outlandish ideas that were in the air. These in turn sharpened his wits and stimulated his intellect until he too grew restive with thought. In this way the greatest intellectual movement ever known in China came about.

Ironically enough, Master K'ung, who would have been the last to give sanction to these unorthodox ideas, himself had contributed unwittingly to their development. As we know, it was he who had first taken the Chou classics from

official custody and presented them to the public; it was he who had disseminated learning among a wide circle of adherents; and it was also he who had set an example to scholars to propagate their teachings on their travels. In other words, it was under Master K'ung's tutelage that the Chinese had begun the study of their ancient culture and grown enthusiastic over it, thereby opening the way for the spectacular rise of the so-called 'hundred schools' of philosophy.

Generally speaking, all schools of Chinese thought sprang from the main Chou trunk. But they branched out, as was natural, in different directions, and often became so transformed through grafting that they were hardly recognizable as offspring of the mother stock. At times the Chou thinkers also professed to have drawn their sustenance from the earlier Shang and Hsia dynasties as well as from mythical times, in which the sage kings of antiquity had reigned. But whatever the origin of their philosophies, it was in the Chou soil that they were rooted, by the Chou genius that they were nourished, and in the light of the Chou intelligence that they were brought to fruition.

If the teachings of Master K'ung represented the main bulk of Chou culture, as we have shown, then the others were mostly offshoots that had grown from the grafted limbs. In fact, so luxuriant and strong were these new shoots that they had almost overshadowed the trunk itself. The story of how these new schools of philosophy combined in their effort to undermine the orthodox system of the K'ung school, and how they strove with each other for supremacy in this most flourishing period of Chinese thought, is as intriguing as any ideological warfare of the present century.

3. *The Triumph of the Female*

AMONG the unorthodox schools the greatest was the Taoist, founded reputedly by Lao-tan, the Old Big-Ear, also known as Lao-tzŭ, the Old Master. An elder contemporary of K'ung Ch'iu, Lao-tan was, according to tradition, keeper of

the imperial archives in the royal capital at Lo and, consequently, one of the most learned men of his time. As the reader will remember, it was to Lao-tan that K'ung Ch'iu went to inquire about the rites and received instead a lesson on humility and simple living. Tradition further stated that the same Lao-tan, after having retired from office, travelled west from the Chou capital to an unknown destination. While on his way, so it was said, he was kept at a frontier pass by the warden with a request that he commit his teachings to writing. This Lao-tan did in a book of 5,000 words known to posterity as *Tao Teh Ching*, or the *Classic of Tao*, one of the profoundest books in the world's philosophy.

The above story, however, is of dubious origin and a great deal of controversy has been raised over the authorship and date of this remarkable book. Suffice it to say that, while we believe in the existence of such an historical figure as Lao-tan and in his meeting with K'ung Ch'iu at Lo, we are, on the other hand, rather sceptical about his authorship of the 5,000-word book, which, judged from both its content and style, must have been a later work, most likely a product of the era of the Warring States. Nevertheless it must be admitted that the *Classic of Tao*, whatever its authorship, is by all standards the most comprehensive treatise we have on Taoist philosophy, poignant with thought and rich in imagination. Moreover, the frequent rhymes and the epigrammatic style make it almost a poetic piece and, as such, unique among the philosophical writings of the period.

In our opinion, whereas Lao-tan, in his capacity as an imperial librarian, was in all probability a northerner, perhaps a native of the royal domain or one of its neighbouring states, the author of the *Classic of Tao* was more likely a southerner from the big Yangtze state of Ch'u, whence came most of the Taoist teachers.[2] For this reason, the Taoist concepts expressed in it were also diametrically opposed to the K'ung tenets, which were fundamentally those of the northern people on the great plains of the Yellow River. Ever since then the two streams of Chinese thought –

the first visionary and care-free, and the second vigorous and aggressive – have been running counter to each other for centuries; and so they remain to this day.

As we have already pointed out, while K'ung Ch'iu was this-worldly in his outlook, Lao-tzŭ, author of the *Classic of Tao* – to be distinguished hereafter from Lao-tan, the Chou librarian – taught a philosophy that is essentially naturalistic and anti-social. For some reason, the south in those days was the centre of recluses and naturalists, some of whom had crossed Master K'ung's path in the course of his travels. Reacting differently to the disorders of the age, they spurned as futile all K'ung Ch'iu's attempts at political reform as well as his pleas for a return to the ceremony and culture of the early Chou period. They were, in the words of one of their group, fellows who withdrew altogether from the world of men, regarding nature as their great retreat, simple living their ideal of life, farming their profession – if they ever had any – and *wu-wei* (inaction or non-interference) the essence of their creed.

This Taoist doctrine of *wu-wei* is essentially the theory of 'letting alone'. As a philosophy of life it means that one should keep within the limit of one's nature and let one's bodily functions take care of themselves. The same theory, when applied to politics, made the Taoists the first advocates of a *laissez-faire* policy. Asserting that the best way to govern is not to govern at all, Lao-tzŭ gave the following famous advice to his readers: 'Rule a big country as you would fry a small fish.'[3] The meaning of this cryptic sentence, though enigmatic at first sight, is not hard to explain. To fry a small fish, we know, needs little time and skill. And to rule a big country would be just as easy and simple if the ruler would only let his people alone, so that they could live peacefully and happily together without being bothered with government. Therefore, the sage said: 'I do nothing, and the people are reformed of themselves; I love quietude and the people are righteous of themselves; I deal in no business and the people grow rich by themselves; I have no desires and the people are simple and honest by themselves.'[4]

In the *Classic of Tao*, Lao-tzŭ not only taught the virtue of non-action, but he also extolled the utility of non-being. Taking as illustrations the hollowness of a clay vessel, the holes of a wheel, and the interior of a house, in all of which utility comes from emptiness, he stated the thesis that 'by the existence of things we profit, and by the non-existence of things we are served.' [5] The same can be said of the bellows, which, though hollow, never bends, and which, 'the more it is worked, the more it brings forth.' [6] For the same reason, Lao-tzŭ exalted the 'Spirit of the Valley' – its hollowness, like the bellows, is symbolic of the Taoist 'void'. The valley, therefore, was called 'the Mystic Female',[7] which was the name he gave to a great principle of life, for, besides being the 'mother of all things', the Female also conquers by being soft and weak, humble and low. Just as weakness overcomes strength, and softness hardness – there is nothing weaker than water, yet none can surpass it in penetrating the hard – so the Female conquers the Male by remaining passive in a lowly position. The lowly or the meek, of course, is again a typical Taoist ideal, since to be low is to be nearer the *Tao*, and to yield is to be preserved whole.

With ideas like these, it is obvious that the Taoists would oppose all human institutions as detrimental to the free display of man's true self. So, instead of teaching such artificial virtues as human-heartedness and righteousness, to which Lao-tzŭ attributed the cause of man's degeneration, he advocated the virtues of humility and quietude. He also asserted the necessity of reverting to a state of pristine simplicity, in which man's original nature was untarnished by worldly contacts and unfettered by human rules. Thus, rejecting all learning and ceremonies as artificial, and hence harmful, Lao-tzŭ ridiculed the man of *li* as one who, 'finding no response to his teaching, would roll up his sleeves to force it on others.' [8] The man of *li* here, of course, strongly reminds us of K'ung Ch'iu's more dogmatic disciples.

Likewise, in Lao-tzŭ's opinion, works of art and culture, and, in fact, all treasures that 'keep their owners awake at night',[9] should be destroyed so as to rid man's heart of the

desire for possession, than which there could be no greater evil. Lastly, even wisdom and knowledge came under attack. These too should be abandoned along with all the artificial virtues, so that people could be profited a hundredfold. In this connexion it is interesting to note the distinction Lao-tzŭ made between knowledge and *Tao*. He wrote:

> By pursuing knowledge, one gains day by day;
> Through pursuing *Tao*, one loses day by day.
> By continual losing, one attains inaction;
> By doing nothing, everything is done.
> He who conquers the world, often does so by doing nothing.
> When one is compelled to do something,
> The world is already beyond his conquering.[10]

From this brief description we can easily see that, though using the same word '*tao*', Lao-tzŭ and K'ung Ch'iu differed widely in its interpretation. Whereas Master K'ung's *tao* is ethical in sense and deals with the way of life, the *Tao* of the Taoists is essentially metaphysical and can be taken as an all-embracing first principle for the myriad things, each of which has its own individual property known as *Teh*. To be more specific, the *Tao* in Lao-tzŭ's book is the invariable law underlying the changing phenomena of the universe. That is why it is eternal, all pervading, inexhaustible in its use, and fathomless like the fountain-head of all things; that is why *Tao*, which follows the way of nature, is itself followed by Heaven, Earth, and Man; that is also why

> Out of *Tao*, One is born;
> Out of One, Two;
> Out of Two, Three;
> Out of Three, the myriad things.
> The myriad things bear the Male, and embrace the Female,
> And attain harmony through the union of immaterial breaths.[11]

4. *An All-embracing Love*

COMPARED with the naturalistic and mysterious tenets of Lao-tzŭ, the doctrines of Mo Ti, founder of another great school of Chinese philosophy, appear especially prosaic and

earthy. Mo Ti's life, like that of Lao-tan, was completely wrapped in obscurity. In this case we are not even sure about his name, for according to one theory [12] the word 'Mo' did not refer to the philosopher's family, but his social standing, which was that of a criminal! [13] Likewise, the word 'Ti' might mean a pheasant's feather, with which the 'criminal-philosopher' decked himself in the manner of the country-folk.[14] It is, of course, difficult to determine at this distant date the accuracy of such claim. Actually, of only one thing we are certain – and that is that Mo Ti came from a low stratum of society. This is an important fact which we must bear in mind if we want to understand the many peculiar traits of Mo Ti's thought.

Nor are we any better informed about the date and place of Mo Ti's birth.[15] From all available sources we gather that he was a contemporary of Tzŭ-ssŭ and flourished in the fifth century B.C. We also know that for a short time Mo Ti held a minor official position in Sung, and that he had travelled extensively in Ch'i and Lu in the east, and Ch'u in the south, where he probably died.

An early authority states that Mo Ti first went to school in the tenets of K'ung, but, disappointed, founded a school of his own. This is possible, for though the fundamental teachings of Ju and Mo were widely different, they both drew their inspiration from the same source, namely, the sage-kings of antiquity. But in this respect Mo Ti went even further back than K'ung Ch'iu, as his particular idol was the Great Yü, legendary founder of the Hsia dynasty. Popularly known to the West as the Chinese Noah, Yü was certainly a greater man than the famed Hebrew, for, instead of riding the deluge like Noah, he had actually stalled it. By saving the vast plains of the Middle Kingdom from the floods that had been devastating the country for decades, Yü had done a tremendous service to the Chinese people. Besides being their saviour, he was also noted for his self-sacrifice and devotion to duty. While he was combating the flood he was said to have suffered endless hardship and privation. We are also told that Yü 'bathed in the rain, combed his hair with

the wind, and rubbed his body smooth in the toils and privations of his travelling.'[16]

The spirit of the legendary Yü was exactly the spirit of Mo Ti, who, coming from the lower depth of society, taught a philosophy of life typical of his class, and hence diametrically opposed to the aristocratic leanings of both K'ung Ch'iu and Lao-tzŭ. In fact, Mo Ti not only preached but also lived a life of rigid discipline and self-mortification. For the good of his fellow-men, he and his disciples, all clad in coarse garments and straw sandals, would toil day and night without ceasing. 'If we do not do this,' said his disciples, 'we are not practising the *tao* of Yü, and hence are unworthy to be the followers of Mo.'[17] It was for this spirit of self-sacrifice that Mo Ti is known to posterity as one who would willingly wear his body smooth from head to foot for the sake of humanity.

As a member of the under-privileged class, Mo Ti had no love for such aristocratic arts as dancing, music, embroidery, or the other refinements of life. His plebeian instinct rebelled against the extravagances of the nobility in their weddings, funerals, and the three years' mourning, and, in fact, all the elaborate feudal rites so dear to Master K'ung. Indeed, to our proletarian philosopher such things were pure waste of time and wealth and detrimental to the economy of the people, who had to pay with their blood and sweat for all these costly performances of the aristocracy. Attacking the lavish burials of his time, Mo Ti wrote: 'Even when an ordinary person dies, the expenses of the funeral are such as to reduce the family almost to beggary. But when a ruler dies, by the time enough gold and jade, pearls and precious stones have been found to lay by the body, wrappings of fine stuff to bind round it, chariots and horses to inter with it, and an immense quantity of tripods and drums, jars and bowls, halberds, swords, screens, banners, and objects in ivory and leather to bury in the tomb, the treasuries of the state would be completely exhausted.'[18]

The impoverishment of the country, in Mo Ti's opinion, was one of the greatest evils that brought not only misery

upon the people but also a curse from Heaven. To Mo Ti, who came from the heart of the people, Heaven was the supreme divine being, whose influence on men was tremendous and whose awesome majesty should be feared and obeyed. 'What the Heavenly Mind affirms,' Mo Ti asserted, ' is right, and what he denies is wrong.'[19] He believed that even the tip of a hair was the work of Heaven. Omniscient and omnipotent, the great Deity saw clearly what was going on everywhere in the world, good deeds as well as bad; and meted out his rewards and punishments accordingly.

The teachings of Mo Ti, which originated from the people, were also intended for them. And to this vast ignorant class what more powerful appeal could there be than that of a ruling Providence, who watched eternally over human affairs? This religious appeal, however, did not make Mo Ti a fanatic, or the leader of a new religious movement, as has often been claimed. On the contrary, what he actually did was to revive the ancient Chinese religion, now in danger of being discarded by such intellectual sceptics as Lao-tzŭ and K'ung Ch'iu. To counteract their influence, Mo Ti advocated a renewed Sinitic faith among his followers. He also succeeded, as none had done before him, in using religion as a motivating force for his doctrine, which, like that of Master K'ung, is essentially human and this-worldly.

The central core of Mo Ti's philosophy is love. It is a supreme virtue broader in its scope and application than the 'human-heartedness' of Master K'ung. According to the latter, since human relationships were not the same, so different too should be one's feelings towards different people. The love for one's brother, for instance, should differ from that for one's father, just as one's love for one's father could not be the same as that for a neighbour's father. But Mo Ti, who came from the masses, had in mind the simpler and more primitive virtue of the countryfolk, and so he announced that love should be equal and alike for everybody. This universal love, he further contended, was in fact the only panacea for the strife-torn world of his time. If everybody would love everybody else as he loved himself, so

Mo Ti argued, there would be an end to all the contentions and troubles in society. This was indeed a grand ideal, which Mo Ti advocated heartily and persuasively with all the weapons of logic at his disposal.

To a man of love like Mo Ti, the greatest foe was hatred, which culminated in killing. In this connexion, what could be worse than the large-scale massacre of mankind known as war? Though Chinese philosophers all condemned war, Mo Ti was especially emphatic and vehement in its denunciation. As a matter of fact, he not only preached against war, but went a step further by putting his words into action. Thus Mo Ti organized his followers into a strictly disciplined militant band, whose aim it was to stop aggressive war and to die, if necessary, in defence of its victims. One story has it that Mo Ti, hearing that the great state of Ch'u was about to attack Sung, walked ten days and nights to Ch'u to dissuade its king from his warlike purpose. At the same time, for fear that he might fail in his peace mission, Mo Ti posted 300 of his veteran disciples, armed with implements of defence he had devised, on the city walls of Sung to await the invading army. Such precaution, fortunately, proved unnecessary.

Both the militant and ascetic traditions of the Mo school continued for centuries to the end of the Chou dynasty. During his lifetime Mo Ti had followers who would willingly have sacrificed themselves for the good of humanity. The same spirit and discipline was maintained after his death under the leadership of a Grand Master, elected from among the faithful. In this way the Mo school also flourished during the period of the Warring States as a popular military organization, and though it never broke out openly into revolution it must have been by its nature a disruptive force in the aristocratic Chou society. But what provoked the K'ung scholars most was the unorthodox teaching of the Mo school rather than its underground activity. As a result of this feeling, the battle between the two camps was particularly violent. Not content with hurling arguments and ideological abuse at each other, the combatants, it seemed,

engaged in a duel of name-calling. Thus, while the Mohists branded the men of ceremony as Ju, or 'weaklings', the latter, in retaliation, stigmatized their swashbuckling foes as Mo, the 'criminals'. But, whereas the followers of K'ung were slow in taking to themselves the uncomplimentary epithet, the Mohists accepted their nickname without any grudge. Indeed, were they not justly proud of their Master, who, though coming from the downtrodden masses, had risen to be their spokesman and prophet, and, we would like to add, the greatest teacher of a great folk philosophy?

5. *The Happiness of being Non-moral*

ANOTHER philosopher of the period, often mentioned together with Mo Ti, was Yang Chu, an apostle of egoism. Though the two had long been linked together by their common enemy, the K'ung scholars, this should not blind us to the fact that their tenets were fundamentally different, for Yang Chu taught, contrary to Mo Ti's all-embracing love, a doctrine of self-love and sensual enjoyment In these philosophical assertions Yang Chu seemed to be alone. But, if he could be assigned to any school, it would be to the Taoist, on the ground that they both had non-moral conceptions of life and a fatalistic belief in death, which provided a good excuse for indulgence in this world. There is a story of Yang Chu's meeting with Lao-tzŭ,[20] which also helps to establish his relationship with the Taoist founder, but which, on the other hand, being an anecdote, does not prove that they were contemporaries. On the contrary, modern critics are inclined to believe that Yang Chu probably flourished in the fourth century B.C. in the northern state of Wei during the reign of its king Hui (370–319 B.C.). Like his fellow-philosophers, he made frequent lecture trips to other states, where his teaching gained great vogue among the people.

These scanty facts are all that we know about this interesting exponent of Chinese Epicureanism. Likewise, all that remains of his philosophy is a mere chapter in the Taoist

book *Lieh-tzŭ*. Here again it is highly doubtful, even if we accept the portion as authentic, whether it represents a complete digest of Yang Chu's teaching. The best we can do, therefore, is to glean whatever material we can find in it and present it as illustrative of one phase of ancient Chinese philosophy.

To state it briefly, Yang Chu's fundamental contention is that, since our life in this world is short, a large part of it being spent in babyhood, senility, and the long hours of sleep, we must make the most of it. Moreover, Yang Chu maintained that fame and praise were ephemeral and that the only things that made life worth living were sensual gratifications, such as the pleasures of food and dress and the enjoyment of music and beauty. These were what actually gave zest to life. 'Let us eat and drink,' so Yang Chu would have advised, 'let us live in pleasure; gratify the ears and eyes; acquire servants and maidens; enjoy music and wine. And if the day is insufficient, let us carry our pleasure on through the night' [21]

To expound his attitude towards life further, Yang Chu told a story of two happy voluptuaries, brothers of Tzŭ-ch'an, a famous minister of Chêng,[22] here introduced as a self-righteous official of the K'ung school. His two brothers, however, were entirely different from him. The elder, a jolly Bacchanalian, had in his house 'a thousand barrels of wine and hillocks of yeast, so that strong smells of liquor greeted the passers-by within a hundred paces from the door': while the younger, a debauchee, filled each of the thirty or forty apartments of his compound with a girl of exquisite beauty, with whom he revelled day and night. Naturally, the self-righteous Tzŭ-ch'an was worried and at last got up enough courage to remonstrate with them. But the brothers received him coldly and, instead of listening to him, gave him a piece of their mind:

You value propriety and righteousness in order to excel before others, and you do violence to your nature in striving for glory. That to us appears to be worse than death. Our only fear is that,

wishing to enjoy fully the beauties of this life, and to exhaust all the pleasures of the present, we should be prevented by the repletion of the belly from drinking what our palate delights in, and by the slackening of our strength from revelling with the pretty girls. We have no time to trouble about bad reputations or mortal dangers. Therefore for you to argue with us and to disturb our minds merely because you surpass others in your ability to govern, and to allure us with promises of glory and appointment, is indeed shameful and deplorable.[23]

Obviously, this kind of teaching was like a slap in the face to the K'ung scholars, but what especially pricked them was the disparaging way in which Yang Chu spoke of K'ung Ch'iu as well as the sage rulers of antiquity like Shun, Yü, and the Duke of Chou. These four, so Yang Chu charged, were fools who literally worked themselves to death merely for the sake of a good name – and what is a good name, he asked, but a posthumous bauble which no one can enjoy? Virtue too, of which they boasted, is but a deception, entirely external, superfluous, and fruitless. So Yang Chu followed the Taoist idea by asserting that we should revert to a state of primitive simplicity; but he went beyond Taoism when he maintained that, instead of restraining ourselves because of moral considerations, we should give the freest rein to our nature and gratify it to the fullest. A degenerate noble who lived a leisurely life in the garden of pleasure, Yang Chu taught a philosophy of decadence in sharp contrast to Mo Ti's asceticism and K'ung Ch'iu's moral endeavour. It is no wonder that they could not get along together. So we find that the followers of K'ung were as vociferous in their denunciation of Yang Chu as they were of Mo Ti.

6. *The Dream of a Butterfly*

If Yang Chu was a decadent, then Chuang Chou, Taoist philosopher of the fourth century B.C., might be called a romantic mystic. Probably the most illustrious of his school, Chuang Chou was also the most brilliant. Endowed with great wit and imagination, Chuang Chou was fond of illus-

trating his discourses with beautiful allegories and lively anecdotes that have made him immortal. For this reason, though we know very little about his life, we seem to be better acquainted with him than with the others; we are also attracted by his winning personality that pervades every page of his writing.

A great story-teller, Chuang Chou himself became the centre of a number of fascinating tales that add greatly to the romantic glamour of his life. According to one story, Chuang Chou was fishing in the River P'u when two messengers came from the King of Ch'u to offer him the premiership of the state. But Chuang Chou declined, saying that he much preferred to be a live tortoise that draggled its tail in the mud than a dead one kept in a golden casket in the king's ancestral shrine. 'Begone!' cried Chuang Chou to the king's officers, 'I, too, will wag my tail in the mud.' [24]

The best story about Chuang Chou came from Chuang Chou himself. 'Once upon a time,' he wrote, 'I, Chuang Chou, dreamt that I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of my happiness as a butterfly, unaware that I was Chuang Chou. Suddenly I awaked, and there I was, virtually myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man, dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly, dreaming I am a man.' [25]

Concerning dreams, Chuang Chou had much to say. He wrote: 'It is said that those who dream of a banquet at night may the next morning wail and weep. Those who dream of wailing and weeping may in the morning go out to hunt. But while a man is dreaming, he does not know that he is dreaming; nor can he interpret a dream until the dream is done. It is only when he is awake that he knows it was a dream. By and by comes the Great Awakening, and then we shall find out that life after all was one great dream.' [26]

If life itself is as ephemeral as a dream, so also is death. In fact, when we look at it closely, we shall see with Chuang Chou that both life and death are merely part of the great process of evolution like the change of day and night, and

the succession of spring and autumn. 'When we come into the world,' wrote Chuang Chou, 'it is because we have the occasion to be born; when we go, we simply follow what is natural.' [27] So death is no occasion for sorrow as life is no cause for joy. Bearing this principle in mind, Chuang Chou refrained from wailing at his wife's death; instead, he sat on the ground, singing and beating time on a bowl. And when he himself was about to die he refused a splendid funeral by his disciples, saying, 'With heaven and earth for my coffin, with the sun, moon, and stars as my regalia, and with all the creation to escort me to the grave – are not my funeral paraphernalia complete?' [28] Then in answer to his students' protest that his corpse, if unburied, might fall prey to carrion birds, he observed wistfully, 'Above ground I shall be food for kites; below, I shall be food for ants and crickets. Why rob the one to feed the other?' [29]

This reminds us of the story of Chuang Chou and the skull. One day, so the story goes, while travelling south of Ch'u, Chuang Chou saw by the roadside an empty skull. Striking it with his riding whip, he addressed it thus, 'Wert thou once some ambitious fellow whose inordinate desires brought him to this pass? – some politician who plunged his state in ruin and perished by the axe and halberd? – some wretch who left behind him a blot on the family name? – some beggar who died in the pangs of hunger and cold? Or didst thou reach this state by the natural course of old age?' Then he picked up the skull and, placing it under his head as a pillow, went to sleep. At midnight the skull appeared to him in a dream, and a conversation soon ensued, in which the skull told Chuang Chou of the happiness of the dead. Chuang Chou, however, was unconvinced. He wanted to know whether the skull would wish to be restored to life so that he could revisit his home and the friends of his youth. At this the skull opened its eyes wide and knitted its brows, saying, 'Why should I cast aside happiness greater than that of a king to participate once again in the toils and troubles of mortality?' [30]

According to Chuang Chou, the reason why mankind got

into trouble was that, instead of following the true path of *Tao*, marked by repose, tranquillity, stillness, and inaction, and adapting himself to the natural conditions of existence, man had fettered himself with ceremonial kudos, moral restraints, social obligations, and in fact all the artificialities of civilization. Moreover, not content with meddling with his own nature, man had also imposed on others what he considered right and good for himself. So he put a halter around a horse's neck and a string through an ox's nose; he even attempted to lengthen the duck's legs and shorten the crane's to make them uniform. He was also like the Lu prince of the fable, who killed a straying sea-bird with wine, meat, and temple music. The tragedy, of course, was due to the prince's misunderstanding of the true nature of the bird, which he foolishly treated like himself and not as a bird should be treated, which would much prefer 'to roost in a deep forest, to wander over a plain, to swim in a river or lake, to feed upon fish, to fly, and to settle leisurely.' 'When the bird was already terrified at human voices,' observed Chuang Chou, 'fancy adding all that music!' [31]

Chuang Chou's advice, therefore, was that in order to achieve real happiness man should aim at the free development of his nature without encumbering it with knowledge and wisdom. 'Cherish that which is within you, and shut off that which is without; for much knowledge is a curse.' [32] Furthermore, the essence of *Tao* is to see nothing, hear nothing, and do nothing. 'Let there be absolute repose and absolute purity; do not weary your body, nor disturb your vitality – and you will live for ever. For if the eye sees nothing, and the ear hears nothing, and the mind thinks nothing, then the soul will preserve the body, and the body will live for ever.' [33]

The restoration of the soul by doing nothing is shown in the following allegory of the Yellow Emperor and his pearl. The Emperor, so Chuang Chou tells us, had once travelled north to the Red Lake and ascended the K'un-lun Mountains. Returning home from the trip, he lost his magic pearl. He employed Intelligence to find it, but without suc-

cess; he employed Sight to find it, but without success; he employed Speech to find it, but without success. Finally he employed Nothing, and Nothing found it. 'Strange indeed,' said the Emperor, 'that Nothing should have been able to find it!' [34]

From what we have related above it is obvious that Chuang Chou could not take kindly to the teachings of the K'ung school. To this apostle of nothingness Master K'ung appeared especially like a busybody in his attempt at moral and social reforms. Chuang Chou was therefore scathing in his attacks on K'ung Ch'iu, which were as numerous as they were clever. Sometimes he would circulate apocryphal stories, in which the head of the Ju school would be represented as a Taoist convert, speaking the Taoist language. At other times Master K'ung was shown in his true colours, only to be rebuffed by the Taoists. Once he was said to have visited Lao-tan with the intention of securing the latter's recommendation to the royal house of Chou, to which he wanted to present copies of his work. But Lao-tan received the project coldly, whereupon Master K'ung unrolled a dozen treatises or so and began to expound them until Lao-tan grew impatient. 'This is enough,' he interrupted, 'tell me briefly the gist of it.' [35] 'It is about human-heartedness and righteousness,' [36] replied Master K'ung undaunted. And again the loquacious pedant was about to fall into a lengthy discourse when he was sent away by Lao-tan with the injunction that he had better learn 'how it is that Heaven and Earth maintain their eternal course, the sun and moon their light, the stars their serried ranks, the birds and beasts their flock, the trees and shrubs their station.' [37] In other words, the man of *li* was admonished to follow the course of nature and to learn its secrets, instead of poking his nose into everything and 'laboriously advertising human-heartedness and righteousness like a town crier with his drum, seeking for news of a lost child.' [38]

'No, sir,' said Lao-tan to K'ung Ch'iu, 'what you are doing is to disjoint man's nature!' [39]

Finally, Chuang Chou also told spurious stories of Master

K'ung, in which the latter was maliciously ridiculed as in the tale of the Brigand Chih. Here the ingenious fiction-writer pictured the famous robber Chih and his men as enjoying a feast of minced human liver at the time of K'ung Ch'iu's visit. When the man from Lu was announced, the Brigand got so infuriated at the intrusion that his eyes blazed like fiery comets, his hair stood on end, and 'his hat was lifted off his head.' [40] Fuming and fretting, he threatened to add the visitor's liver to his 'morning stew'. At last, when Master K'ung was presented, the Brigand said to him: 'You dress up in a wide cloak and belt of clipped hide, and by your cant and humbug delude the princes of the world into giving you the wealth and honours that are your only real ambition. There can be no greater brigand than you, and instead of talking so much about the Brigand Chih, I wonder why people do not call you the Brigand K'ung.' [41] On his part, the Sage was servile and fawning in the Brigand's presence. He acted in his best court manner when he reverentially approached his insolent host. We seem to see him as he first advanced at a brisk trot, carefully avoiding the Brigand's mat, and then ran backwards a few steps before he finally prostrated himself twice before the enthroned robber. Later, with the same meticulous care he beat his retreat, only with greater speed this time. In fact, so thoroughly frightened was the Sage that 'when he reached the gate of the camp and regained his carriage, his hands were trembling to such an extent that three times the reins fell out of them. There was a cloud before his eyes and his face was ashen grey. He bent over the fore-rail with sunken head, gasping for breath.' [42] This is certainly the most ridiculous picture of Master K'ung that we have ever seen.

7. *The White Horse and What Not*

FROM what we have related above it is apparent that the school of Ju, as Master K'ung's group came to be called, was only one of the numerous schools in this most prolific period of Chinese thought. The Ju, to be sure, possessed the

advantage of having inherited the orthodox Chou culture handed down by the Duke of Chou and Master K'ung. But just as the imperial Chou position had been greatly impaired in these warring times, so also had the Ju philosophy. Besides its main competitors, such as the Taoists, the Mohists, and, later, the Legalists, there were also a number of other schools, which evolved from and clustered around the major ones, thus adding their lesser lights to the galaxy of Chinese intellects.

The school of 'Name', for instance, taught the theory of knowledge and the necessity of studying natural phenomena; its teachers were also well versed in the art of dialectics. This last led them to propound a series of logical puzzles such as 'An egg has feathers,' 'Fire is not hot,' 'The shadow of a flying bird has never moved,' 'A white dog is black,' and many similar paradoxes [43] equally well known in the writings of this period.

The two most famous names of this school were Hui Shih (fourth century B.C.) and Kung-sun Lung (fourth–third century B.C.). Both dialecticians, the former emphasized the relativity of actual things, while the latter the absoluteness of names. Hui Shih, a friend of Chuang Chou, with whom he had been engaged in many a verbal rebuttal, came to be prime minister of Wei. His works, it was said, filled five carts. Kung-sun Lung, the other logician, was the author of a chapter entitled 'Discourse on the White Horse', in which he averred that 'a white horse is not a horse.' As the story goes, once when Kung-sun Lung was approaching a frontier pass on horseback he was stopped by the guard, who told him that horses were not allowed there. 'But,' replied the philosopher-tourist, 'my horse is white, and a white horse is not a horse.' [44] With these words, he rode away in triumph, leaving the dumbfounded guard at a loss to solve the quibble.

From this Dialectician group emerged a school of sophists known as 'Criss-cross Philosophers'. These were politicians versed in the art of persuasion and intrigue. Founded by Wang Hsü (fourth century B.C.), popularly known as the

Master of the Ghost Vale, from the name of the valley in which he lived and taught, this school had two able representatives in Su Ch'in and Chang I. After having spent their schooldays together at Ghost Vale, the two friends parted to seek their fortunes. Of the two Su Ch'in was the more fortunate. After a short period of disappointment he rose spectacularly to power as president of a sextuple Anti-Ch'in Confederation formed by Ch'i, Ch'u, Yen, Han, Wei, and Chao, with each of the six allied powers conferring on him the seal of a separate chancellorship.

In the meantime Chang I was in great distress. He had been accused of theft and bastinadoed in Ch'u; he had been rudely sent away by his great schoolmate when he had gone to him for help. At last, broken in spirit and fortune, he went back home, only to be showered with reproaches by his wife. 'Just see if my tongue is still in its place,' Chang I calmly said to her. And being told that it was, he remarked, 'That will do.' [45] So he went out to try his luck once more. This time Chang I was more successful and with the same tongue won the confidence of the King of Ch'in, to whom he submitted the scheme of a Pro-Ch'in Union to offset the hostile influence of Su Ch'in's Confederation. Travelling to the Anti-Ch'in confederate states, he sowed the seed of discord so successfully that they set to fighting each other instead of uniting against Ch'in. Thus Su Ch'in's alliance soon collapsed, and the fortunes of the two protagonists now were reversed. Their careers were typical of the so-called itinerant scholars of the time.

There was also a school of Military Strategy founded by Sun Wu, a famous general (sixth–fifth century B.C.), to whom was attributed the authorship of a book of thirteen chapters on the tactics and philosophy of war.[46] Though undoubtedly the product of a later age, it was nevertheless the first book of its kind and has remained a military classic to this day. As for its reputed author, one story has it that he was once commissioned by the King of Wu to organize a corps of 180 women warriors selected from the royal harem. But at their first roll-call the young Amazons, making light

of their captain, burst out laughing. A great disciplinarian, Sun Wu had two offenders, both the king's favourite concubines, decapitated. After that his orders were feared and obeyed and his fame as a general spread far and wide.

Lastly, to complete our list, we must mention an offshoot of the Taoist, the Yin-yang school. It was so called because its members believed in the existence of *yin* (female) and *yang* (male) as two cosmic principles, in whose reactions all creations were produced. Sometimes it was also known as the Five Elements school, because it taught the fantastic theory that each period of history was dominated by one of five elements, namely, earth, wood, metal, fire, and water. According to the same theory these were also the active agents that produced and overcame each other in an endless cycle. Thus metal, after remaining dominant for a certain period of time, would be overcome by fire, just as fire was overcome by water, water by earth, earth by wood, and wood by metal. All in all, it was this school that first synthesized the supernatural views of the Chinese people and welded them into a single system of thought; it furthermore provided a philosophical basis for such occult beliefs as divination, physiognomy, and *feng-shui*,[47] as well as a pseudo-scientific knowledge of the universe. More than anything else, it was a great co-ordinator of the ancient Sinitic superstitions.

Chapter Four

A STALWART CHAMPION OF THE K'UNG SCHOOL

1. *Meng K'o, the Second Sage*

As we have seen, the period of the Warring States was not only an age of political confusion, but also one of intellectual activity, in which virtually 'a hundred schools' of philosophy arose to vie for supremacy. It was indeed an age of sparkling wits, brilliant thinkers, and profound scholars; but of them all Meng K'o stood out as the greatest. With his winning eloquence, moral courage, and deep conviction, he championed the ethical and political doctrines of Master K'ung, at the same time attacking with great zeal the heterodox teachings of the other schools. He also elaborated on the K'ung dogma until it attained a high standard of perfection. In his contribution to Ju philosophy, as in his defence of the great tradition, which he helped to complete, Meng K'o occupies a unique position among the scholars of the K'ung school. Posterity has rightly honoured him as the second sage, next only to the great Master himself.

MENG K'O, popularly known as Master Meng (Mencius), lived in the fourth century B.C. His dates are uncertain. One commonly accepted tradition says that Meng K'o's life covered the eighty-four years from 372 to 289 B.C.[1] He was born in the small principality of Tsou,[2] adjoining Lu. In fact, his ancestry could be traced to the great Meng family of Lu, some of whose members had once studied ceremony with K'ung Ch'iu. But with time, the distant branches of the once noble family became dispossessed and had to herd with the common people, among whom the boy K'o grew up.

Meng K'o's father, it seems, played little part in the upbringing of his son. It is believed that he died early when

K'o was only three years old. On the other hand, K'o's mother was a famous historical figure, generally regarded as an epitome of motherly virtue. In the course of centuries a number of anecdotes, too delightful to be left untold, have been gathered to illustrate the way in which the future sage was reared. According to one of these, Mother Meng moved three times in order to provide her child with the best possible environment. The story says that they first lived near a cemetery, where burying and mourning so impressed the boy that he took to mimicking the procedures with great seriousness. 'This is no place for my son,' [3] said the mother, and so she moved to an apartment near the market-place. Here young K'o straightway became a pedlar, bargaining and vaunting his wares from morning till night. Greatly concerned, his mother made another move, this time by a schoolhouse, where the sensitive child began to improve hi manners by imitating the dignified bearing of the scholars. Like them, he bowed and yielded precedence as he advanced and retired – truly a pretty sight to see in a little boy!

Another story relates that the boy Meng saw a butcher kill a pig. 'What for?' he asked his mother. 'To feed you,' the mother answered. But upon second thoughts she repented her remark. 'When I was pregnant with him,' she said to herself, 'I would not sit on a mat that was not properly placed and I would not eat meat that was not properly carved. In this way I started his education early before he was born. And now, just as his intelligence is unfolding, I lie to him. This is teaching him to be dishonest.' [4] So in order to justify her words she went out and bought some pork for the boy.

When Meng K'o grew up he studied with a disciple of Tzŭ-ssŭ, and was thus initiated into the great school of K'ung. At first he was not a particularly diligent student. Then one day, as he stopped in the midst of his recitation, his mother, who had been plying the loom near by, suddenly gashed the web with a knife. Astonished, K'o asked the reason. 'Your inattention to your studies is not much different from my cutting the web,' [5] she said. In both cases

the work was undone when it was only half done. This admonition remained with Meng K'o all his life, making him the most industrious of students – and later the best of scholars.

About Meng K'o's marriage nothing is known except for an interesting, though improbable, story of his wanting to divorce his wife when he found her half-naked in her boudoir. This, he contended, was a serious breach of etiquette, and he made ready to part with her. But Mother Meng saved the situation by summoning her son to her presence for a lecture. 'According to the rules of propriety,' she chided, 'a man raises his voice when he goes up the hall, so as to warn folks of his approach; and he keeps his eyes low as he enters the door for fear that he might detect another's faults. But you yourself have transgressed in etiquette, and yet you blame your wife for it. Isn't that unjust?' [6] The dutiful son admitted his mistake and kept his wife.

2. *'Be Strong to do Good'*

EXCEPT for these scattered incidents, a complete darkness cloaks the first years of Meng K'o's life. This was probably a period of preparation, of intensive study and diligent research in the texts of the K'ung school. But when he reached his fortieth year he emerged from his obscurity as a great scholar with a band of faithful followers. Then came a period of twenty or more years of active public life, during which he visited the states of Lu, Wei (also known as Liang, from the name of its capital), T'eng, Sung, and Ch'i, where he stayed the longest. Meng K'o's fame was such that everywhere he went he was received with honour and respect by the rulers. He was well entertained, comfortably lodged, and amply recompensed for his services. Handsome gifts, including gold, he received as tokens of friendship from the great princes. His advice was eagerly sought, and once or twice even followed. A counsellor of kings, Meng K'o travelled in grand style – which would have put Master K'ung to shame – with a retinue of hundreds of followers in

a long train of carriages. When his mother died, he gave her such a lavish funeral that it created a sensation in Lu and incurred criticism from all quarters.

Among the princes who had dealings with Meng K'o, Duke Wen of T'eng was the most faithful. T'eng was a small principality of about ten square miles, close to Tsou, Meng K'o's birthplace. Its ruler, Wen, when still a crown prince, had made a special trip to visit Master Meng, of whose fame as a scholar he had heard a great deal. The meeting, as was expected, proved fruitful. While pleased with the scholar's discourse on the goodness of human nature, his laudatory reference to the sage-kings of antiquity, and his insistence on the oneness of *tao*, the prince was especially impressed by Master Meng's assurance that T'eng, though a small principality, might yet rise to greatness under a good prince. So immediately after his ascension to the throne following his father's death Duke Wen sent his tutor, Jan Yu, to seek Master Meng's advice on the first principles of good government.

When the T'eng envoy went to Tsou to consult Master Meng, the latter replied,' How good it is for a man to do his utmost in discharging his funeral duties to his parents!' [7] Then, quoting Tseng Ts'an's words on filial piety, he ended by advising the Duke of T'eng, before he did anything else, to observe the three years' mourning for his father by wearing coarse garb and eating meals of gruel. But when this advice was brought back to T'eng the new duke had a hard time convincing his people of its wisdom. So Jan Yu made a second visit to Master Meng. The scholar, still insisting on the soundness of his opinion, this time quoted Master K'ung as his authority. Moreover, he asked, had not Master K'ung himself said that the relation between a prince and his subjects was like that between the wind and the grass, and that the grass bent in whichever direction the wind blew? The whole business, therefore, depended upon the prince himself. When Jan Yu returned with these words, the duke was convinced. For five months he mourned his father's death by dwelling in a shed without issuing any

edict or holding any audience, so that at last his fame as a filial son spread far and wide. When after the customary waiting period the burial of the old duke finally took place, people flocked from all sides to witness it; and those who condoled with the prince were immensely pleased with 'the sadness of his countenance and the mournfulness of his wailing and weeping.' [8] So Meng K'o scored a ceremonial triumph through the Duke of T'eng; but T'eng did not rise to power as the scholar had promised.

A few years later Master Meng visited the court of T'eng as an honoured guest of the duke, who assiduously consulted him on government affairs. A small principality between the mighty Ch'u and Ch'i, T'eng had a difficult time holding her own between her aggressive neighbours. Such being the situation, Master Meng's long-range propositions seemed too slow to meet the imminent dangers. Duke Wen, for instance, was alarmed at the news of Ch'i's erecting fortifications on the T'eng border. He was at a loss as to what he should do, and so was Master Meng, who could only counsel him vaguely with, 'If you do good, there will be one among your descendants who will attain the kingly sway. A prince lays the foundation and then bequeaths his achievements to his successors to be continued by them. But the final accomplishment depends upon Heaven. What else can you do? Be strong to do good – that is all!' [9]

3. *Profit versus Virtue*

MENG K'O'S relations with the other princes were not as happy as those with the Duke of T'eng. From the first meeting he had with King Hui of Liang it was obvious that the scholar and the prince could not get along together. The aged king, who during his long reign had witnessed many ups and downs of his kingdom, and who had suffered severe indignities at the hand of the other states, including the loss of territory and the life of his eldest son, was naturally interested in power politics. What he especially wanted was to strengthen his state militarily in order to avenge these

humiliations. So immediately after greeting the venerable scholar from Tsou he asked him what advice he would give to *profit* his kingdom; and as immediately he received a rebuff from his visitor, who had no love for such ideas as profit. 'Why must you speak of profit?' Meng K'o asked, for according to him, if the king was interested only in profit for his country, the great ministers in profit for their families, the petty officials and the common people in profit for their persons, then high and low would fight one another for gain and the kingdom would be in danger. Then he continued: 'Let Your Majesty speak of love (*jen*) and righteousness (*yi*), and of nothing else. Why must you speak of profit?'[10]

The above conversation underscores the great difference of opinion between Meng K'o, the advocate of Ju philosophy, and the feudal lords, who were more interested in quick practical results than in grand ethico-political ideals. So when King Hui complained that he had devoted not only his whole life but all his energies as well to his country, and yet fared no better than the rulers of the neighbouring states, Master Meng enlightened him with an illustration from war, which the king liked and understood. 'Suppose that after the drums have beaten, and swords have been crossed, your soldiers throw off their armour, trail their weapons behind them, and retreat, some a hundred steps and others fifty steps; would you not say that the men who ran only fifty paces have a right to laugh at those who ran a hundred paces?'

'No,' answered the king, 'they also retreated, though not as far.'

'Since Your Majesty knows this,' said Master Meng, 'you must not expect to have more people than the neighbouring lands.'[11]

In another conversation Meng K'o attacked King Hui directly without beating about the bush. After the king told him that he would receive his instruction calmly, Master Meng asked, 'Is killing a man with a club any different from killing him with a sword?'

'No, there is no difference.'

'Is killing him with the sword any different from killing him by misrule?'

'No, there is no difference,' the king admitted.

'In your kitchen,' Master Meng pursued, 'there is fat meat; in your stables there are fat horses; but the people look hungry, and starved bodies lie along the countryside. This is letting beasts devour men. Men hate even beasts that eat each other. If a prince, who is a parent to his people, cannot govern without letting beasts eat men, wherein is he a parent to his people?' [12]

A year or so after Meng Ko's visit King Hui died. He was succeeded by his son, King Hsiang, who made an even worse impression on the sage. After his first interview with the new ruler, Master Meng told his friends what he thought of the king: 'When I looked at him from a distance, he did not appear to me like a sovereign, and when I drew near to him, I saw nothing in him to command awe and respect.' [13] In fact, Master Meng was so disgusted that he soon left the state.

4. *Below the Gate of Grain*

THE greater part of Meng K'o's political life was spent in Ch'i during the reign of its King Hsüan, a great patron of letters. Gathering to his court a galaxy of notable intellectuals, the king lodged them in magnificent quarters below the western gate of the capital, known as the Gate of Grain. He also gave them rich emoluments and honorary titles, but without burdening them with any work. Their only duty was to advise the king on political affairs, to discourse on their learning, and to compile books for the propagation of their teachings. In this way Ch'i became the greatest centre of learning during the period of the Warring States and attracted many eminent scholars and philosophers.

Twice Master Meng visited Ch'i, where he was well received by King Hsüan. But, unlike those amateur statesmen below the Gate of Grain, Master Meng was an office-holder in the court of Ch'i,[14] though it is uncertain in what capacity

he rendered his service. We only know that he occupied a high position at court, probably that of a counsellor, and that he had been sent by the king on a mission of condolence to T'eng with a court favourite as his assistant. Sometimes he was also consulted on important state affairs as in the case of the war between Ch'i and Yen. All in all, his position in Ch'i seemed to be a respectable as well as a responsible one.

In his many interviews with King Hsüan, Master Meng tried to persuade him that, in spite of his self-confessed weaknesses for beauty and wealth, hunting and music, parks and palaces, he could yet attain imperial sway if he would only share his pleasures with the people. He also tactfully flattered the king, praising his kindness to animals before telling him that he should extend his kindness from animals to men. In all these discourses Meng K'o showed himself a master of rhetoric who knew how to put the king in good humour so as to make him receptive to his more serious advice. But once in a while Master Meng did not hesitate to drive home his point. Talking to the king one day, he asked, 'If Your Majesty's minister, while going on a journey to Ch'u, had entrusted his wife and children to a friend, and upon his return discovered that his wife and children had been cold and starved, what should he do to his friend?'

'Cast him off!' replied the king.

'If your chief judge could not regulate the offices under him, what should be done?'

'He should be dismissed.'

'If within the four borders of your kingdom there is no good government, what should be done?'

The king looked uneasy and changed the subject.[15]

A very interesting incident is told of the polite relation that existed between Master Meng and King Hsüan. It happened like this: One day, as Master Meng was going to court, he received a message from the king, informing him that His Majesty was prevented from paying him a visit on account of a cold, and hoped instead that Master Meng would go to see him the next morning. Master Meng was displeased with the king's insincerity. So he replied that he

too was ill and regretted that he would not be able to attend on the king. The next day, however, he went out as usual to pay a visit of condolence at a friend's home. But just after he left, the king's messenger arrived with a doctor to look after his health. This put Master Meng's nephew, who was at home to receive the royal envoys, in such a great dilemma that in order to smooth things over he lied that his uncle, who had felt better that morning, was on his way to the palace. At the same time he dispatched several men to waylay Master Meng, begging him by all means to pay the king a visit. Master Meng, apparently, was unperturbed by the message, for, ignoring it, he spent the night with his friend.

After several years in Ch'i, Master Meng finally decided that it was time for him to leave. When his intention was made known, the king went to pay him a visit, and later sent an official to persuade him to stay. Master Meng, however, was unmoved. He even refused to speak with another emissary of the king, who caught up with him the first night after he had left the capital; instead, he leant upon his stool and slept. But, in spite of his resolution, Master Meng was at heart reluctant to leave what was probably the best court in those days. For three nights he lingered at a border town of Ch'i, vainly expecting another message of recall from the king. But it never came; so he finally left Ch'i for his homeland.

In many ways Master Meng's life was comparable to that of Master K'ung. Like his predecessor, he spent the best years of his life in search of a sage ruler who would put his teachings into practice; also like his predecessor, he failed to meet such an intelligent prince and had to be satisfied with teaching and compilation in his last years. In one respect, however, he was more fortunate than Master K'ung. He was able to live comfortably in his private life, and was spared the dangers and distresses that beset Master K'ung in the course of his travels. But, on the other hand, Master Meng lacked the opportunity that Master K'ung had to put his theory into practice. More of a scholar than a statesman, Meng K'o, though able to discourse elo-

quently on government, did not show the statesmanship which his great forbear certainly displayed in his spectacular rise to power in Lu as a successful administrator and diplomat.

For the last twenty years of his life Meng K'o settled down peacefully at Tsou to continue his teaching and writing. He left to posterity seven books of the discourses he had with kings, ministers, friends, and followers. These, as recorded by his disciples, are replete with wit, wisdom, and eloquence. The *Works of Meng-tzŭ* now ranks as one of the four great books of the Ju school, the other three being the *Analects*, *The Great Learning*, and the *Doctrine of the Mean*. Compared with these, Meng K'o's work excels especially in its interesting content as well as in its florid style.

5. *Master Meng is not fond of Arguing*

As has been previously noted, Meng K'o lived at a time when many other schools of philosophy flourished. So besides meting out his advice to princes and kings he had also to defend his tenets against rival teachings that prevailed among the intellectuals of his age. Alarmed by the spread of unorthodox ideas, Master Meng felt in duty bound to come to the defence of the K'ung doctrine. His attitude was clearly shown in his answer to a disciple who asked him: 'Master, people all say that you are fond of disputing. May I venture to ask why?'

'Indeed, why should I love disputing? But, how can I help it?' replied Master Meng.[16]

Yes, how could Meng K'o do otherwise than fight against the overflowing streams of ideas that had engulfed the world of Chinese thought?

In particular, Master Meng attacked Yang Chu and Mo Ti, whose teachings were as directly opposed to each other as they were to those of the Ju school, but proved to be equally popular among the people and therefore equally dangerous from the point of view of a devoted K'ung follower. To Master Meng, Yang Chu, who would not pluck

out a single hair from his body to benefit the world, and Mo Ti, who, on the contrary, was bent on saving the world even though he had to rub his body smooth from head to foot, were both extremists who failed to attain the golden mean, and who therefore perverted the true way. 'If the doctrines of Yang and Mo are not checked, and the doctrine of Master K'ung is not promoted,' asserted Meng K'o, 'perverse teachings will delude the people and block the road to human-heartedness and righteousness. And when that way is blocked, beasts will devour men, and men will devour one another.' [17]

Thus, by opposing the evil teachings of Yang and Mo, Master Meng aspired to perpetuate the traditions of the sages. His aim, like that of Master K'ung, was to rectify the hearts of men so that they would not stray from the right path. 'Do I do so because I am fond of arguing?' reiterated Master Meng. 'No, it is simply that I cannot do otherwise. Any one who lifts his voice against Yang and Mo is worthy to be a disciple of the sages.' [18]

It seems, however, that Master Meng did not have any actual contact with the adherents of Yang and Mo. The only recorded incident in this connexion was his criticism of a certain Mohist named Yi Chih, who, dazzled by Master Meng's great fame, wished to be presented to him. This Master Meng denied, but he consented to carry on a conversation with him through an intermediary, one of his own disciples. When told of the Mohist's assertion that love itself was without difference of degree, Master Meng accused him of failing to acknowledge the peculiar affection due to a parent or even a kinsman. 'Does Yi Chih really believe that a brother's son is no dearer to him than a neighbour's child?' [19] he asked.

By entirely ignoring even the closest family relationship it is quite obvious that Mo Ti merited Meng K'o's attack that he was 'without a father', just as Yang Chu merited the accusation of being 'without a sovereign', because of his self-interest. 'But to acknowledge neither king nor father is to be a brute,' [20] concluded Master Meng in a logic typically his own.

6. *The Hermit and the Goose*

TOWARDS the Taoist school of hermits and agriculturalists Master Meng's criticism was also extremely caustic. His attitude is clearly demonstrated by the way he ridiculed Ch'en Chung, an ascetic who lived in great poverty in the country. Though a member of an ancient family, with a rich elder brother holding high office at court, he chose nevertheless the life of a Taoist recluse. One day, so Meng K'o tells us, when Ch'en Chung went to his brother's house, he was annoyed by the cackling of a goose. Knitting his brow, he complained, 'What is this cackle-cackle here for?' But soon afterwards, without Ch'en Chung's knowledge, his mother killed the goose and prepared a feast for her 'prodigal son'. At this very moment his brother returned from abroad. Seeing that Ch'en Chung, an avowed vegetarian, was feasting on the goose with great relish, he said maliciously, 'Don't you know that this is the flesh of the cackle-cackle?' Thereupon the holy hermit became so disgusted that he vomited what he had previously so much enjoyed. 'In his abstinence,' commented Master Meng sarcastically, 'wasn't Ch'en Chung much like the worm that ate only the dry mould above ground and drank from the Yellow Spring below?' [21]

7. *Master Hsü has his Troubles*

ANOTHER butt of Meng K'o's attack was a group of southern philosophers who believed in returning to a simple life as an antidote for the corruptions of feudal civilization. Claiming their inspiration from the legendary emperor Shen Nung, the Divine Husbandman,[22] they practised farming in the country, and while in the city, wove mats and plaited sandals for a living. A leader of such a group, Hsü Hsing by name, came to T'eng, where Meng K'o had his magnificent quarters in the ducal palace. It happened that a new convert of Hsü Hsing came one day to visit Master Meng, and in the course of the conversation reported Hsü Hsing's

criticism of the duke. 'The prince of T'eng,' he said, 'is indeed a worthy prince, but he has not yet heard the doctrine of the true way. The wise ruler labours in the fields with his people, and eats with them. He prepares his own meals, morning and evening, while carrying on the work of the government. But the lord of T'eng has barns and granaries, storehouses and treasure houses: he is actually oppressing the people to nourish himself. How can he be a really worthy prince?'

'Master Hsü, I presume,' said Master Meng, 'sows the grain and eats his own produce.'

'Yes.'

'Does he also weave the cloth he wears?'

'No, Master Hsü wears clothes of hair-cloth.'

'Has Master Hsü a cap?'

'Yes, he wears one.'

'What kind of cap?'

'A plain one.'

'Did he weave it himself?'

'No. He bartered grain for it.'

'Why didn't he make it himself?'

'That would have interfered with his farming.'

'Does Master Hsü use pots and pans for cooking, and iron shares for ploughing?'

'Yes.'

'Did he make them himself?'

'No. He bartered grain for them.'

'Well,' said Master Meng, 'if he did no harm to the potter and smith when he bartered his grain for their articles, why should the husbandman be harmed when the potter and smith bartered their articles for his grain? Moreover, why does not Master Hsü himself take up pottery and smithery, supplying his needs with articles made on his own premises? Why all this multifarious dealing with a hundred craftsmen? Why does Master Hsü go to so much trouble?'

'Why, the business of farming cannot possibly be carried on at the same time with a number of other trades', answered the new convert in defence of Master Hsü.

'Is it then the government of a state which alone can be combined with the business of farming?' pursued Master Meng. 'No, society is constructed in such a way that men of high and low stations have alike their own businesses; and every one has to be supplied with the products of other men's industry. On the other hand, everybody in this world would be thrown into confusion if he had to manufacture all the articles for his own use. Hence the saying, "Some toil with their minds; others toil with their bodies. Those who toil with their minds govern others, while those who toil with their bodies are governed by others. Those who are governed produce food; those who govern are fed by their fellows." This is a principle universally recognized.' [23] This was also, as we have seen, the very principle of feudalism, upon which Masters K'ung and Meng based their teachings.

8. *The Hand that Rescues a Drowning Sister-in-law*

FROM all these controversies Master Meng, the veteran of a hundred debates, always emerged triumphant, confounding his opponents with his eloquence and adroitness until they were either tongue-tied or heartily convinced. Only once was he entrapped in the maze of argument, from which he could hardly tear himself away. This was when he was closeted with a famous sophist of the time by the name of Shun-yü K'un. Their conversation, as reported in Master Meng's *Works*, ran as follows:

'Is it a rule of etiquette,' asked the sophist, 'that men and women should not touch hands when passing things to one another?'

'It is,' replied Master Meng.

'Suppose a man's sister-in-law were drowning,' pursued Shun-yü K'un, 'should he rescue her with his hand?'

'Certainly he should,' replied Master Meng. 'Not to rescue one's sister-in-law from drowning would be beastly inhumanity. It is a general rule for men and women not to touch hands; whereas to pull a drowning sister-in-law out of the water with one's hand is merely expediency.'

This was good repartee, but it was exactly here that Master Meng got caught in his own logic.

'The whole world,' said Shun-yü K'un, 'is drowning before your eyes. How is that you, Master, will not rescue it with your hands?'

Discomfited, Master Meng could only resort to a quibble for an answer: 'A drowning world,' he said, 'is to be saved by *tao*; a drowning sister-in-law with the hand. Do you expect me to rescue the world with my hand?' [24]

Chapter Five

THE MIND OF A DEMOCRATIC THINKER

1. *The Innate Goodness of Human Nature*

ONE of the most brilliant minds of his time, Meng K'o was, like K'ung Ch'iu, an indefatigable teacher of morals and government. He succeeded Tzŭ-ssŭ and Tseng Ts'an as leader of the catholic Ju school and left to posterity a system of ethico-political doctrines well expounded in his numerous discourses with kings and commoners. Especially well known are his words on human nature and political economy, of which he was an able exponent. He was, moreover, the first of the Ju philosophers to emphasize the importance of the people's livelihood as the first duty of government. Living in the midst of a chaotic age, in which the common man suffered from untold miseries, Master Meng felt keenly that all human endeavour should be directed to the creation of an ideal state like the Great Commonwealth, in which mankind could live happily and harmoniously together. But, true to the great tradition of the K'ung school, Meng K'o also maintained that good government depended upon good administration, thus underscoring the need of moral cultivation on the part of the ruling class. Hence ethics too became the corner-stone of Master Meng's teaching. He went, however, a step further than his predecessors in an effort to find a psychological basis for his ethical ideas, and in so doing made the happy discovery of the innate goodness of man's nature, his chief contribution to Chinese thought.

Before we discuss Master Meng's idea itself, a few words of explanation seem necessary. First of all, it must be pointed out that in an age of intense intellectual activity like the period of the Warring States man was not only wide awake to the mysteries of the great universe, from which he de-

duced the complementary principles of *yin* and *yang*, but he was also tremendously curious about the microcosmic world that was in himself. Hence the prevalent question of the time was: What was human nature after all? Was it good, and if so, was man's goodness endowed by Heaven at his birth? Or was it in all aspects inherently bad?

In answer to these questions a number of theories have been advanced. One school, led by Master Kao, with whom Master Meng had many arguments, believed that human nature was neither good nor bad; another school maintained that it could be turned towards good or bad, depending upon circumstances. According to still another school, the innate nature of some men was good, while that of others was bad. To support this theory, several historical figures were mentioned as examples: a sage king who had a wicked father, and a worthless monarch who had a sage uncle.

But contrary to all of them, Master Meng held that man's nature was good. Said he, 'It is in virtue of man's innate feelings that human nature may be considered good.' [1] In other words, man's nature is good because, when guided by these innate feelings, man will do what is good. On the other hand, if man does not do what is good, his instincts are not to blame. It is only that he has lost his original power for good. As the saying goes, 'Seek, and ye shall find; let go, and it is lost.' [2]

To illustrate further Meng K'o's views on this subject, let us quote the following debate between him and Master Kao, his opponent:

'Our nature,' Master Kao observed, 'is like whirling water. If a breach is made to the east, it flows to the east; if a breach is made to the west, it flows west. And just as water does not discern between east and west, so man's nature is indifferent to good or bad.'

'It is true,' rejoined Master Meng, 'that water will flow indifferently to east or west, but will it flow equally well up and down? Human nature is disposed towards goodness just as water tends to flow downwards. There is no water but flows downwards, and no man but shows his tendency

to be good. Now, by striking water hard, you may splash it higher than your head, and, by damming it, you may make it go uphill. But, is that the nature of water? Or is it external force that causes it to do so? Likewise, if man is not made to do what is good, his nature is being forced in a similar way.'[3]

Human nature, moreover, is not to be confounded with the externals of life. It is not that by which a man is a creature of appetites and passions, but that by which a man is lifted up into the higher sphere of intelligence and virtue.

In another controversy with Master Kao, who maintained the somewhat absurd view that life and nature were one, Master Meng asked, 'Do you call life nature in the same sense that you call white white?'

'Yes.'

'Is the whiteness of a white feather the same as the whiteness of white snow? And is the whiteness of white snow the same as the whiteness of white jade?'

'Yes.'

'Then,' said Master Meng triumphantly, 'is the nature of a dog the same as the nature of an ox, and the nature of an ox the same as the nature of a man?'[4]

2. *An Allegory of the Virgin Forest*

IN an interesting allegory Master Meng compared the abuse of man's innate nature to the despoiling of a virgin forest.

'Beautiful once were the trees on Bull Mountain,' said Master Meng. 'But being on the outskirts of a great capital,[5] they were hewn down with axes and hatchets, and their beauty was destroyed. Even so, the day air and night air quickened the stumps, and rain and dew moistened them until here and there fresh sprouts began to grow. But soon cattle and sheep came to browse on them, and in the end the mountain became gaunt and bare as it is now. And seeing it thus, people imagine that it was never wooded. But is such the nature of the mountain?

'So it is with human nature. How can it be, indeed, that

man is devoid of human-heartedness and righteousness? The reason is that he has lost his true heart in the same way that the trees have been felled by axes and hatchets. Stricken day after day, how can the heart remain fair? Even so, the breath of day and night, and the calm air of dawn develop in man's heart desires and aversions that are proper to humanity. But soon these better feelings are ruffled and quelled by the day's destructive work. Thus, fettered again and again, they wither, and the healing influence of night is insufficient to keep them alive. So in the end man reverts to a state not far removed from that of birds and beasts, and seeing him thus, people imagine that he never had talents. But is such the nature of man? Truly,

> If rightly tended, no creature but thrives;
> If left untended, no creature but pines away.

Master K'ung said, "Hold fast, and you shall keep it; let go, and it is gone. It comes and goes without keeping time; none knows where it abides." Was it not the human heart of which he spoke?' [6]

*

The above passage makes clear Master Meng's chief contention that human nature is originally good, but that it may also become depraved through man's own destructive efforts or because of the rough contacts of life. Its thriving or withering away depends, therefore, in a large measure upon whether it is tended or not. In other words, man still retains all the goodness that was originally in his heart; but as time goes by his grasp on it becomes weakened, and if he does not take care to hold it fast he is liable to lose it altogether.

3. *Four Limbs of a Man*

THE great problem confronting man is therefore that of preserving and cultivating those good feelings that are his birthright. These are, according to Master Meng, the feelings of compassion, shame (for one's want of goodness),

reverence (or modesty), and discrimination between right and wrong. Being instinctive, these feelings are also common to all men. Take, for instance, the feeling of compassion. It is aroused the moment one sees a child about to fall into a well. The reaction comes spontaneously, not because one is distressed at the child's cries, nor because one hopes by rescuing the child to win its parents' gratitude or the neighbours' praise, but because one is endowed with 'a heart that cannot endure to see the suffering of others.' [7] It is the possession of this feeling of commiseration, as well as of the others mentioned above, that distinguishes man from other creatures.

Thus, to differentiate himself from birds and beasts, man should aim at the development of his good feelings so that they may ripen into great virtues. Generally speaking, this should not be difficult to achieve, for man has not only many advantages over the lower animals but is endowed as well with the capacity for perfection. Every one, indeed, has the makings of a sage in him, for if all men are fundamentally the same in their nature, so Master Meng affirmed, 'we and the sages must also be one in kind.' In fact, we may all be Yaos and Shuns, the wise kings of antiquity, if we but tread in their path. 'If you wear Yao's clothes, speak Yao's words, and do Yao's deeds,' observed Master Meng, 'then you too will be a Yao – that is all!' [8]

Therefore, if we fail, as most of us do, in achieving the greatness of a Yao or Shun, we have only ourselves to blame. The trouble is not in our stars, but in our failure to develop fully those good instincts from which spring the four great virtues of *jen* (human-heartedness), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (propriety), and *chih* (wisdom). To be more specific, the feeling of compassion is the origin of human-heartedness; the feeling of shame, the origin of righteousness; the feeling of reverence, the origin of propriety; and the sense of right and wrong, the origin of wisdom. 'Man has these four beginnings,' remarked Master Meng, 'just as he has his four limbs.' [9]

These virtues, it must be noted, are not drilled into us

from without but are part of our being. Being inherent in our nature, they show themselves in our behaviour and actions and, if properly nurtured, will grow and ripen in our mind. Their presence in man, for instance, is indicated in 'the serenity of his countenance, the nobility of his bearing, and the general character they impart to his limbs, which know how to move without need of speech.' [10]

Though often mentioned together, these four virtues are not equally important in Master Meng's ethical scale. He seldom spoke of *chih* except in connexion with knowledge and education. As to *li*, once the major subject of study in the K'ung school, he gave it a position subordinate to *jen* and *yi*, the two cardinal virtues in his scheme. *Jen*, which Master Meng considered as synonymous with 'humanity', was especially exalted as the hub of man's nature, with *yi* as its external expression. As Master Meng put it, 'Human-heartedness is man's peaceful abode, and righteousness his true road.' Then he continued, 'Alas for those who desert the peaceful abode and dwell not therein! Alas for those who abandon the true path and follow it not!' [11]

4. *The Disgraceful Man of Ch'i*

ACCORDING to Master Meng, one who does not follow the course of human-heartedness and righteousness loses the original goodness of his heart. In so doing he exposes himself to bad external influences, while internally evil impulses gain ascendancy over him. So he becomes unscrupulous and depraved, seeking by deceitful means the gratification of his desires. That is how man degenerates and becomes as shameless as the Man of Ch'i in the following story told by Master Meng:

There was a Man of Ch'i who lived with his wife and concubine in a small city. Every morning he would leave home early all by himself and returned at night, smelling of wine and meat. When asked with whom he had been dining and drinking, he would reply haughtily that they were all people of wealth and rank. But since no men of distinction

ever came to visit him, his wife at last became suspicious and determined to spy on him. Accordingly, one morning she followed her husband. As he walked through the whole city she noticed that not a soul stopped to talk with him. With this her suspicion grew even greater. At last he came to a graveyard in the eastern suburb, and you may imagine her disgust when she saw him going about begging for scraps of food that were left over from the sacrifices that were being offered among the tombs. Thus he went from group to group until he had his bellyful. This was too much for his good spouse, who couldn't get home fast enough to tell the concubine what she had seen. In utter shame of their husband, the two women stood together in the middle of the courtyard, weeping and wailing. Meanwhile the man came strutting home with his usual supercilious air, unaware of what had happened.

'In the eyes of a gentleman,' concluded Master Meng, 'the way men seek riches and honours, success and gain, is seldom such that their wives and concubines would not weep together for shame.' [12]

5. *The Heart of a Naked Child*

WARNED by the example of the Man of Ch'i, we ask ourselves the question: how is it possible for us to preserve the innate goodness that is within us? In answering this question we are reminded of a remarkable saying of Meng K'o's that, 'A gentleman is one who has not lost the heart of a naked child.' [13] The infant heart, so to speak, is a symbol as well as the source of all that is good in our nature, to which we should hold fast. Nevertheless, the irony of life is that when our dogs and chickens go astray we make every effort to find them; but very few of us are interested in recovering our natural goodness. In view of this neglect and ignorance, Master Meng taught the ways in which men could preserve their good nature.

First of all, men should have the will to be good and to do good. *Jen*, the supreme virtue, needs, for instance, con-

tinual and careful cultivation. As mentioned above, the seed of *jen* is present in the heart of every one, but it may fail to grow if constant vigilance is not exercised at all times. Like the five kinds of grain, *jen* too should be tended with the utmost care: it should be watered, sunned, and fertilized until it becomes ripe. 'Of all seeds, the five kinds of grain are the best; yet if unripe they are not so good as darnel or tares. The same is true of *jen*: here, too, ripeness is everything.' [14]

The main function of education, therefore, is to develop those good feelings inherent in us. To do this we must exert great care and forbearance, for just as grain cannot grow in one day, but must take time for ripening, so also must human nature. Unduly hastening its process is just as harmful as negligence. It will but spoil the crop, as is shown in another of Master Meng's parables.

The Man of Sung, on visiting his fields, was grieved because his young grain had not grown as tall as it should. So he tried to assist its growth by pulling out the shoots. Returning home all covered with weeds and grass, he said to his people, 'I am all tired out. I have been helping the grain to grow.' [15] His son ran out to see what had happened, and lo! the grain had all withered.

After telling the story, Master Meng moralized, 'There are few indeed in this world who do not assist their grain to grow. Those who think it useless to nourish their hearts are like those who neglect to weed, while those who help their hearts to grow (by unnatural means) are pulling their crops up by the roots. There is not only no benefit in this, but actual harm.' [16]

Another important factor in the cultivation of one's nature is environment. A good environment favours, just as bad environment spoils, its growth. To continue our figure of seed-planting, let us quote another passage from Master Meng, 'Now, here is the barley seed, sown on the same land at the same time. Growing lustily, it ripens with midsummer. But not all the crop is alike. Some of it is good, and some bad, because the soil is rich in some spots and stony in others. Nor are the rain and dew, or the amount of

cultivation, equal.' [17] For the same reason, we find that most children are good in the good years and bad in the bad years. But this is not because their natural powers are different in different times, but because the change of circumstances has made them what they are.

Master Meng, it seems, was particularly sensitive to the influence of environment on man's natural growth. This, indeed, is not surprising when we recall the great care with which he was brought up by his mother, who moved three times in order to give him the best possible living conditions. Moreover, did not Master K'ung once say, 'It is the moral character of a neighbourhood that constitutes its excellence? How can he be considered wise who does not elect to dwell in moral surroundings?' [18]

In this connexion Master Meng charged that the kings with whom he had come into contact were most of them unwise, because they chose to surround themselves with people who were depraved and wicked. Just as in the case of a plant which, however hardy it may be, can never survive ten days' cold after only one day of warmth, so there can never be a ruler who, habitually surrounded by corrupt officials, can yet benefit by occasional words of wisdom. 'My visits to the king are few and far between,' Master Meng once remarked quite unhappily, 'and as soon as I leave, he is overrun with people who act upon him like cold upon plants. Though I may succeed in bringing up a sprout here and there, what good can it do?' [19]

From this it will be seen that Master Meng believed it important for a sovereign to have around him men of virtue, who could influence him to be good. To illustrate this point he made what is in our opinion one of the best observations on learning a foreign language – an observation that still has in it a ring of truth to-day. To understand it, we must first point out that China in those days was divided into a number of states whose people spoke dialects considerably different from one another. Hence northerners like the people of Ch'i would have a difficult time understanding the people of Ch'u from the far south, and vice versa.

Now, according to Master Meng, suppose here in Ch'i was an envoy from Ch'u who wanted his son to learn the speech of Ch'i. To accomplish this aim the question is, whom should he employ to teach his son, a man of Ch'i or a man of Ch'u? Of course, the former. But even this would not do, for with only one man teaching the boy the Ch'i language, and the rest of the time all the Ch'u men continually shouting at him in his own dialect, the boy would never be able to learn the language even though his father beat him every day. On the other hand, if the boy lived alone in the interior of Ch'i for several years without meeting any of his countrymen, he would speak no other language but Ch'i, and even though his father beat him daily, he would not be able to make him forget it.

The moral of the story, of course, is that if all those in attendance on the king were men of integrity, the king could not be otherwise than good. On the other hand, if all his officers were wicked, there would be little chance of the king's being able to remain virtuous.

6. *Three Treasures of a Prince*

THIS discussion of the king and his ministers leads us to the problem of good government, or, as Master Meng called it, 'humane (*jen*) government'. While basing his theory of government on Master K'ung, Meng K'o was able to elaborate on his predecessor's view with some of his own ideas that were startlingly new. For one thing, Master Meng's attitude towards the Chou sovereigns was different from that of Master K'ung. Living some hundred and fifty years later, at a time when the feudal structure had all but crumbled, Master Meng felt no lingering respect or loyalty for the reigning house of Chou. Instead, he preached that any of the seven powers of his time, or even the lesser states, could assume 'kingly sway', a favourite term of his, if its rulers would only follow the principles of good government that Master Meng himself had laid down. If Master K'ung had fondly dreamed of restoring the Chou

authority, Master Meng certainly had no such feudal aspirations.

The time, moreover, was ripe for the rise of a new Son of Heaven to assume sway over all the Chinese states. As Master Meng expressed it, 'Never was there a time so devoid of a true sovereign as at present; never was there a time when people suffered more from tyrannical rule. We all know that the hungry are easily fed and the thirsty easily slaked. Master K'ung once said, "The spread of virtue is more rapid than the transmission of imperial orders by stages and couriers." So now, if humane government were practised in a country of ten thousand chariots, its people would be as pleased as men relieved from hanging by their heels. It is only in times like these that, with only half the labour of the ancients, one can achieve twice as much.' [20] Indeed, for a prince endowed with a humane heart and practising humane government, the rule of the world would be as easy as turning things around in the palm of his hand.

A great political philosopher, Meng K'o was much more specific and advanced than K'ung Ch'iu in his principles of government. As mentioned above, he was mainly concerned with improving the people's lot by means of reforms such as land tenure, reduction of taxes, and what we might call old age pensions. Living in the midst of suffering and starvation, he must have been especially impressed by the scenes of wretched humanity around him. So he conceived of government as fundamentally a question of political economy, the key to which was the amelioration of the people's living conditions.

Considered in this light, the way of good government, as taught by Master Meng, was not difficult to attain. It consisted, first, in honouring men of worth and employing those who were capable; second, in lightening levies on marketable goods; third, in abolishing tolls and duties to facilitate travel; fourth, in restoring the 'well-field' system of farming,[21] instead of taxing the farmers on their produce; and fifth, in sparing the tradespeople from miscellaneous contributions and fines.

As we can easily see, all these measures, with the exception of the first, were aimed at reducing the heavy taxation on peasants and merchants, thereby rescuing them from their desperate condition. For the same reason, Master Meng advocated the reduction to a minimum of the king's pleasure parks and hunting grounds, the use of conscripted labour for public works only at slack agricultural seasons, and the abolition of cruel penalties. Master Meng believed that if reforms like these could be successfully carried out the king would not only have contented people at home, but he would also be able to attract people from neighbouring states, who 'would look up to him as to a father'.[22] And with a large population, which was one of the three treasures of a prince, the other two being land and good administration, the country could not but grow rich and strong. With such success, who would be able to prevent it from attaining a kingly sway over the other states, the ambition of all the rulers of this period?

In another passage, which is deservedly famous, Master Meng set forth even more graphically the implements of government, including the institution of public support for the aged and moral instruction for the young. Chiefly concerned with the life of the farmers, who constituted the main bulk of the Chinese population, Master Meng advised King Hui of Liang as follows: 'If the farmer's seasons are not interfered with (i.e. by war or conscription), there will be more grain in the land than can be consumed. If close-meshed nets are not allowed in the pools and lakes, there will be more fish and turtles than are required for food. If the axe is brought to the forest only at the proper time, the supply of timber will exceed the demand. Having more grain and fish than they can eat, and more timber than they can use, the people will be able to feed the living and bury the dead without undue worry and vexation. To ensure this for his people is the first duty of a king.

'Let homesteads of five *mu* be planted with mulberry, so that all persons over fifty may be able to wear silk. Let the proper seasons be observed in the breeding of poultry, dogs,

and swine, so that all persons over seventy may be able to eat meat. Let a farm of a hundred *mu* not be robbed of its labour, so that a family of eight mouths may never go hungry. Let attention be paid to teaching in schools, with special regard to the duties of sons and brothers; then white-haired men will not be seen carrying loads on the high roads. No ruler under whom the aged wear silk and eat meat, and the common people suffer neither from hunger nor cold, has ever failed to become king of the whole country.' [23]

But what was the actual state of affairs in Meng K'o's time? With bold and vigorous words he blamed the king for the sad plight of the people: 'Now dogs and swine eat the food of men, and you know not how to stop the waste. On the roads people are starving to death, and you know not how to relieve them out of your store. When they die you say "It is not my fault; it is due to the bad year"; a plea no better than if you stabbed a man to death and then said, "It was not I that did it, it was the knife." Do not lay the blame on the harvest, O King, and you will find the people of the whole world flocking to you.' [24]

7. *The Mandate of Heaven*

In these feudal times Master Meng had the distinction of being a true democrat, and indeed almost a radical in political thought. Carried to its logical conclusion, his championship of the people's welfare made him at the same time an advocate of the people's supremacy. In a startling statement he said, 'The people rank highest in a state, the spirits of the Land and Grain come next, and the sovereign is of the least account.' [25]

This unusual remark, while it must have struck the orthodox ear of Meng K'o's contemporaries like a thunderbolt, still sounds extremely modern to us across the centuries. It deviated radically from Master K'ung's political dogma, according to which, as was also the actual practice of those days, the sovereign was the all-powerful overlord of

the people. Of course, Master K'ung might have conceded that the people's confidence in their ruler was an important factor in government; but he would never go so far as Master Meng to assert that the common people, most of them serfs, should be more highly regarded than their great lords. While following in the footsteps of his great predecessor, Master Meng, it seems, had advanced by leaps and bounds from the feudal ideas that had been rapidly breaking down during the time of the Warring States.

This did not mean, however, that Master Meng was a revolutionist who broke away entirely from tradition. On the contrary, he felt keenly the necessity of finding some authority on which to base his new democracy. And he found it in the *Classic of History*, in which occurred the phrase 'the Mandate of Heaven', a political creed of the Chou people sanctioned by Master K'ung himself. Originally, this conception went back to the Sinitic belief in Heaven as a ruling deity, whose sway extended over all creation. But since Heaven could not deal directly with the myriad creatures and especially with men, he appointed as his deputy on earth a line of kings to rule in his name. These were, figuratively speaking, the Sons of Heaven. But later, if some of their descendants should prove unacceptable to Heaven because of their wickedness and cruelty, he would transfer his mandate to another house, noted for its great virtue, to form a new line of kings. It was in this way, so the Chou people contended, that their royal house thrived on the ruins of the Shang dynasty.

The Mandate of Heaven – what a revealing phrase! And was it not said in one of those historical documents that 'Heaven sees as the people see, and Heaven hears even as the people hear?' [26] Heaven, the great deity, of course, did not talk, but his dictates were clearly discernible in the trends of historical events and human deeds. Moreover, there was an even surer sign of Heaven's pleasure and displeasure towards a ruler – it was manifested in the will of the people. Take, for instance, the sage-king Shun. Though of humble origin, he was made king because people wished him

to be a ruler. And when Shun was accepted by the people, he was also accepted by Heaven. The people's will, therefore, was also the tangible expression of Heaven's will on earth.

As a logical conclusion to the above observation, the right to govern, so Meng K'o asserted, depended upon the consent of the governed; and a ruler who had lost the confidence of his people would also lose the Mandate of Heaven. This point was made clear by Meng K'o when he told King Hsüan of Ch'i that a monarch who trod on virtue and threw away his moral obligations forfeited at the same time his divine right as a king. Such being the case, the people had the right to get rid of him as they would any undesirable individual. Thus referring to Chou Hsin, a wicked ruler and the last of the house of Shang, Master Meng observed, 'He who acts in defiance of the highest moral ideals (*jen*) is a rascal; he who outrages the principle of honour (*yi*) is a knave. The man who acts as a rascal and knave is properly described as a contemptible ruffian. I have heard about the killing of a ruffian named Chou; I have not heard of putting a sovereign to death.' [27]

As a matter of fact, the right to dispose of a wicked king, whom Master Meng would not recognize as king, rested not only with the people but with the ministers as well. Of course, if the prince should treat his subordinates as his hands and feet, they in turn would rely on him as their belly and heart. 'But,' Master Meng continued, 'when the lord looks on his lieges as his dogs and horses, then they may regard him as merely one of their fellows; and if the lord treats them as if they were grass and dirt, then they may regard him as a brigand and an enemy.' [28] In this connexion, Master Meng also maintained that, if after repeated remonstrances the king still failed to mend his ways, the ministers who were related to him by blood had the right and duty to dethrone him. Is it any wonder that at these words the King of Chi's countenance fell?

The love of war was the chief fault of the sovereigns of the period. At least, that was what Meng K'o believed, and he,

like most philosophers of the time, was vehement in his denunciation of those who loved war. He attacked King Hui of Liang for driving his people, and even his own son, to death on the battle-field. He branded as criminal those military experts who were skilful in marshalling troops and conducting battles. Referring to Master K'ung's condemnation of Jan Ch'iu for his part in collecting oppressive taxes from the people, Master Meng said, 'Thus we see that those who seek to enrich a prince, whose government is not benevolent, are condemned by Master K'ung; how much more should those be condemned who fight for their prince in an unjust cause? When land is the cause of contention, corpses fill the fields; when a city is the cause of contention, corpses fill the space within the walls. This is teaching the very soil beneath us to devour human flesh – a crime for which no death can atone.' [29] 'Therefore, I say,' Master Meng continued, 'those who make fighting their trade should suffer the severest punishment; those who organize the feudal lords for aggression should come next; and last, those who force the people to till uncultivated land for the ruler's benefit.' [30]

Thus fought Master Meng spiritedly in his crusade against the merciless killing which was the order of the day. Like Hsiang Shu, who had launched the world's first peace conference 200 years earlier,[31] Master Meng was a passionate advocate of peace. But, needless to say, his efforts failed as they were bound to do. Things worsened after his death in 289 B.C., with the new century becoming progressively even more bloodthirsty and ruthless. Nevertheless, Master Meng had succeeded in imprinting on the minds of his followers an idealistic teaching with its emphasis on democratic thinking as well as on man's inborn goodness and his position in society. It was not long before it became, in addition to the teachings of Master K'ung, a part of that most valuable philosophical heritage that ancient China has bequeathed to mankind.

Chapter Six

THE MOULDING OF A GREAT TRADITION

1. *Master Hsün, the Magistrate of Lan-ling*

AFTER the death of Meng K'o the mantle of the K'ung school fell on Hsün Ch'ing, another great champion of *tao*. Hsün Ch'ing was born in the northern state of Chao, quite far from Lu, the original seat of Ju tradition. The date of his birth is a despair to all lovers of exact chronology, and surmises made by scholars range widely between the forty and more years from 340 to 298 B.C.[1] Equally obscure are the events of Hsün Ch'ing's life. The only thing we know is that he was practically unknown, like Meng K'o, in the first fifty years of his life – presumably a period of preparation. Then, emerging from his seclusion, he travelled to Ch'i, the great intellectual centre of the age, to learn from a group of academicians who had gathered at its capital below the Gate of Grain. There Hsün Ch'ing soon attained great fame and, as the most honoured of the scholars, acted three times in the capacity of a libation officer at the great temple sacrifices. Later, after the dispersal of the scholars from Ch'i in protest against its militant policy, Hsün Ch'ing also left Ch'i and went to Ch'in, where he had an audience with its king; but he failed to get any preferment in that state. So he left Ch'in and returned to Chao, his native state.

There is an interesting record of Hsün Ch'ing's meeting with King Hsiao-cheng of Chao, in whose presence he engaged with a general of the king's army in a debate on military affairs. Brushing aside the general's views on military strategy, Hsün Ch'ing, the K'ung scholar, asserted that the art of war consisted primarily in getting the support of the people, who were potential soldiers, and that deceitful tactics should be replaced by the practice of human-heartedness and righteousness, which were essential to winning a

campaign. As a matter of fact, he succeeded so well in convincing the king and the general of the soundness of his argument that they both listened very attentively, often nodding their heads in approbation.

Hsün Ch'ing, however, does not seem to have made headway anywhere in these states. Thus disillusioned, he was content in the last years of his life to accept a minor position from the government of Ch'u, and for many years of his life was the magistrate of Lan-ling, a Lu city newly conquered by Ch'u. There he gathered around him a group of young men, some of whom rose to eminence as scholars and politicians. Master Hsün himself died about 235 B.C., a much-beloved old man whose popularity among the people of Lan-ling outlived him for a number of years.

To Hsün Ch'ing are credited thirty-three essays of lasting fame. They show him as a prose master, a profound thinker, and, most of all, an energetic defender of the Ju dogma.

2. *The Great 'Weaklings'*

HSÜN CH'ING lived at a time when the 'hundred schools' of philosophy flourished and, like Meng K'o, had to uphold his own teaching by attacking that of others. In an essay entitled 'Against the Twelve Masters' he launched an all-out onslaught on his contemporaries, including not only rival philosophers such as the Taoists, the Mohists, and the Logicians, but also the prominent members of his own school like Tzŭ-ssŭ and Meng K'o. Even the immediate disciples of Master K'ung, such as Tzŭ-chang, Tzŭ-hsia, and Tzŭ-yu, were not spared from his fiery pen.[2] But as a result of this indiscriminate attack on foes and friends alike he made himself unpopular among his own school, and suffered consequently in the judgement of posterity, who came to accept Tzŭ-ssŭ and Meng K'o as heirs to the great tradition. As we can easily see, this dissension, besides showing the deep cleavage that had split the K'ung school into different groups, also reveals the bitterness of the philosophical controversy that raged at the close of the feudal period.

A penetrating critic, Hsün Ch'ing was able to dispose of his enemies in 'the erring schools of philosophy' with a few incisive words. He thus denounced Mo Ti as prejudiced towards utility to the neglect of culture, Chuang Chou as prejudiced towards nature to the neglect of man, and Hui Shih as prejudiced towards words to the neglect of reality. Such succinct phrases hit the vulnerable spots of the rival systems, whose teachers appeared ridiculously narrow-minded when compared with those of the K'ung school. 'Those who have partial knowledge,' declared Master Hsün, 'perceive one aspect of the way (*tao*), but they fail to know its totality. So they think it sufficient to gloss things over. Being confused themselves, they also mislead others. ... This is indeed a great misfortune brought about by ignorance and prejudice.' [3]

In Hsün Ch'ing's opinion, Master K'ung, on the other hand, was human and wise. Himself a sage, his virtue was equal to that of Duke Chou, and his fame abreast of the sage-kings of antiquity. In fact, his was the only school which possessed the whole of the great way and which succeeded in carrying it out in practical living. But, unfortunately, not all its followers were like their sage master. Generally speaking, they could be divided, according to Hsün Ch'ing, into three types: the vulgar Ju, who made their living by selling superficial and often erroneous ideas; the good Ju, who were true followers of *tao* but who lacked the intelligence to achieve perfection; and lastly, the great Ju, who were perfect in their conduct, superior in their knowledge of the true way, and when in office capable of achieving order and unification for the whole world. Apparently, it was with the last group that Master Hsün wished to identify himself.

When King Chao of Ch'in asked him whether the Ju were of any use to society, Master Hsün immediately gave a glorified account of his profession by telling the king the many merits of a great Ju. The latter, so Master Hsün affirmed, 'when placed in a superior position, had the capacities of a king or prince, and when in a subordinate position was a trusty monitor of the state and truly a treasure of the

sovereign. And even though he should retire to a lowly hamlet, he would still be esteemed by every one for holding sincerely to the true path.' [4] Therefore, in whichever position he was, a great Ju was sure to distinguish himself, to renovate the people, to adorn the court, and, if he were a ruler himself – note well that here the Ju has been exalted to the ruling class – to rule his state so well that 'all within the four seas would be like one family.' [5]

Thus in his enthusiastic defence of Ju, a name originally intended as a ridicule of the ceremonial professionals of the K'ung school, Hsün Ch'ing gave it such lofty attributes that it was henceforth no longer a term of contempt but a title of great honour coveted by all. The change was now complete when the great 'weaklings' became the great scholars.

3. *Religion divorced from Philosophy*

TAKEN as a whole, the teachings of Masters Meng and Hsün were not as widely different as they first appeared. On the contrary, their difference was mainly one of interpretation and emphasis. To state it briefly, whereas Master Meng elaborated on the idealistic portions of the Ju doctrine by exalting the supreme virtues of human-heartedness and righteousness, Master Hsün took over as his chief tenet the more practical aspects of the Ju teaching, such as rites and music. But in order to do so, especially in an age when sound reasoning was pre-requisite to all philosophical discourses, Hsün Ch'ing had to give not only an historical justification of his ideas as Master K'ung had done before, but also a new logical basis for his assertions. Thus, while maintaining that man, essentially a social animal, had to make his own efforts for self-improvement and adjustment to society, Master Hsün also set out to prove that the salvation of man lay in himself alone, and not, as religious people would say, in Heaven. Indeed, Master Hsün had no such religious scruples, and it was his disbelief in Heaven's dispensations that had convinced him of the necessity of man's own exertions.

Historically speaking, the religious faith of the Chou people, which culminated in their belief in Heaven's power over man, had been greatly shaken during the 200 years or more between Masters K'ung and Hsün. As we know, even Master K'ung was not a religious man himself, and though he often spoke of Heaven's commissions and appointments he seldom openly declared his faith. As for Master Meng, he was only interested in the Mandate of Heaven as a measure useful to his political theorizing. Now, in the hands of Master Hsün, Heaven, who was once the almighty anthromorphic god, became so depersonalized that he was no longer regarded as a powerful influence on man's life.

How all these changes came about can best be told by a review of the philosophical tendencies of the time. The period of the Warring States, as we have noted before, was a period of great confusion and change in man's conceptions of life and the universe. The constant wars, with their attendant destruction of life and property, and the untold misery of the common people, must have weighed heavily on the mind of every thinking man as he began to doubt whether after all there was any justice in the world. In an age when the good suffered along with the wicked, men were apt to be disillusioned and sceptical. Hence the question was: If Heaven were the great benign god that he was said to be, why was it that he allowed mankind to wallow in such deep misery without extending a helping hand? Or could it be that after all Heaven was not such a mighty god as reputed, and that he did not play such an important rôle in man's life as was once imagined?

Living at a time when religion failed to inspire, Hsün Ch'ing became a confessed agnostic. In this he seemed to be more in line with the Taoist than the orthodox school, to which he belonged. For Hsün Ch'ing believed with Lao-tzŭ that Heaven was no more than the unvarying law of nature, and that all changes in the universe such as the movement of the stars, the alteration of the sun and moon, the succession of the seasons, etc., were the operations of that great law. 'The results of these changes we know,' Master Hsün

wrote, 'but we do not know their invisible source – these are the workings of Heaven, which a sage does not seek to know.' [6] Moreover, according to Master Hsün, these strange phenomena of nature had nothing to do with man's activities; nor did prodigious signs portend evil. 'The falling of stars and the groaning of trees are but natural disturbances caused by the modification of Heaven and Earth, the mutation of the *yin* and *yang*,' Master Hsün assured us. 'These are uncommon events. We may marvel at them, but we should not fear them. When ominous signs come from man himself, then we should be really afraid.' [7]

Master Hsün believed that it was man himself, and not Heaven, who was responsible for his own life as well as the prosperity and calamity that came to him. 'If the right way of life is cultivated,' Master Hsün maintained, 'then Heaven cannot send misfortune; flood and drought cannot cause famine; extreme cold or heat cannot cause suffering; supernatural powers cannot cause calamity.' [8] On the other hand, if man should neglect his duty and act contrary to the way of life, then even Heaven would be helpless to help him, and he would have only himself to blame.

As a matter of fact, Hsün Ch'ing had so reinterpreted the orthodox doctrine that he finally succeeded in doing away altogether with whatever modicum of superstition there had been in the ancient Chinese thought. He questioned, as Master K'ung had before him, the efficacy of prayer. Why should people pray for rain? he asked. It would rain anyway, whether people prayed or not. He also discredited fortune-telling and physiognomy; he had no use for divination; and, like Master K'ung, he considered destiny as depending on human action. The spirits, he thought, were mostly the children of one's imagination. He therefore ridiculed the superstitious fellow who beat the drum and sacrificed a suckling pig to appease the evil ones that had caused, so the man believed, his rheumatism. It was too bad, Master Hsün said sneeringly, that the fellow should lose his pig and wear out his drum in this way without getting the happiness of recovering from his disease. [9]

In another story, Master Hsün told the sad plight of a timorous man out walking in the moonlight. His mind being beset by weird tales, the man fancied he had walked into a world of spirits and goblins. Stooping down, he saw his shadow and took it to be a crouching devil; looking up, he caught sight of his hair and took it to be a forest demon. Thus haunted by the creations of his credulous mind, he turned back and ran for his life. But before he reached home the poor fellow lost his breath and died. 'A very distressing affair, this!' [10] commented our philosopher.

Hence, by rejecting such supernatural beliefs and fruitless speculations, Master Hsün succeeded in completing the process of divorcing religion from philosophy, which had its beginning in Master K'ung. This was a very laudable undertaking, which had a significant bearing on the development of Chinese thought throughout the centuries. It also had serious repercussions, for from now on religion had to go underground, so to speak, and never again would it become the chief concern of Chinese intellectuals except for a few erratic souls. Ancestor worship, to be sure, was still practised, but it was more of a social affair, a sort of family reunion between the dead and the living, than a purely religious act. So, while religious faith was being discarded by the scholars, superstition was growing rampant among the unenlightened masses, who took it as an integral part of their belief. On the other hand, religion as a motivating force in man's intellectual and spiritual life had long been dead and buried. Even its revival under Buddhism in the later centuries was half-hearted and short-lived. The Chinese people lost their spiritual faith in Hsün Ch'ing's time, and they have not yet found it.

4. *Human Nature is Evil*

ANOTHER startling idea of Hsün Ch'ing's is that human nature is evil. It is here that he ran counter to Meng K'o, who maintained the view of man's original goodness. Ever since then, the controversy of the two teachers has been a

matter of intense discussion among Chinese scholars, and a countless number of essays have been written on the subject. The battle royal reached its climax in the twelfth century, when the followers of Meng K'o ultimately triumphed. They then deposed the rival philosopher from the important position he had occupied in the K'ung school. It was ironical, therefore, that Hsün Ch'ing, the former champion of the Ju school, should be declared an outcast by the same group of people whose forbears he had once so ardently defended.

It is obvious why Master Hsün had no illusions about human nature in the raw. His belief in the evil nature of man was influenced by the unhappy events that occurred daily around him. For who could deny that strife, corruption, and rapacity were not running riot in Master Hsün's time? And, moreover, were not men addicted to the love of profit and sensual pleasures as Master Hsün declared? With all these glaring facts before him and his mind constantly affected by them, Master Hsün had to admit that the nature of man was evil and that his goodness was acquired. This being his thesis, he wrote:

> Let us consider now human nature. By birth men possess the passion for profit. When they obey this passion, the result is quarrelling and grabbing to the utter detriment of mutual consideration and forbearance. By birth men envy and hate. When they obey this passion, the result is killing and injury to the utter detriment of loyalty and mutual confidence. By birth men have the lusts of the ear and eye, and a passion for the beauty of the human voice and figure. When they follow these lusts, the result is licence and anarchy to the detriment of ritual and righteousness, of culture and reason. Thus, if men give rein to their congenital nature and obey their instinctive emotions, the outcome, of necessity, is quarrelling and grabbing, a common opposing of culture and confounding of reason, and the arrival at an unmitigated state of violence.[11]

Then he made a direct attack on Meng K'o, accusing the latter of failing to understand human nature, of failing to distinguish between what is congenial and acquired. He

wrote: 'What belongs to the original nature is from Heaven. It cannot be learned, nor can it be worked for: whereas, the rules of ritual and righteousness which sage-kings formulated are what men have to learn and work for if they are to become morally capable and arrive at completion.' [12] It is interesting to note here that Master Hsün attributed to Heaven the source of men's congenital nature, which he believed to be evil. We wonder which conception of Heaven he had in mind when he made that statement: was it the anthromorphic god or the law of nature? In either case, he was certainly guilty of blasphemy, and it is no wonder that he was at last ousted from the orthodox school, which believed both in the benignity of Heaven and the goodness of man's nature.

But, as mentioned above, Master Hsün had reasons for his assertion, with which he was making out a case to prove the necessity of regulating desires by moral education. For he believed that human nature, though inherently evil, was nevertheless capable of improvement. Man, indeed, was endowed at his birth with intelligence, and this intelligence enabled him to transform the crude materials of his nature into a mature, refined personality through the process of cultivation. Thus, according to Master Hsün, what one needed was constant practice in the 'way of ritual and righteousness', which alone could teach one to be virtuous, thereby bringing one 'to a state of moral order'.[13]

5. *Making Poetry of Daily Life*

FROM what has been said above we can easily see that both Masters Hsün and Meng, though proceeding from a different starting point, had arrived at the same goal of moral perfection which had also been Master K'ung's. But here again we must admit that the two later philosophers did not take the same road to achieve their goal. To Master Hsün, at least, the most direct way was the good old way of ritual (*li*) and music, and to these he now turned in his philosophical quest.

The origin and evolution of *li* as a refining influence on

Chinese society has a history as old as that of the country itself. It suffices to mention here Hsün Ch'ing's view and his elaboration of its meaning. First of all, it should be pointed out that, whereas Master Meng and the followers of his humanistic school regarded *li* as a mere outgrowth of the inner spirit of *jen*, Master Hsün, on the other hand, considered *li* as the most effective means of counteracting what he alleged to be the inherent baseness of human nature. It was, he believed, only through the beautiful artificial influence of ceremonials, which edified and nourished, that man could mend and refine his rough nature and, by so doing, live properly and harmoniously in a well-ordered society.

We are now not far from the psychological basis of Master Hsün's teaching. According to him, desire with which man was born created wants, and wants unsatisfied bred conflict and disorder, which in turn caused all the troubles of this world. Hence the conclusion was that man's desires, base and insatiable if left to their own course, should be properly guided and restrained. And what measure could be more effective for the building up of a perfect character than the rules of propriety embodied in the social and religious ceremonies? '*Li* arises from the necessity of regulating human desires,' [14] so Master Hsün affirmed. Moreover, he also believed that *li* had its historical justification, for it was established by the 'wise men of old' and practised by princes and scholars alike. Hence, no matter how much the times had changed, *li*, though changing with the times, never deviated from its original purpose as a guiding principle to man's erring nature.

An enthusiastic advocate, Master Hsün praised *li* in glowing words: 'Perfect indeed is *li* (as a sacramental act symbolizing) the heavens and earth in their harmony, the sun and moon in their splendour, the four seasons in their succession, the stars in their movements, the rivers and streams in their flow, the myriad creatures in their abundance, liking and disliking in due (expression), delight and vexation with fitting (force), in the lower orders of society (the expression of) obedience, in the higher orders (the expression of) shining

intelligence, with all creations (unceasingly) changing, yet without confusion, for if the unity of creation were lost, the loss would be irredeemable.' [15] In his eulogy of *li* as the acme of human perfection Master Hsün rose to the realm of poetry, and a poet he certainly was.

As a matter of fact, it was this poetic temperament that had made Master Hsün so irreconcilable to the teachings of Mo Ti, the most prosaic of the ancient Chinese philosophers. So in his defence of mourning and sacrificial rites, denounced by the utilitarians as extravagant, Master Hsün made his appeal to the readers' emotions. He reminded them of the fact that these practices were originally the expression of man's affectionate yearning for the dead, 'the piling up of memories and intentions, of thoughts and longings.' [16] Seen in this light, a sacrifice represented the height of faithfulness and love, and 'the completion of propriety and refinement',[17] just as the three years' mourning was the proper channel through which men gave vent to their deep, inconsolable sorrows.

In Master Hsün's opinion, therefore, all these sacramental acts should be conducted in their proper form so as to beautify death and thereby lessen its ugliness, to beautify sorrow and thereby heal its wounds, to beautify the feeling of reverence by serving the dead as if serving the living. It is in this way that emotion and art are synchronized in ritual, which, in addition to making poetry of daily life, is also in the hands of the ruler 'the highest administrative duty, the source of a country's strength, the way of majesty in action, and the guiding principle of honour.' [18] Taken all in all, is not *li* the greatest of principles, and the virtue that embraces every other ethical concept?

6. *An Expression of Joy*

BEING poetic-minded, Hsün Ch'ing found great joy and inspiration in music. In this he was a worthy disciple of Master K'ung, who, we know, had an ear for music and taught it as a transforming influence on man's life. As one of the six arts

cultivated by the Chou aristocracy, music had occupied an important position in the classic curriculum, but in the post-Chou periods it degenerated even among the scholars of the K'ung school. The *Classic of Music*, one of the six Chou canons, is lost to posterity, and it is only in the works of Hsün Ch'ing that we can reconstruct the part played by music as a beautiful ritualistic experience and a communal entertainment in ancient times.

Following in the footsteps of Master K'ung, Master Hsün taught that music, as an expression of human emotion, was essential to society. Together with ritual, the two being inseparable as a powerful educative force, music helped to form or transform man's character. Good music, characterized by Master Hsün as 'the inner bond of harmony', could stir up goodness in people's hearts and thereby keep them away from evil influences. 'Music,' wrote Master Hsün, 'is an expression of joy,[19] an irrepressible part of human emotion. Men cannot be without happiness, and happiness invariably breaks out in voice and finds expression in movements. ... If these expressions are not properly directed, riots invariably result. In view of this, the ancient kings invented musical notes so that the sounds might express happiness but excite no riot, ... and that composition and orchestration might inspire good thoughts and suppress evil notions.'[20]

Consequently, musical performances in the ancestral temples, in the inner apartments, and in the village squares were occasions on which the feelings of reverence, affection, and obedience were inspired among the audience. 'Thus music unites to establish harmony, compares to enrich its notes, and orchestrates to create beauty. While leading in one direction, it regulates the myriad changes.'[21] Its influence being profound, music was therefore an important means by which a ruler governed his people. And just as good music tended to make people orderly and harmonious, so licentious music endangered the country by causing its people to degenerate. That was the reason why the ancients were so careful in musical compositions.

Master Hsün also gave us a good description of the various instruments used in ancient China. While discoursing on the moral effects of music, he wrote, 'The drum is the king of the orchestra; the bells are the perfect rulers; the stone chimes discriminate and regulate; the reed organs are reverent and harmonious; the flageolets and flute give volume; the ocarina and the bamboo flutes are excellent and beautiful. And while singing represents the perfection of clarity, dancing symbolizes the way of Heaven.' [22]

In another passage Master Hsün showed that he too was a happy connoisseur of dancing, for which he had the highest regard. He wrote graphically on the art of dancing: 'The dancer's eyes do not look at himself, and his ears do not listen to himself; yet he controls the lowering and raising of his head, the bending and straightening of his body, his advancing and retreating, his slow and rapid movements – everything is thus well regulated. He exerts all the strength of his body to keep time with the beat of the drum and the sound of bells, and never for a moment would he dance out of tune or move contrary to the rhythmic measures.' [23]

7. *The Philosophy of Culture*

FROM what we know of his teaching Hsün Ch'ing was definitely the most orthodox of the Ju scholars. Though occasionally advancing ideas of his own, such as his theory of human nature and his disbelief in religion, he was nevertheless at heart a thorough traditionalist. As a political thinker, he upheld the feudal ideals and institutions that Master K'ung handed down. In ethics he was an indefatigable transmitter of the great truth – not the metaphysical *Tao*, which is the way of Heaven, but the ethical *tao*, which is the way of man. Moreover, Hsün Ch'ing was profoundly convinced of the necessity of law and authority in a well-ordered society. Oftentimes, carried away by the force of conviction, he erred rather on the side of conservatism.

Compared with the more advanced ideas of Meng K'o, who was undoubtedly the greatest political genius that

ancient China produced, Hsün Ch'ing's views appeared especially reactionary. It was for this that he was known among his fellow philosophers as an authoritarian, which he certainly was. In fact, his conservatism, his insistence on established authority, and his belief in moral order made him a true catholic of the K'ung school. But, on the other hand, his beautification of ritual, music, and dancing showed him the possessor of a poetic instinct which considerably mollified the rigidity of his creed.

As mentioned above, the masters Hsün and Meng each specialized in one of the two main branches of study in the K'ung school, namely, the ceremonial and the humanistic. Just as Master Meng followed directly Master K'ung's later disciples like Tseng Ts'an and Tzŭ-ssŭ in their emphasis on humane ideals and human relationships, so Master Hsün followed Master K'ung's earlier disciples like Tzŭ-kung and others, who found in ceremonials and music their major interest. These subjects, we remember, were also the starting point from which Master K'ung himself embarked on his career as a teacher, and the foundation on which he built his ethical and political system. In this sense Hsün Ch'ing was truly a loyal follower of his great Master.

Nevertheless, the division in the K'ung school was by no means as hard and fast as it sounds. It did not prevent Master Hsün, for instance, from discoursing on moral subjects such as honour and shame, educational subjects such as self-cultivation, political subjects such as kings and hegemonists, and dialectic subjects such as the rectification of names. Indeed, his interests were so broad that they covered practically all aspects of human activity. With a keen analytic mind rare at that period, Master Hsün succeeded in stringing together the scattered and unorganized teachings of the K'ung school into a coherent system of thought as none of the others had done before him.

If Master Hsün was analytic in his method of presentation, he was also eclectic in his ideas. Traces of the other philosophical schools, such as the Taoist, the Dialectician, the Legalist, and even the Mohist, are discernible in his

writings. While fundamentally a follower of the Ju school, Hsün Ch'ing did not hesitate to take in anything and everything that he considered good and useful for his system, which has rightly been called the philosophy of culture. We know that value comes from culture, and culture itself is the highest attainment of man. Thus in presenting the philosophy of culture Hsün Ch'ing summarized for us the intellectual achievements of a great race in its most creative period. In view of this contribution, a high tribute is due to Hsün Ch'ing, by whom the great tradition of the Chinese people was at last moulded.

Chapter Seven

THE LEGALIST TRIUMPH

1. *The Rise of the Legalist School*

AT the time of Masters Meng and Hsün there emerged in the northern states a very powerful school of thought that was destined to triumph over all the others in this great battle of ideas. The Legalist school conquered, however, not by strength of argument but by sheer political force, when the government party, with which it was aligned, succeeded at last in putting the whole of China under its control. But before we proceed to give an account of its victory and the disaster that befell the Ju group, let us begin by showing how this new school became such an important factor in the realms of philosophy and politics.

The Chou world, we remember, had been originally governed by two different codes of regulations: the ceremonies that directed the lives of the aristocracy, and the common laws that controlled the lives of the peasantry. In the course of centuries, as a result of the merging of classes, these distinctions became less strict than they had been. In the hands of Master K'ung, for instance, the rules of noble conduct, derived from the ceremonies, became a universal system of ethics for all people, irrespective of rank and class. At the same time, the penal laws, formerly applied only to the serfs, also gained general acceptance among the intellectuals as an effective means of crime prevention. In view of the fact that the nobles of that period had grown so corrupt and unruly that they could no longer be restrained by the gentle code of ritual, it was natural that many political thinkers came to feel that licence and insubordination among the aristocrats should be curbed by the application of a severe set of rules. Hence there rose a school of thought which maintained that strict and equal punishments should be meted out to all transgressors of law.

At this point it should be noted that the Legalists, though advocates and administrators of rigorous laws, were by no means more relentless than the other politicians of the time. What made them appear so was the vigour and strictness with which they enforced the penal code, which was itself inhumane. As originally applied to captives, slaves, and serfs, the law had remained cruel for centuries in spite of the humanitarian efforts of Master K'ung and others. For instance, it included such barbarous practices as cutting off the nose and feet, castration, and quartering, all of which the Legalists sought to apply to plebeians and patricians alike. But if they were inexorable in their attitude, their harshness was considerably modified by the fairness of their position. The strength of the Legalist school, indeed, lay in its concept that all were equal in the eyes of the law.

2. *Philosophers and Administrators*

THE school of law originated with law-makers and administrators. As early as the seventh century B.C. the idea of law had already existed, and it was embodied in Kuan Chung, one of the great ministers of Ch'i. Kuan Chung not only made Ch'i the richest and strongest state in the east by introducing government monopoly in salt and iron, which were abundant in the Ch'i peninsula, but he also left to later generations a pattern of good and efficient administration. Though criticized by Master K'ung for being negligent in ceremonial observances, he was nevertheless commended as having rendered a great service to the Chinese nation by stemming the tide of barbaric invasions on the Chinese states. For, said Master K'ung, 'Were it not for Kuan Chung, we might now be wearing our hair loose and folding our clothes to the left,' [1] that is, in the style of the barbarians.

It is unlikely that Kuan Chung, the busy statesman, should have ever conceived the idea of becoming an author. Moreover, as we know, it was not a common practice for the statesman of those days to commit his ideas to writing, and

even Master K'ung refrained from setting down his teachings. So the book *Kuan-tzŭ*, attributed to the Ch'i minister, was undoubtedly a later forgery without much historical value, but the man Kuan Chung was certainly the greatest administrator since the Duke of Chou and deservedly honoured as the spiritual founder of the Legalist school.

Another prominent figure was Tzŭ-ch'an, prime minister of Chêng, who promulgated the first written Chinese code as early as 536 B.C. Probably the most remarkable man of his time, he won Master K'ung's praise as being an epitome of the 'princely man'. At his death the Master wept bitterly, observing that he had a love bequeathed by the ancients.

Whereas Kuan Chung and Tzŭ-ch'an might be regarded as forerunners of the Legalist school, Shen Tao, a scholar of Chao, Shen Pu-hai, a minister of Han, and Shang Yang, a native of Wei, who later became the great law-maker of Ch'in, were three of the most prominent Legalist thinkers of a later period. Contemporaries of Meng K'o, they all flourished in the fourth century B.C. in the northern states of Han, Wei, and Chao, the three succession states of the once mighty Tsin. From these states the Legalist idea spread to Ch'in in the north-west, where it gained a firm foothold in the government administration. The reason for its growth in the hardy northern climate is not far to seek. Obviously, just as the genial southern temperament was akin to the romantic naturalistic ideals of the *Lao-tzŭ* and *Chuang-tzŭ*, and the people on the central plains were attracted to Master K'ung's doctrine of the mean, so the practical genius of the northern people expressed itself in the theories and practices of law.

Generally speaking, Shen Tao contributed to Legalism the concept of *shih*, variously translated as force or power. Expressed figuratively, *shih* is the *res media* by which a dragon rides on the clouds and a unicorn covers a thousand miles a day; while without it both these fabulous animals would become as helpless and crippled as an ant or a cricket. To be more specific, *shih* is the authority which enables a ruler to govern his people. A king without *shih* is therefore not much

different from any ordinary man; he is powerless to make his orders obeyed and his influence felt among the people.

The second concept, *shu*, as advanced by Shen Pu-hai, carries the Legalist theories into practical administration. *Shu* is especially the art of government or statecraft, by means of which a ruler controls his subordinates and employs them to his own advantage. These political measures are devised for their effectiveness without regard to moral standards. Hence some of them may be entirely fraudulent and oppressive, but in so far as they achieve their purpose they are considered as indispensable to good government. For instance, it was by such unscrupulous means that the ruler of Ch'in finally succeeded in getting an iron grasp on his people and in bringing all the neighbouring states under his domination. It was also the same principle that made it possible for a totalitarian state to force first its own people into slavery, and then the other states into submission and bondage.

Fa, the third Legalist concept, was the weapon with which Shang Yang, popularly known as the Lord of Shang, fought his way to power and greatness in Ch'in. During his ministry there Shang Yang brought about many reforms in that rising state. He strengthened government control on the people by breaking up the old patriarchal family; he increased the state treasury by abolishing the 'well-field' system of agriculture and opening up waste lands for cultivation; he encouraged military service by a system of rewards and punishments. His greatest achievement, however, was the enactment of a set of new laws for all the people. Having once promulgated them, he was so vigorous in their execution that he even punished the delinquency of the crown prince by having the prince's tutor branded; at a second offence by the same prince Lord Shang had the hapless tutor's nose sliced off. Thus, after five years of administration, he made Ch'in the strongest and the best governed among all the contending states. But in his strict enforcement of the law he also made many enemies and, in spite of his meritorious service, his career was cut short when the

same crown prince he had disgraced ascended the throne. The latter, accusing Lord Shang of treason, condemned him to death and caused him to be torn to pieces by four chariots driven in opposite directions.

To this ambitious, unscrupulous but also brilliant politician, posterity attributed the authorship of a political treatise that now goes under his name. Though most likely not from his pen, the *Book of Lord Shang* contains much that was in keeping with its namesake's views and practices. There is, for example, a striking correspondence in the political aspirations of Lord Shang the man, and the aim of *Lord Shang* the book. In either case, it is to create a centralized militant state with the ultimate goal of attaining supremacy over the other states. To achieve this, so maintains *Lord Shang*, the people must be encouraged to farm and to fight, that is, to produce abundance in times of peace and to be well organized for fighting in times of war. But Lord Shang's great contribution to Chinese political thought was in his insistence, both in theory and practice, on an equitable application of the law, in which he neither spared the strong and great in their punishments nor showed favouritism to relatives and friends. Thus, while laying the foundation for the future conquest of Ch'in, he also paved the way for the ultimate Legalist triumph over the 'hundred schools' of philosophy.

3. *A Synthesis of Legalist Ideas*

STRANGELY enough, the two great exponents of Legalist thought in the next century were both disciples of Hsün Ch'ing, the great K'ung scholar. While the latter was a magistrate at Lan-ling he had with him two students, Han Fei and Li Ssŭ: the first turned out to be a Legalist theorist, and the second a Legalist administrator. Though it might seem implausible at first sight that Legalist scholars should spring from the K'ung school, it is obvious that Master Hsün's authoritarianism could easily lead to the even greater authoritarianism of his disciples, who found in law and statecraft a more effective means of attaining a strong

and orderly government than in ceremonials and music. Moreover, Master Hsün's theory of human nature must have provided a good psychological basis for the Legalist contention that law was essential in combating and restraining crimes into which men were apt to fall because of their inherent evil.

Han Fei, a brilliant teacher of power politics, came from a noble family in the state of Han. An habitual stutterer, he resorted to writing to communicate and propagate his ideas. By chance, two of his essays, entitled 'Solitary Indignation' and 'The Five Vermin', were introduced to Ch'in and read by its ambitious young king Cheng, who expressed a great desire to know their author. 'These are the works of Han Fei,' said Li Ssŭ, Han Fei's fellow-student and now an official in the court of Ch'in. Later, when Han Fei was sent to Ch'in as a goodwill envoy from Han, he was so well received by the king that the Ch'in officials, including Li Ssŭ, became jealous. They slandered him to King Cheng with the result that the honoured visitor was accused of treachery and thrown into prison. While there, Han Fei received from his former schoolmate a gift of poison and an order to commit suicide. Thus died in Ch'in, rather ironically, the very man whose teaching was to serve as a philosophical basis for the future greatness of that mighty state.

In the works of Han Fei we have a complete synthesis of the Legalist ideas of the fourth and third centuries B.C. While following Shen Tao in his concept of sovereign authority, and Shang Yang in his vigorous administration of the law, Han Fei was especially indebted to Shen Pu-hai in his emphasis on statecraft, which he called 'the art of wielding the sceptre'. In discussing the relation between the prince and his ministers, Han Fei, who considered the sovereign's person as inviolable and the sovereign's power as absolute, insisted that the ruler of men should have a firm control of the 'two handles of government', viz., commendation and chastisement – with the first a prince secured the officials' loyalty, and with the second he commanded awe by inflicting death and torture upon all who dared to disobey.

True to the Legalist conception, Han Fei also maintained that there should be an equal application of the law to nobles and serfs. He said, 'Ministers are never exempt from punishment for their faults; commoners are never overlooked in rewards for good.' [2] But, according to Han Fei, there was one person who was above the law – he was the sovereign himself, who alone made the law and from whom all authority emanated. Thus in his political ideas Han Fei advocated an absolute monarchy based upon law and government and upheld by military strength. His ideal state, therefore, was a centralized state with one sovereign, one régime, one supreme law – an autocracy that would put an end to all war and confusion by virtue of its totalitarian powers.

4. *K'ung Scholars under Fire*

THE typical attitude of the Legalist philosopher in contradistinction to that of the K'ung scholar is well illustrated in the following dialogue between three teachers of the Ch'i academy below the Gate of Grain.

T'ien P'ien, an eloquent speaker with the nickname the 'Heavenly Mouth', was reading the *Classic of History* when he observed that 'the age of Yao was one of great peace.'

Sung Hsing, his colleague, overhearing the remark, said, 'Was this not due to the administration of the sage kings?'

'No,' broke in P'eng Meng, who was standing near by; 'this was due to the administration of a sage law, not to that of a sage man.' [3]

Though none of the three interlocutors was a confirmed Legalist or K'ung scholar, yet in the words of P'eng Meng and Sung Hsing we have a good example of the different political dogmas of the two schools. Whereas the K'ung school stressed the personal influence of the ruler, the Legalist contended that a country could be well governed only by a body of good efficient laws which, once established, would keep the ball of state rolling without the ruler's doing anything in particular. The advantage of this position was that, since sage-kings appeared but rarely, all rulers who followed

the law did not have to be gifted and virtuous. Moreover, laws eliminated personal factors which were often a hindrance in government administration.

For the same reason, the Legalists rejected the K'ung scholars' static conception of history and their faith in traditional authority. On the contrary, they maintained that, since social changes were inevitable, all state affairs should be conditioned by environment and the exigencies of the immediate present. Instead of yearning for the unattainable ideals of a hoary age and adhering to worn-out conventions, they demanded a complete rupture with the past. Modern government, they asserted, had long outgrown the tribal family of the earliest days, and the functions of the ruler could not be the same as those of parents. Furthermore, family virtues such as love and benevolence had no place in the government of a nation.

Likewise, in their insistence on an equitable law for the average man, the Legalists came into conflict with the privileged aristocratic class. As noted before, it was this conviction that led Lord Shang to impose punishment on the offending prince, which led ultimately to his own downfall. But the seeds of Legalism sown by this dauntless minister took root in the Ch'in soil, and as a result there emerged in that state a monarchical order that succeeded at last in supplanting the feudal régime as well as the inalienable rights of the aristocracy.

In their anti-feudal campaigns the Legalists condemned in one breath all ancient institutions and traditions together with the ethics, ritual, history, and literature of the past that had been so dear to Master K'ung. Thus among the ten evils of the time the Legalists listed filial piety, fraternal love as well as poetry, ceremony, and music. All these they considered either impracticable or unprofitable to the people, who should be engaged in the more productive pursuits of agriculture and the 'honourable' profession of soldiery.

It was then that the K'ung scholars came under fire. Though antagonistic towards all the other schools, the Legalists centred their attack especially on the Ju followers.

These they included with merchants, artisans, swashbucklers, etc., among the ten idle classes to be eliminated. The K'ung scholars, in particular, were accused of being 'glib-tongued', of living on others, and of seeking to surpass one another in empty talk. Moreover, they were the dangerous elements in society, who, though fed at state expense, served nevertheless only to awaken distrust in the state by their high-sounding words and specious arguments. So in a moment of 'solitary indignation' Han Fei, the great spokesman of the Legalist school, condemned them all as grubs and parasites.

5. *The End of an Epoch*

WHILE the battle of the intellectuals was going on with a great deal of sound and fury a more devastating war was also in progress among the contending states in a life-and-death struggle for supremacy. It lasted for many decades until finally the remote backward north-western state of Ch'in succeeded, with its superior political and military power, in unifying the whole of China. Because of its geographical isolation, Ch'in had been the last great state to be admitted to the Chinese confederation. But, though less civilized than the rest, it had the advantage of being the least fettered by traditions and inhibitions, and hence was the more receptive to such new totalitarian ideas as those advocated by the Legalists. This made it possible for Ch'in at the time of Lord Shang to make reforms in government and law that subsequently led it on the road to conquest. Immediately afterwards, the third century B.C. saw the mighty armies of Ch'in, backed by a strong government at home, overrunning the central plains as they hacked down hurdles of opposition and raced towards the enemy capitals in a mad effort to dominate the entire Chinese kingdom. This goal Ch'in finally won in 221 B.C., when one after another the feudal states of Han, Chao, Ch'i, Wei, Ch'u, and Yen succumbed to her might, the house of Chou having previously been overthrown in 256 B.C., when its last king 'saw his sacrifices discontinued'. With the fall of the symbolic

authority of Chou, feudalism too came to an official end. Now a new era dawned in Chinese history when King Cheng of Ch'in was crowned the First Emperor of China.

The great political genius who engineered this epoch-making conquest was none other than Li Ssŭ, the Ch'in prime minister, whom we have met as a fellow-student with Han Fei at Master Hsün's school. Though a less brilliant scholar, Li Ssŭ was more successful as an administrator. A stern realist, cold, calculating, and unrelenting, he was the greatest statesman since Lord Shang to have served at the court of Ch'in. His influence, for better or worse, was tremendous. With the support of the First Emperor, Li Ssŭ now effected sweeping changes in Chinese society that resulted in a complete destruction of feudalism in the new empire.

Among the many anti-feudal measures adopted by Li Ssŭ were the establishment of a strong central government backed by efficient military machinery, the replacement of aristocracy by a well-trained bureaucracy, and the standardization of measurements and weights, of carriages and roads. But most important of all was the division of the empire, this time not into semi-independent fiefs but into well-defined administrative units, each governed by a non-hereditary official directly appointed by the court. While the institution of these units – the country was divided into thirty-six commanderies, each of which was in turn sub-divided into a number of prefectures – was a marked departure from the Chou régime, the break with feudalism was made complete by the destruction of the landed power of the aristocracy, when no less than 120,000 noble families of the conquered kingdoms were removed from their ancestral holdings to the Ch'in capital at Hsien-yang (near modern Sian) and their privately owned weapons confiscated to make huge bronze statues for the emperor's palaces. Thus the feudal society of ancient China received the last staggering blow, from which it never recovered.

6. *A Fatal Banquet*

WHILE the First Emperor of Ch'in, at Li Ssŭ's instigation, was thus engaged in the destruction of the past, he still had with him in the first years of his reign seventy scholars of great learning, to whom he gave the official rank of *Po Shih* or Eruditus. These learned men he kept in his court to keep alive the torch of culture, now in danger of being extinguished because of the dissolution of the states. Though Legalism had triumphed in the person of Li Ssŭ, the battle was not yet entirely lost for the other philosophies, which at least were allowed to survive. They might, in fact, have continued to flourish during the Ch'in dynasty had it not been for an inadvertent speech of a K'ung scholar, Shun-yü Yüeh by name, which caused the greatest catastrophe that ever befell an ancient culture.

It all happened like this: In the thirty-fourth year (213 B.C.) of his reign the First Emperor held a banquet in his palace at Hsien-yang, to which he invited all the dignitaries of the court. This must have been a great occasion – perhaps the Emperor's birthday – for the seventy Eruditi who were present all came forward to wish the Emperor a long life. During the course of the celebration, as was natural, there were many complimentary speeches. Among the speakers was a certain courtier who congratulated His Majesty on his great achievements, commending him especially for having transformed the loosely-knit feudal states into well-organized commanderies and prefectures under the direct control of the central government. 'For myriads of generations,' so the eulogist concluded, 'will these achievements be handed down. Never since antiquity has Your Majesty's awesome virtue been equalled.'

The Emperor was pleased. But Shun-yü Yüeh, one of the Eruditi, came forward to protest against the courtier's speech. Addressing the Emperor, he said: 'Your servant has heard that the reason why the Shang and Chou kings (held the empire) for more than a thousand years was that they

gave fiefs to their sons, brothers, and meritorious ministers as supporting props to the royal house. At present, Your Majesty possesses all within the four seas, yet Your Majesty's sons and younger brothers remain common men. (If eventually there should be uprisings,) how could your subjects come to their sovereign's help without means of assistance? Your servant has never heard of any affairs which have not been modelled on antiquity as enduring for long.'[4]

The First Emperor submitted this criticism to his officers. The Grand Councillor Li Ssŭ then memorialized:

The Five Emperors did not imitate each other, nor did the Three Dynasties repeat themselves, because forms of government change in accordance with times. ... In the old days, the feudal lords, who were continually at war with one another, wished to secure the services of the best talents and hence encouraged scholars. Now that the world is unified and all laws emanate from a single authority, the common people should apply themselves to agriculture and industry, and the intellectuals to laws and administration. Nevertheless, the scholars to-day are studying the past in order to defame the present. They cause distrust and confusion in the minds of the black-haired people ...

Your servant, therefore, ventures to propose that all historical records, save those of Ch'in, be burned; that all libraries of poetry, history, and philosophy, except those under the custody of the Eruditi, be sent to the officials to be destroyed; that all people who recite poetry or discuss history be executed; that all those who raise their voice against the present government in the name of antiquity be beheaded together with their families; ... that only books of medicine, divination, agriculture, and arboriculture be preserved; that students be required to study laws under officials.[5]

The imperial decree, as drafted by Li Ssŭ, was approved by the Emperor.

7. *The Great Catastrophe*

As a result of this edict, which must have been carried out with the great thoroughness typical of the Legalist administration, the intellectual activity of the previous period came to an abrupt end. Though the K'ung scholars bore the brunt

of the attack with the *Classic of Poetry* and the *Classic of History* placed under special ban, the other schools of philosophy also suffered a great setback, from which they never recovered. Ancient learning, first wrested from official monopoly by Master K'ung, was now once more kept under lock and key in the imperial archives, accessible only to a few; while new ideas, deprived of their source of nourishment, could no longer spread and thrive. The totalitarian control of thought was now complete.

But that was not all. The disastrous proscription of books was followed by the even more catastrophic burying alive of scholars. Whether these scholars were persecuted for refusing to surrender their precious possessions or whether, as another story says, they were mere scapegoats of the Emperor's indignation at the desertion of certain court magicians [6] is immaterial. The cruel fact is that no less than 460 of the Ju scholars were put to death a year after that fateful edict, thus creating unspeakable havoc in the rank and file of the Chinese intellectuals, just as the burning of books had left irreparable gaps in the history of Chinese literature.

But the worst was yet to come. The Ch'in Empire, as we know, was short-lived and there was a possibility that some day the proscribed books in the imperial archives might yet see the light of day to give stimulus to learning. The greatest catastrophe befell, however, when after the fall of Ch'in in 206 B.C. the imperial palaces at Hsien-yang were set on fire by the rebel army. As history informs us, the monstrous conflagration lasted for three months and the only complete collection of China's most treasured ancient books perished in the flames. Irreparable indeed was this greatest of all losses to China's rich cultural heritage.

Chapter Eight

THE K'UNG CLASSICS INSCRIBED ON STONE TABLETS

1. *The Revival of Learning*

FORTUNATELY for posterity, Chinese culture, which had suffered such great havoc in the Ch'in period, did not perish altogether. After the founding of the Han dynasty in the wake of Ch'in the scholars were once more active. The school of Ju, especially, rallied in an all-out effort to win for itself the dominant position it had held in the Chou period. After many vicissitudes the struggle that lasted for decades was finally won and the teaching of Master K'ung established as the orthodox doctrine of the new state.

Things did not look very promising in the first years of the Han period. Coming from a low, illiterate family, Liu Pang, Eminent Emperor (206–195 B.C.) of the Dynasty, had little love for such pedantic ceremonial practitioners as the Ju. In fact, he was so thoroughly disgusted with them that he would, so the story says, urinate in their high hats to show his contempt. And when pressed to give more consideration to ancient learning, he would answer, 'I have conquered the empire on horseback, and on horseback I propose to hold it.'[1]

But, luckily for the Ju, no sovereign on horseback could long hold an empire. Soon the soldier-emperor discovered that at least in one subject these intellectuals could be useful. At that time he was much troubled by the confusion at his court caused mainly by generals and ministers as uneducated and unmannered as he himself. Now, the K'ung scholars were noted for their great knowledge of ritual. So one of them, Shu-sun T'ung (third to second century B.C.), who had been an Eruditus under the Ch'in regime, was ordered to draw up a code of ceremonials for the court. This Shu-sun T'ung did with pleasure and competence, and when the

rites were at last performed everything went so well and orderly that Liu Pang, highly flattered by the great homage done him, exclaimed, 'Now I know what it means to be an emperor!'[2]

This seems to be a turning point in the history of the K'ung school, the ceremonial knowledge of whose members won for it a foothold in the court. As a reward for his meritorious service, Shu-sun T'ung was made the Imperial Master of Ceremony, and the other scholars, who had helped him in drafting the Ceremonial Code, were also given official positions at court. At the same time the Eminent Emperor began to change his attitude towards the literati. Shortly before his death in 195 B.C. he went to visit Master K'ung's grave in Lu during one of his inspection tours and offered there the grand sacrifice of an ox, a sheep, and a pig – a high honour worthy of a great sage.

Even then the Eminent Emperor refused to withdraw the ban against the Chou books, which was not lifted until 191 B.C., in the reign of the next emperor. Then began a feverish attempt to restore the lost books. With official encouragement, the scholars finally succeeded in unearthing a large number of the K'ung classics that had been scattered among the people. These were brought together and presented to the court to be kept in the imperial archives. It was in this manner that the *Classic of Poetry*, the *Classic of History*, and the *Spring and Autumn* were once more rescued from oblivion, the *Classic of Change* having previously escaped persecution as a work of divination. These four and the *Record of Rites*, which was pieced together later, constitute the Five Classics which have been handed down to posterity since the Han dynasty. The only loss, so far as the K'ung classics were concerned, was the *Classic of Music*, only one chapter of which survived in the *Works* of Master Hsün.

A typical example may be cited of the way in which these classics were restored. For many years the *Classic of History* was lost to the world until Fu Sheng, a former Eruditus under the Ch'in regime, recovered it for posterity. According to one story, at the time of the Proscription Edict in 213 B.C.,

Fu Sheng had hidden the bamboo tablets that made up this classic in the walls of his home before he fled for safety. There the book remained for almost half a century until the reign of Emperor Wen of Han (179–157 B.C.), when Fu Sheng, now in his nineties, brought it from its hiding place. Though most of the tablets were worn out, Fu Sheng was able to piece them together into a book of twenty-nine chapters that bore his name. Another account, even more fascinating, credited Fu Sheng with actually writing down from memory all these chapters of the *History* classic – a prodigious feat indeed!

But the most fruitful discovery of the classics came a few decades later in the last years of Emperor Wu (140–87 B.C.). At that time Prince Kung of Lu, while dismantling an old house of the K'ung family to make way for his palace, discovered in the dilapidated walls numerous tablets that formed the *Classic of History*, the *Spring and Autumn*, the *Analects*, and the *Classic of Filial Piety*. All these, however, were written in the archaic tadpole characters of Master K'ung's time and were hardly legible to the people of the Han period. So these recovered books were sent to K'ung An-kuo (second century B.C.), a great scholar and lineal descendant of Master K'ung in the eleventh generation, to be deciphered and written in the current Han script. This An-kuo accomplished, and when his version of the *History* in forty-six portions was completed he presented it together with the old tablets to the emperor in 97 B.C. Thus it was through painstaking efforts like these that the lost Chou classics were finally restored to the Chinese people.

2. *Eruditi of the Five Classics*

AT the same time the K'ung scholars were repairing the damage to their literary heritage they had to fight a political battle in order to win recognition as the sole teachers of orthodoxy, for in spite of the happy beginnings made by Shu-sun T'ung they did not find the political atmosphere entirely favourable. To be sure, Legalism had fallen into

disgrace because of its connexion with the Ch'in tyrants; and Mohism, for unknown reasons, had failed to revive as a vital philosophy after the death-blow dealt to the 'hundred schools'. But there was Taoism, the chief rival of the Ju school, which had grown extremely popular in government circles in the early Han period. Not only were most of the ministers Taoistically inclined, but even the emperors themselves showed distinct Taoist leanings, adopting *laissez-faire* as their state policy and Taoist occultism as their personal faith. The Empress Tou, especially, was a devoted Taoist, and her influence was great during the three reigns of her husband Wen, her son Ching (156–141 B.C.), and her grandson Wu. It was only after her death in 135 B.C. that the Taoist influence at court waned. Even then the later Han emperors, including the great Wu, though professed patrons of the K'ung doctrine, were also at heart believers in the occult arts.

But Taoist magic, whatever its promises, failed to satisfy in the end, when its elixir of life and its isles of the blest all proved illusory. On the other hand, the K'ung scholars also had their magic: it was the secret, more easily attainable than the Taoist, of securing for the emperor not longevity but a long absolute reign. In this respect the feudal doctrine of Master K'ung that once upheld the authority of the Chou king could easily be converted into a political system in support of a centralized autocratic state that was the Han. Allegiance to the Son of Heaven, for instance, was required of the feudal lords as it was required of the court ministers of the new empire. In the same way, Master K'ung's effort to restore the lost powers of the Chou sovereign – this too could be capitalized on to bolster up the new imperial authority. All in all, though Taoist occultism was more fascinating to the ambitious young Emperor Wu, the K'ung teaching also made a powerful appeal. Thus, while dallying with alchemy, magic, and the idea of immortality, the emperor saw no objection to keeping the K'ung scholars at court to introduce political measures that could help to weld his vast empire.

The first indication of the rise of the K'ung school in the Han dynasty appears in an imperial edict of 141 B.C., ordering the dismissal of the non-K'ung scholars from the Board of Eruditi, which served as an official organ for the advancement of learning. By giving the K'ung scholars the monopoly of learning this edict was a significant event in the history of the Ju school. But though the new law was successfully introduced by its supporters at court, it was at first countermanded by the Empress Dowager Tou, whose Taoist sympathies we have already mentioned. A quarrel soon ensued between the powerful Dowager and the K'ung scholars, two of whom gave up their lives in the fight. But luckily for the Ju followers the aged Empress was not destined to live long, and in 136 B.C., a year before her death, the K'ung doctrine was proclaimed in another edict and adopted as a state dogma.

Immediately after the expulsion of the other philosophers from the Board of Eruditi the Ju scholars reorganized it into five faculties, each specializing in one of the five K'ung classics, namely, the *Classic of Change*, the *Classic of Poetry*, the *Classic of History*, the *Record of Rites*, and the *Spring and Autumn*. Later, in 124 B.C., another innovation was introduced by the K'ung scholars at court. This was the founding of the first Chinese university in the Han capital at Chang-an, for the purpose of 'transmitting the sacred ways of the ancient rulers and of achieving the moral and intellectual advancement of the empire.' At first, only fifty students were admitted to the university to study with the Eruditi in the five classical departments. But from this modest beginning the university soon grew by leaps and bounds until by the end of the first century B.C. it had as many as 3,000 students. This number was further increased in the later centuries until it reached a peak of 30,000 in the second century A.D. – probably the biggest enrolment in any university! At the same time many other schools were established in the outlying districts, and like the national university, these, too, had as their aim the training of young men in the knowledge of the K'ung classics. Holding firmly in their hands the reins of

education, the K'ung scholars soon dominated the Chinese intellectual scene, and continued to do so during the ensuing two millennia.

Another important measure in promoting the K'ung doctrine was the introduction of an examination system based upon the Five Classics. This system, too, had its origin in the Han dynasty when the government was badly in need of good, capable officials to administer the great empire. At that time the two most important qualifications for these civil office-holders were education and moral integrity. The first was stressed because the officials should be able at least to read the imperial edicts and send in written reports to the court. For this as well as other reasons it was apparent that no one would be better qualified for office than the well-read followers of the K'ung school. Hence in the place of a hereditary aristocracy, now extinct, there rose a new class of people, the scholar-officials, who came to fill all the key government positions throughout the empire.

In their zeal to propagate their teaching the K'ung scholars attempted to limit the members of the new official class to their group alone. This they accomplished by the clever tactics of making the K'ung classics the only subjects for examination. Their first victory came when the new educational law issued in the reign of Emperor Wu stipulated that any university student, after a year's study with the Eruditi, could become an official by passing an examination in one of the five classical subjects. From this propitious beginning, which set a precedent for all succeeding generations, the Chinese examination system, the world's earliest, soon developed into a full-scale competition among the educated, who were given titles and ranks in accordance with their proficiency in the knowledge of the classics. In this way the K'ung scholars secured the monopoly of the country's bureaucracy, while at the same time they firmly established, for better or for worse, their hold on China's intellectual life.

3. *The 'Science of Catastrophes and Anomalies'*

THE credit for all these successful innovations went to Tung Chung-shu (179?–104? B.C.), the greatest of the early Han scholars. As a representative of the intellectual group at an imperial conference, Tung thrice addressed to the throne memorials in which he advocated a system of education based upon the K'ung doctrine – an important aim of the K'ung followers which, as we have seen, was finally realized. But here it must be noted that the K'ung doctrines as expounded by Tung Chung-shu and adopted in the early Han period was a far cry from the Master's original teaching. Ironically enough, just at the moment when the star of the K'ung school was in its ascendency, it started changing colour.

Great scholar though he was, Tung Chung-shu must have appeared a rather pompous figure to his students. Instead of having personal contact with them, Tung would give his lectures behind a curtain while at the same time exacting a strict attention to order and propriety from his audience. In fact, he was so inaccessible to his pupils that the newcomers had to be prepared by their senior colleagues before being admitted, if they were lucky enough, to their first interview with their august teacher. Besides his strictness, Tung was also noted for his great industry. According to one story, he was so absorbed in his studies that for three years he did not even take a look at his garden.

As to the teaching of this dignified scholar, we must admit that it was largely a strange admixture of orthodox and heterodox elements. Generally speaking, there was in Tung's philosophy as set forth in his work the *Copious Dew in Spring and Autumn* a distinct leaning towards the supernatural ideas of the Yin-yang school. The *Copious Dew*, for instance, was a fanciful interpretation of Master K'ung's *Spring and Autumn* in accordance with the prevalent beliefs of the time. As an example of its curious nature, we must relate that certain passages in it are actually prayers for rain and the stopping of rain.[3]

In ethics Tung Chung-shu upheld the five 'constant virtues' of *jen* (human-heartedness), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (propriety), *chih* (wisdom), and *hsin* (sincerity); in politics he stressed as most important the relationship between a sovereign and his subjects. In all these, as in his advocacy of a monarchical order, to which he gave a theoretical justification, he was orthodox enough. But Tung departed from the K'ung tradition in his cosmic speculation, especially in his belief in the correspondence between natural phenomena and human actions. Thus, whereas Master K'ung refused to delve into such metaphysical subjects and Master Hsün declared openly against them, Master Tung deliberately incorporated the old Sinitic superstitions into his new dogma.

The central idea of Master Tung's system may be summarized briefly as follows: Because of the close relation between man and nature and the great similarity in the social and cosmic orders, any human action that reached the highest level of goodness or evil would flow into the universal course of Heaven and Earth and manifest itself in the strange phenomena of nature. Man's wicked deeds, for instance, would culminate in catastrophes such as fire, flood, drought, and earthquake, and in anomalies such as comets, eclipses, and the 'growing of beards on women'. These pseudo-scientific beliefs Master Tung called the 'Science of Catastrophes and Anomalies'.

But, not content with merely postulating this new 'science', Tung Chung-shu went a step further by applying his discovery to political affairs. He asserted that the sovereign, by virtue of his great authority, was particularly responsible in his deeds for such prodigies as Heaven might deem fit to send on earth. When these occurred, according to Master Tung, it was still not too late for the ruler to mend his ways; but if he persisted in his misdeeds without heeding these ominous signs, then he would ultimately cause his own downfall as well as the ruin of his empire.

A monarchist at heart, Tung Chung-shu had nevertheless succeeded in devising a formula that acted wonderfully as a

check on the absolute sway of the monarch. It is hard to say whether in advancing his theory Tung had this idea specifically in mind – once he taught that the principal object of the *Spring and Autumn* was to 'subject the people to the ruler, and the ruler to Heaven' [4] – or whether he was merely reflecting some prevalent beliefs of his time. Of one thing, however, we are certain. These were credulous times, and even the K'ung scholars themselves were not free from the superstitions that were swaying the life of the Han people from the emperor down. But, whatever Tung's motive, his idea was happily accepted by later scholars, who found it a useful weapon with which to combat misgovernment on the part of the monarch; for even though the emperor's powers were unlimited, as they actually were, he would at least be subject to the judgements of Heaven, the omnipotent Being, whose reaction was plainly visible in the abnormalities of nature. So whenever anything of ill omen occurred the scholars were quick to seize this Heaven-sent opportunity to remonstrate with the emperor on his misdeeds. And in quite a few cases the scholars did succeed in bringing about some reform, thanks to this ingenious theory of Master Tung.

4. *Two Imperial Conferences*

WHILE the victory of the K'ung school was almost assured and a new philosophy in the process of making, there raged at the same time within the ranks of the K'ung scholars a bitter controversy over the interpretation of the classics. Especially disconcerting was the quarrel over the claims of some newly discovered classics or some popular commentaries to be admitted to official acceptance. In the latter case the dispute centred around the three commentaries of the *Spring and Autumn* by Kung-yang Kao, Ku-liang Ch'ih, and Tso Ch'iu-ming, all products of the Warring States period.

The whole controversy that prevailed on and off throughout the entire Han age is too complicated to be related here. It suffices to point out that of the three commentaries the

Kung-yang was the only one accepted as authoritative in the beginning of the Han era. That was at the time of Emperor Wu, when the influence of Tung Chung-shu, a *Kung-yang* specialist, was at its height. But in the course of time the *Ku-liang Commentary* began also to gain favour among the scholars until finally it received imperial patronage at the time of Emperor Hsüan (73–49 B.C.), when a special faculty of the Eruditus was created for it. Then a generation later, in the reigns of Ai (6–1 B.C.) and P'ing (A.D. 1–5), a new movement was afoot to make the *Tso Commentary* an official study too, a movement which succeeded only after many vicissitudes. But even then the dispute on the relative merits of the three commentaries dragged on for many centuries, and it has not been settled to this day.

In an effort to resolve these scholarly differences two imperial conferences were summoned respectively in 54 B.C. and A.D. 79. The first meeting held during the reign of Emperor Hsüan was attended by the outstanding scholars of the empire to the number of twenty-two. For three years the conferees discussed and argued; then finally, in 51 B.C., a general meeting was held in the Stone Conduit Pavilion in the palace, in which the decisions of the council were memorialized to the throne for ratification. It was in this conference that the *Ku-liang* group, backed by the emperor himself, asserted itself against the hitherto dominant *Kung-yang* adherents. About 120 years later another conference of a similar nature was held in the presence of Emperor Chang (A.D. 76–88) at the White Tiger Lodge of the palace. There a battle royal was fought between the supporters of *Kung-yang* and those of *Tso*. But, in spite of these disagreements, the scholars did succeed in fixing an official interpretation of the K'ung classics. The fruits of their labour were later gathered by Pan Ku (A.D. 32–92), the great Han historian, who put together the council's deliberations in a comprehensive memorial that summarizes for posterity the Ju teachings of the Han period.

5. *Old Script versus the Modern*

THE above story represents only some of the minor clashes that led to a major battle between the two schools of script, the Modern and the Old. Generally speaking, the Modern Scriptists, who were professors of the classic texts that had been modernized into the Han script at the time of their restoration, had the sanction of authority behind them, as they were mostly members of the Board of Eruditi, which was established in Emperor Ching's time. Through the process of oral transmission from master to disciple the tradition of the Eruditi prevailed for generations until at last their authority was challenged in the first century A.D. by Liu Hsin (46? B.C.–A.D. 23), one of the most remarkable scholars of the period.

Son of Liu Hsiang, a *Ku-liang* scholar, who had taken a prominent part in the Stone Conduit Conference, Hsin was entrusted with the work of completing a catalogue of the Imperial Library, a task which had been started by his father. This he accomplished, the catalogue still remaining our chief source of information on the ancient books. At the same time, while working on his catalogue Liu Hsin had access to the imperial repository, in which he found what was presumably the collection of ancient classics discovered from the walls of the dismantled K'ung house in Lu and presented by Prince Kung to Emperor Wu. These books, as the reader will recall, were written in an archaic style which was already obsolete at the time of Emperor Wu and had to be deciphered by specialists. Now, in addition to Prince Kung's collection, Liu Hsin also discovered in the recesses of the imperial archives other old-script classics that had escaped previous attention, notably the *Ritual of Chou*, supposed to have been written by the great Duke of Chou, but most certainly a product of the Warring States period, if not later.[5] It was also at that time that Liu Hsin was first introduced to the *Tso Commentary*, then a comparatively obscure work.

Overjoyed at his discoveries, Liu Hsin brought these old texts to the attention of the Eruditi with the hope that the latter might accept them as part of their official charge. But the bigoted professors, believing that their authority had been challenged, refused to consider these stray works; instead, they accused Liu Hsin of having forged them for his own benefit. So a bitter controversy raged in which Liu Hsin stood alone against all the other scholars of the realm. At last the feelings ran so high that Liu Hsin, fearing reprisals from the powerful supporters of the Eruditi, was forced to resign his positions at court.

But political events soon intervened in those scholarly disputes. When Wang Mang, an ambitious member of the powerful Empress Dowager's family, usurped the Han throne and founded the Hsin dynasty (A.D. 9–23), Liu Hsin was made minister of state. Thus with his rise to power Liu Hsin's classic convictions carried the day. But the victory was as shortlived as Wang Mang's dynasty, which came to an abrupt end in A.D. 23. In the same year Liu Hsin died, leaving behind him an uncertain fame because of his unhappy association with the usurping regime.

The death of Liu Hsin, however, did not put an end to the long, intermittent war between the two contending camps of K'ung scholars. On the contrary, it continued with great intensity to the last years of the Han dynasty, and the longer it lasted the more widely split the contestants became. Their disagreement on the texts was accentuated by a difference in their interpretation of Master K'ung's teachings as well as in their conceptions of Master K'ung the man. To state it briefly, whereas the Modern Script school considered Master K'ung as an unsceptred king and a saviour of the world, who had actually written most of the classics to express his views of a new world order, the Old Script school maintained that Master K'ung was essentially a sage scholar, whose chief contribution lay in his presenting to posterity the invaluable legacy of the past. To us, the former view is rather far-fetched, but it is by no means surprising that it should find favour in the Han period. The attempt to

adulterate Master K'ung's teaching, as we have seen, began as early as the days of Tung Chung-shu. After that, further stimulated by the credulities of the time, writers of the Han dynasty started a large-scale fabrication of the K'ung texts, called *wei* (woof), as a supplement to *ching* (warp), the classics. So there existed at that time a vast apocryphal literature, in which Master K'ung was represented as a 'throneless king', instituting laws for future generations, or as a divine being, the son of the Black Emperor, endowed with many supernatural gifts, among them the power of foretelling the future. Thus by attributing to Master K'ung a godhead he himself would have emphatically disclaimed, these Han forgers attempted to deify the sage and make his teaching a religion. In this they might even have succeeded, had it not been for the staunch opposition of the Old Script scholars, who brushed aside such views as purely fantastic.

Perhaps this great irrationalism of the Modern Script school, more than anything else, was responsible for its ultimate decline in the second half of the Han dynasty, for immediately after Liu Hsin writers emerged who took a sceptical view of the early credulities. Among them, Yang Hsiung (53 B.C.–A.D. 18), a contemporary of Liu Hsin, led the attack on the *Yin-yang* beliefs that had contaminated the K'ung doctrine. He was also noted for his effort to compromise the dispute on human nature between Masters Meng and Hsün by taking the middle position that man's nature was neither entirely good nor entirely bad, but a mixture of both, its development in either direction depending mainly on environment. Then there was also Ma Yung (A.D. 79–166), 'the universal scholar', whose profound learning had attracted to him as many as a thousand pupils. One of them, Chêng Hsüan (A.D. 127–200), became later such a devotee of learning that even the slave girls in his household, so it was said, would interlard their conversation with quotations from the *Classic of Poetry*. Chêng Hsüan himself, an Old Scriptist by training, was also a great synthesist. Instead of majoring in one of the canons, as would an Eruditus, he made a comparative study of all the K'ung classics, on each of which he

wrote an elaborate commentary. Eclectic by nature and liberal in his views, he took whatever he deemed best in both the old and new texts, and by so doing effected a synthesis of the K'ung learning that put an end, at least temporarily, to the century-old controversy of the scholars.

6. *The Voice of Rationalism*

ABOUT the same time there lived Wang Ch'ung (A.D. 27–100?), probably the greatest thinker of the Han period. Unlike his fellow-scholars, who aspired to fame and position, Wang Ch'ung led a quiet, simple life in the country. 'Although he was poor and had not an acre to dwell on,' Wang Ch'ung wrote of himself, 'his mind was freer than that of kings and dukes, and though he had no emoluments counted by pecks and bushels, he felt as if he had ten thousand *chung* [6] to live upon. He enjoyed a tranquil and happy existence, but his desires did not run riot, and though he was living in a state of poverty, his spirit was not broken. The study of ancient literature was his debauchery, and strange stories his relish. ... A recluse in solitary retirement, he sought to sift truth from falsehood.' [7]

While engaged in the task of truth-sifting Wang Ch'ung wrote a number of books, of which the most important was *Lun Heng*, or the *Animadversions*. Unique both in style and content, the book represented the first definite attempt by any writer to break away from the ornate literary style of the time; it also was a lone protest against the voices of unreason that had dominated the Han period. In this remarkable book all sorts of falsehood came under attack. With keen observation and searching criticism, Wang Ch'ung made a clean sweep of all such superstitious beliefs in prodigies, anomalies, ghosts, divination, and the like. But especially severe was his attack on the supernatural ideas of the K'ung scholars. Instead of attributing any human significance to the abnormalities of nature, Wang Ch'ung tried to rationalize them by making use of the astronomical knowledge of his age. Thus he pointed out that on the average there was a

lunar eclipse about every six months, and a solar eclipse about every forty-one or forty-two months. 'These being regular occurrences,' Wang Ch'ung affirmed, 'eclipses are independent of any political action.' [8] And so were all the other anomalies and catastrophes of nature made so much of by Tung Chung-shu.

Wang Ch'ung particularly disagreed with Tung's belief in the teleological relations between Heaven and man. He maintained, on the contrary, that Heaven, having neither mouth nor ears, could not listen to man's prayers or reply to questions addressed to it. 'We are living between Heaven and Earth,' so Wang Ch'ung reasoned, 'like lice on the human body. If the lice, wishing to learn from man, emitted sounds near his ear, they would certainly not be heard. Why? Because there is such an enormous difference in size between men and lice that the utterances of the latter would be hardly audible. Now let us suppose that a pigmy-like man puts questions to Heaven and Earth, which are so immense. How could they understand his words or become acquainted with his wishes?' [9]

Using the same argument, Wang Ch'ung also refuted the prevalent conception that man was the hub of the universe. This conception was wrong, for according to Wang Ch'ung man's place in the universe was no more than that of a louse underneath one's jacket or an ant in its tiny hill. Now, the louse or the ant might jump or crawl about, but could their movements change the atmosphere in their hiding place? And for that matter could man affect the phenomena of nature with his puny existence and his insignificant actions?[10]

While exposing the erroneous views of his own time, Wang Ch'ung also went back to wage war against the exaggerations and inaccuracies of the earlier writers. Extremely frank and daring in his criticism, he divested history of its many fantastic legends and unfounded assertions. He attacked as charlatanic the Taoist claim of prolonging life; he denounced as slanderous Han Fei's stricture on the scholars. And, though a K'ung scholar himself, Wang Ch'ung did not

hesitate to take Master K'ung to task for the several contradictions and inconsistencies found in his recorded discourses. Master Meng too was subject to a critical examination and found guilty of defective reasoning. In all these cases, to Wang Ch'ung, the sceptic, the moral was that no authority could stand that could not prove its worth by the soundness of its reasoning and the strength of its intrinsic position.

To sum up, we would say that Wang Ch'ung, one of the powerful critics of his time, had succeeded in a large measure in disposing of the superstitious beliefs of the Chinese people – at least of the intellectuals. By so doing he contributed to the movement of the Old Script school in its effort to purge the K'ung philosophy of the *Yin-yang* elements that had found their way into the early Han writings. His work, therefore, had an important bearing on the development of the Ju teaching. While hastening the collapse of the fantastic New Script ideas, Wang Ch'ung also helped in restoring Master K'ung to his terrestrial pedestal and his rightful position as the greatest of men without the aura of holiness.

7. *Master K'ung canonized*

WANG CH'UNG'S effort notwithstanding, the attempt to deify Master K'ung went on uninterrupted for many centuries in and after the Han dynasty. As early as A.D. 59 a beginning was made in the K'ung cult when Emperor Ming (A.D. 58–75) of the Later Han dynasty ordered sacrifices, hitherto confined to the K'ung temple in Lu, to be made in all the government schools in the cities. This clearly established Master K'ung as the patron saint of education. In the meantime, Master K'ung's home at Ch'ü-fu became the centre of pilgrimages as well as the scene of several imperial visits. At such times sacrifices were offered to Master K'ung, and later to his seventy-two disciples as well. And one learns that in A.D. 72 music was introduced in the ceremonies when the same Emperor Ming worshipped at the sage's temple at Ch'ü-fu.

After the collapse of Han there followed a long period of

moral and political chaos in China, in which Master K'ung's teaching somewhat lost its hold on the intellectuals, many of whom turned to Taoism, and later to Buddhism, for inspiration. But the effort to accelerate the canonization of Master K'ung was redoubled on the part of his followers, perhaps as a result of the keen competition of the rival doctrines. Following the Taoist and Buddhist examples, the K'ung scholars now began to introduce certain religious features into the worship of Master K'ung. These had their beginnings in A.D. 178, when a likeness of the sage was used in his shrine in place of the simple tablets. This led further to the addition of wooden images in A.D. 505. In the same year the first temple in Master K'ung's honour was built at Nanking, the capital of the southern Liang dynasty. Half a century later, K'ung temples rose in almost every prefectural city throughout the empire. At the same time a complete code of sacrificial ritual had been drawn up for the worship of Master K'ung. When China was reunited by the T'ang rulers in the seventh century, the K'ung cult was already well established.

The canonization of Master K'ung was followed by the ennoblement of the K'ung family. Master K'ung himself was made Duke Ni in the first century A.D., and later promoted to the rank of the Illustrious Prince of Culture in the eighth century. His ancestors too were given posthumous honours, while his lineal descendants became hereditary marquises and dukes. Endowed with land, revenue, and title, these scions of the K'ung house – the greatest, the noblest, and the oldest the world ever knew – were able to maintain the tradition of their sagely progenitor as scholars and officials and in the course of centuries to rise to great eminence.

But from our point of view the most important attempt to immortalize Master K'ung was the inscribing of the K'ung classics on stone tablets as a lasting memorial to the Master's greatness. In view of the loss of time and labour over the controversial texts, it was decided to perpetuate these great books in a more permanent medium than the easily perish-

able bamboo slips, silk parchment, and paper, which came into general use in the Later Han dynasty. The first attempt in this direction was made in the second century A.D. Supervising the work of engraving on stone was Ts'ai Yung (A.D. 133–92), a famous scholar noted for his tippling propensities. But in this arduous work of love Ts'ai Yung was extremely sober, as he wrote out with red ink in a beautiful hand the authorized text of the Five Classics in forty-six large tablets for the craftsman to cut. When the work was done the tablets were placed in one of the imperial colleges in the Han capital. Fragments of them, it is said, are still in existence.

Ever since then the engraving of the classical books has been repeated on a number of occasions. In later times the scope of engraving was considerably widened to include all the classical works of the Chou dynasty to the number of thirteen.[11] Portions of those stone books, especially the A.D. 837 edition engraved in Chang-an, capital of the T'ang dynasty, actually survived the wreckage of time and are preserved to this day.

Finally, the invention of printing from wooden blocks saved for ever the Ju classics from the fate of oblivion. The first printed collection of the canonical books appeared in A.D. 953, a mammoth work that took twenty-one years to accomplish. After that, innumerable publications followed. Thus at long last were perpetuated the teachings of Master K'ung in a countless number of texts, commentaries, expositions, etc., that form the most important section of a Chinese library.

Chapter Nine

CROSS-CURRENTS IN CHINESE THOUGHT

1. *A Light from 'the Western World'* [1]

In the Later Han dynasty, which saw the great triumph of the Ju school, there was also introduced to the Chinese people a new philosophy of life destined to be a formidable rival to the K'ung system. Buddhism, however, was not founded by a native son of Han, but by a prince of India, Gautama Buddha, who lived – a happy coincidence – about the same time as Master K'ung. His religion had its beginning in northern India, whence it spread, after a period of growth and popularity in the third century B.C., to the Greco-Bactrian kingdoms of Central Asia. It was there that the Chinese first heard of this foreign religion that was to exert an influence on Chinese life comparable to that of Taoism and the K'ung dogma.

History records that Emperor Ming of the Later Han dynasty, who had started the K'ung cult by ordering sacrificial offerings to be made to the sage in the government schools, was also responsible for the introduction of Buddhism to China in the first century A.D. According to a well-known story, the emperor was haunted in his dreams by the vision of a golden man enveloped in a bright halo; later, upon the advice of his courtiers, he sought the new divinity in 'the countries of the far west', with which the Han people had recently come into contact. A mission dispatched for this purpose came back from Central Asia in A.D. 67 with many Buddhist images and scriptures as well as two Indian monks. These were housed at the White Horse Monastery, outside the Later Han capital at Lo-yang, where they made a translation of the Sutra of Forty-two Sections, the first Buddhist work to be rendered into the Chinese language.

After this auspicious beginning Buddhism spread far and

wide in China during the dark ages when the country was torn by civil strife and foreign invasion, and when the hold of the K'ung scholars on the government was insecure. By the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. there was an immense expansion of Buddhism in both the South and the North, into which the nation was then divided. In consequence, a large number of the Chinese population accepted the alien creed. At one time as many as nine-tenths of the inhabitants in north-west China were said to have embraced the new faith. Some of the devotees also took Buddhist orders, while others, like the famous monk Fa Hsien (fifth century A.D.) made long arduous journeys to India to drink deep at the fountain-head of Buddhist wisdom.

In A.D. 517, during the reign of Emperor Wu of the southern Liang dynasty, the first Tripitaka, a collection of Buddhist scriptures, was published. A Buddhist votary himself, the emperor even contemplated enrolling himself in the monastic order and twice forsook the luxury of the palace for the sanctity of the monastery, only to be twice taken back to his throne by his courtiers, who each time paid a large sum of money to ransom His Imperial Majesty from his self-imposed confinement. Several years later, at the age of eighty-six, Emperor Wu lost his life when he was besieged by a rebel general. For this unhappy end he won for himself the derision of the K'ung scholars, who alleged that the emperor had preached Buddhism so effectively to his officers that they would not mount their horses to fight for him.

The reasons for the great popularity of Buddhism in this long period of darkness are not far to seek. For one thing, Buddhism, which promised salvation from worldly sufferings, was the one light from 'the Western world' that beckoned hopefully to all despairing souls; it also brought with it the cheerful message of a happy life in its thirty-two heavens. It gave, in other words, comfort and encouragement to the seething millions of a vast empire trapped in war and misery. This other-worldly attraction was exactly what the K'ung dogma failed to give, its supreme ethical and political teachings notwithstanding; for as a philosophy of life the native

doctrine had no means of satisfying the spiritual needs of a people in times of turmoil and bewilderment. Buddhism, therefore, came happily to offer suffering humanity the long-awaited consolation of religion.

2. *An Attack on Buddha's Finger-bone*

THIS, however, was only one side of the argument. On the other, it must be pointed out that Buddhism as a religion was essentially incompatible with the best traditions of the native civilization. To the Ju scholars the alien creed was especially nefarious because of its anti-social practices, such as celibacy, asceticism, and mutilation. History records, for instance, numerous cases of Buddhist fanatics who burned their fingers and arms, and even their bodies, while chanting the sacred names of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in order to attain salvation. These un-Chinese ways naturally aroused the resentment of the orthodox, to whom it was a sacred duty, as Master Tseng, the arch filial-pietist, had once observed, to keep whole and unharmed the human body that was the gift of one's parents. It is no wonder that the followers of K'ung were so thoroughly alarmed by this 'barbaric' faith that had overrun the country that they protested vociferously against it.

The most famous denunciation of Buddhism came from Han Yü (768–824), a great poet and essayist of the T'ang dynasty, posthumously honoured as the 'Prince of Literature'. As a K'ung scholar, Han Yü was an adherent of Meng K'o, and instrumental in raising the latter, then considered only as one of the numerous followers of the school, to his eminent position as the 'Second Sage'. In a famous essay entitled 'On the Origin of *Tao*', Han Yü wrote: 'This *tao* Yao transmitted to Shun, Shun transmitted to Yü, Yü transmitted to Tang, Tang transmitted to Wen and Wu,[2] and the Duke of Chou. These handed it down to Master K'ung, who passed it on to Meng K'o. After the latter's death, the succession was lost.'[3] This, in effect, placed Master Meng as next only to Master K'ung in the orthodox hierarchy. Since

then, Meng K'o's new status has gained general acceptance among scholars and his works have become a basic text of the Ju school.

According to Han Yü, the chief reason for the decline of *tao* could be attributed to the spread of Taoist and Buddhist 'heresies'. He charged their followers with withdrawing themselves from the world, the state, and the family, and of fleeing from the eternal obligations of society, with the unhappy result that 'sons would not submit themselves to their fathers, subjects would not submit themselves to their sovereigns, and the people would no longer occupy themselves with their duties.' [4] Because of these evil consequences, Han Yü, the greatest champion of *tao* after Meng K'o, advocated that all Buddhist books be burned, Buddhist temples converted to human homes, and the monks and nuns restored to normal living. 'Thus and thus only,' maintained Han Yü, 'could there be the wherewithal to feed the widow and the orphan, to nourish the crippled and the sick,' [5] i.e. in accordance with the ideals of the Great Commonwealth, to attain which was now impossible because of the demoralizing influences of the foreign religion.

Han Yü is particularly remembered for his single-handed battle against the Buddhist superstitions of his day, an evil that had grown rampant during the reigns of the T'ang emperors, most of whom were either Taoist or Buddhist sympathizers. The battle itself centred around an imperial edict by Emperor Hsien (806–20) ordering a grand palace reception for a reputed finger-bone of Gautama Buddha, which was being sent from a frontier city to the T'ang capital at Chang-an. Against this royal credulity, Han Yü, alone of all the officials at court, raised his voice. This was expressed in a candid memorial to the throne, in which he first pointed out the foreign origin of the Buddhist faith; then denounced its founder as only a 'barbarian' from the Western kingdom, who, neither speaking the Chinese language nor dressed in the Chinese manner, was moreover ignorant of the great father-and-son and sovereign-and-subject relations; then branded as a piece of 'preposterous mummery' the reception

of such a savage relic as Buddha's finger-bone; next, dwelt at large on the possible evil effects of the imperial patronage of this alien cult [6]; and ended by advising the emperor to destroy the relic by fire or water, thereby exterminating this pernicious cult at its source. 'And,' Han Yü added, 'should Buddha have power to avenge this insult by the infliction of some misfortune, then let his wrath be visited upon the person of your servant, who now calls upon Heaven above to witness that he will not repent him of his oath.' [7]

Ironically enough it was not the wrath of the foreign god, but that of the emperor, that descended upon the memorialist. Han Yü was at first sentenced to death by the infuriated monarch, but later, at the intercession of his friends at court, pardoned and banished to the southern wilds of Chao-chow [8] to live among the aborigines cursed with plague and ignorance. The exile, however, did not daunt Han Yü's spirit. Here again he battled with his mighty pen against another monstrosity – this time a crocodile that was devastating the riverside by seizing whatever it could lay its fangs on: fowls, cattle, and human beings. Against this accursed reptile Han Yü wrote his famous ultimatum, and the formidable words of the scholar-governor so frightened the evil-doer that it soon vanished into the boundless sea.

Nor was Han Yü wholly unrecompensed for his championship of the true faith. Though he himself did not live to see the great day of victory, it came some twenty years after his death when, in A.D. 845, another T'ang emperor (Emperor Wu, 841–6) ordered the dissolution of all the foreign religious houses throughout the empire. As a result of this proscription Buddhism alone had 4,600 of its monasteries destroyed, 40,000 of its temples and shrines demolished, and 265,000 of its devotees returned to secular life. A severe blow indeed! But even this did not put an end to Buddhism in China, as it did to the other alien creeds like Nestorianism, Zoroastrianism, and Manichaeism [9] that had been introduced to the Chinese during the T'ang period. Here again it must be noted, as a matter of historical interest, that the motivating force behind this persecution of foreign religions was

not the K'ung dogma, but Taoism, to which not a few of the T'ang sovereigns, including Emperor Wu, were addicted.

3. *Two Friends in a Great Debate*

WHILE Han Yü was a typical scholar of his age, loyal, outspoken, and intolerant of foreign ideas, his friend Liu Tsung-yüan (773–819), though no less orthodox by training and no less a poet and essayist, was of a different mould. In their personal lives the two had cemented a friendship that was immortal; but in their intellectual convictions they were widely apart. Not being a spirited fighter like Han Yü, Liu Tsung-yüan represented a growing tendency among the scholars towards philosophical compromise and amalgamation that began asserting itself in the T'ang dynasty and culminated later in the Sung. This eclectic tendency was highly characteristic of Chinese thinking, and when applied to philosophy it became a practical attempt to show the similarity, if not the identity, of the fundamental tenets of China's three great doctrines: Ju, Tao, and Fo (Buddhism).

The hatred of superstition, to be sure, was shared alike by the two friends. Like his learned compeer, Liu Tsung-yüan had objections to 'the bald pates of the monks, their dark robes, their renunciation of domestic ties, and their idleness.' [10] But, unlike his friend, Liu was broadminded enough to see through the husks the beautiful kernel of this foreign cult, which he found to have a great deal in common with the teachings of Master K'ung. In fact, Liu believed that much of Buddhism was in perfect harmony with human nature and coincident with the principles found in the classics. At the same time, Liu accused as prejudicial Han Yü's animosity towards Buddhism because of its 'barbaric' origin. But if this argument is good for anything, objected Liu Tsung-yüan, 'then we might find ourselves embracing brigands who happened to be our fellow-countrymen, while neglecting virtuous men who happened to be foreigners! Surely this would be a hollow mockery indeed!' [11]

Furthermore, Liu Tsung-yüan had a good word or two

for his Buddhist friends, some of whom were fine scholars of a placid temperament and subdued passions. The majority of the priests too, as he had found out, loved only to lead a simple life of contemplation amid the charms of hills and streams. Then he continued: 'And when I am disgusted with the hurry-scurry of our age in its daily race and struggle for the seals and tassels of office, I ask myself whom I am to follow, if not them.' [12] It is obvious that Liu Tsung-yüan was not a busy office-seeker as most of his colleagues were and that the time had come when even K'ung scholars would turn recluses.

4. '*The Restoration of Human Nature*'

At this time in our narrative it may not be out of place to ask: Wherein are the beauties of the Buddhistic teaching that appeared so attractive to such a fine scholar as Liu Tsung-yüan? In answering this question we must first make a distinction between the two aspects of Buddhism, its philosophical core and its superstitious rind. The Chinese intellectuals, who had like Wang Ch'ung waged war against the credulities of their own people, naturally took unkindly to the fanatical practices of a foreign religion. But these merely constitute the lode, to use another of Liu Tsung-yüan's phrases, which should not prejudice us from admiring the golden ore of philosophy it contains. As a matter of fact, so far as Buddhist philosophy was concerned, even Han Yü, its inveterate foe, had little to complain about. His attack, as we have seen, was mainly directed at the popular superstitions and the anti-social influences of the monastic orders. There was little of the Buddhist thought itself to which Han Yü objected. On the contrary, later scholars have suspected that even Han Yü himself had imbibed, perhaps unconsciously, a good dose of Buddhism in his views on human nature.

This indebtedness was more apparent in the writings of Li Ao (died *c.* 844), another friend of Han Yü's. Like the latter, the younger man was a devoted follower of the orthodox *tao*. In his essay on the 'Restoration of Human Nature' he reiterated Han Yü's idea of the transmission of *tao*, plus his

own hope of being a link in the transmission. After having defined *tao* as 'the utmost sincerity inherent in the nature of a sage,' Li Ao continued: 'Whenever someone asks me about it, I always tell him what I know. So I now commit this to writing ... with the hope that I may be able to transmit to my age the *tao* that has long been neglected and abandoned.'[13]

Li Ao, however, was more of an apologist than a champion. Instead of denouncing Buddhism and Taoism outright, he adopted a more conciliatory attitude by asserting that there was really nothing new in these two unorthodox philosophies, and that the best in them could be found as well in the Ju dogma. Take, for example, the questions of human nature and destiny that had aroused so much interest and speculation among the scholars of his time. Whereas his contemporaries would go to the scriptures of Lao-tzŭ and Buddha for enlightenment on these subjects, Li Ao claimed that the final word on them had long been spoken by the writers of the K'ung school. To bear out his contention he ransacked the classics for passages that paralleled Buddhist and Taoist ideas from which to draw conclusions along the orthodox line. In this way Li Ao initiated a very important movement for formulating from all the available sources the new theories of human nature and the universe that were to occupy the attention of the later philosophers.

This represents also a beginning in the syncretization of Chinese thought, for which Li Ao set a precedent for later generations – the precedent, that is, of seeking from the K'ung classics a solution of the metaphysical and supermoral problems that were intriguing the intellectuals of the new age. Particularly useful to these seekers of *tao* were the *Classic of Change* with its 'Appendices', *The Great Learning*, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, and the *Meng-tzŭ*, all of which now gained, because of their rich philosophical contents, an increasingly important status in the eyes of scholars. Moreover, as a result of this tendency, much that was originally in Buddhism was also taken over by the K'ung scholars to form a new philosophy of their own.

5. *Contemplation and Enlightenment*

IN the meantime Buddhism was, as was everything foreign, beginning to undergo a great change in the course of its growth on Chinese soil. Not entirely at home with the alien creed, Chinese thinkers soon evolved teachings of their own that differed greatly from the original doctrines as taught by the Indian monks of the early centuries. Among these new sects the one that was to exert a considerable influence on Chinese thinking was Ch'anism, so named from the Sanskrit word *dhyana*, meaning 'ecstatic meditation'. This school of Chinese Buddhism claimed as its founder the famous Indian monk Tamo (Bodhidharma), who came to China at the time of Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty. According to a well-known legend, Tamo, a very wise teacher of the Law, once crossed the wide Yangtze on a reed; another story, more miraculous still, asserts that it was from Tamo's eyelids that the tea plant first sprang to give the Chinese their favourite beverage. Tamo was also credited with the following saying: 'You cannot find Buddha in books. Look into your own heart, and there you will find him.' [14] Hence, the four maxims of Ch'anism are:

1. Special transmission outside the scriptures.
2. No dependence upon written words.
3. Direct communication to the soul.
4. Search into one's own nature for the attainment of Buddhahood.[15]

Apart from its legendary founder the Ch'an school was entirely Chinese in its patriarchal succession. Likewise, it was also more Chinese than Indian in its emphasis on intuitive learning, its belief in sudden enlightenment, its discarding of the fundamental Buddhist concept of reincarnation, and its general disregard for theological and ritualistic aspects. In due time Chinese Buddhism, as a school of thought, was to be divorced from all the paraphernalia of rites, charms, and spells, as well as the pantheons of gods

and demons. These latter were driven underground to blend with the other indigenous religious elements to form a vast network of superstitious beliefs to which the mind of the Chinese people has clung to this day.

The story of the Ch'an sect with its numerous divisions is too complicated to be told here. Suffice it to say that it was divided mainly into two schools, the southern and the northern. The former, which was more influential and prosperous, had as its founder Hui-neng (638–713), the sixth patriarch of the school, who was chosen by his predecessor on the merit of a single poem, in which he summarized the essence of the Ch'an teaching. According to the story, Shen-hsiu (died 706), an elder disciple of the fifth patriarch and considered by many worthy to be his successor, had previously written the following lines:

> The body is like the knowledge tree;
> The mind is like a mirror stand, –
> It should be constantly cleansed,
> Lest dust should settle on it.

But Hui-neng, though an illiterate monk who could hardly write his own name, was dissatisfied with these verses and, in a moment of inspiration, improvised:

> There is no such thing as a knowledge tree;
> There is no such thing as a mirror stand.
> There being nothing that has a real existence,
> How then could the dust settle thereon? [16]

Since this poem was considered much superior to the first because of its greater understanding of, and deeper insight into, the truth, Hui-neng was made the sixth patriarch of the Ch'an sect. This, however, did not deter Shen-hsiu from starting the northern branch of Ch'anism, and the two schools flourished side by side, competing with each other in a spirit of mutual encouragement and rivalry.

The most remarkable Buddhist scholar of the period was Tsung-mi (780–841), patriarch of the Hua-yen sect. Tsung-mi had been trained in his earlier years in the Ch'an

principles, of which he had been an assiduous student. Besides his invaluable work on Ch'anism, which he compared at great length with the other Buddhist sects, Tsung-mi also made a thorough study of the various theories on the origin of man. In one of his essays on the subject, while considering both the Ju and Tao doctrines as unsound, he nevertheless admitted that they too had in them some glimpse of truth. In fact, what Tsung-mi attempted was to syncretize from the Buddhist point of view the teachings of the three great Chinese schools; and much that he said about the emotional nature, the intuitive mind, and the origin of the universe had important implications for the K'ung theorizers of a later age. Thus, on the one hand, Tsung-mi summarized for posterity the Buddhist lore of the T'ang dynasty, and on the other, though a Buddhist himself, paved the way for the Neo-Ju philosophy of the Sung and Ming periods.

6. *The Whole Universe is Man's Dwelling-place*

TAOISM, another important school of Chinese thought, had also undergone great changes in the centuries following Lao-tzŭ and Chuang Chou. Generally speaking, philosophical Taoism never regained the brilliancy it had lost since its heyday in the Chou dynasty. To be sure, there was a brief revival under the patronage of Prince Hui-nan (died 122 B.C.) in the early Han period, but it soon degenerated to blend with the supernatural ideas of the Yin-yang school, the search for the elixir of life, the belief in ghosts and spirits, and the practice of divination, alchemy, and exorcism into a religious Taoism that was fundamentally different from, and in many respects diametrically opposed to, philosophical Taoism.

As a *bona fide* religion, Taoism did not develop until the Later Han dynasty. At that time there lived one Chang Ling (A.D. 34–156), who, claiming longevity and the power of miraculous healing, founded the so-called Five-Bushel-Rice sect. This being a time of political chaos and social disintegration, he easily attracted to his sect converts who each

paid five bushels of grain as an initiation fee. From its start in western China the sect spread to the whole country, where it amalgamated with the other superstitious groups of the time to form the Taoist religion. Subsequently Chang's successors were honoured as the Heavenly Teachers of Tao and worshipped by peasants and emperors alike.

Though Lao-tzŭ's connexion with the new religion was more or less nominal, his *Classic of Tao* was now exalted as the Taoist scripture, and Lao-tzŭ himself the chief deity. This movement was probably in line with a similar one, as we have already seen, to deify Master K'ung. But whereas the followers of the K'ung school had failed to make Ju a religion and Master K'ung a god, the Taoist believers had succeeded in making Lao-tzŭ the titular head of their cult. Since then a great confusion has resulted from the mixture of the philosophical and religious elements in Taoism, and it is as difficult to separate the one from the other as it is to separate gold from its matrix.

This did not mean, of course, that Taoism was no longer alive as a philosophy. As such it survived in the works of its numerous commentators and critics. In fact, the best exposition of this philosophy appeared in the third century A.D. in Wang Pi's (226–49) *Commentary on the Classic of Tao* and Hsiang Hsiu's (*c.* 221–300) *Commentary on the Chuang-tzŭ*, later completed by Kuo Hsiang (died *c.* 312). Also noteworthy is the fact that a large number of these Taoist writers like Ho Yen (died 249) and Wang Pi had invaded the domains of the K'ung school by appropriating the *Classic of Change* and explaining it in the light of the Taoist creed. Thus Wang Pi, Lao-tzŭ's commentator, wrote on the *Change* as a Taoist classic, while Ho Yen went so far as to base his interpretation of the *Analects* on the teachings of Lao-tzŭ and Chuang Chou. This of course had the happy effect of reconciling and harmonizing the Ju and Tao schools of thought; and, strange to say, the K'ung scholars themselves later accepted this Taoist interpretation of the K'ung doctrine.

The rivalry of these two schools, however, did not immediately end here. Their fundamental incompatibility was

clearly shown in the rebellion of many Taoist recluses against the moral and social conventions of the time. To mention only one example: In the same tumultuous third century, when China was plagued by war and dissension, there lived in the north a group of Taoist literati who styled themselves The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove. Though some of them had in fact a chequered official life, they all exalted *wu-wei* as the supreme virtue of life and disdained the rules of propriety as taught by the K'ung moralists. Instead of serving their country, they drowned themselves in wine and song and had more days of intoxication than soberness. Nature alone was their object of worship, and mountains and woods their passion – hence the name The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove.

Yüan Chi (210–63), the most famous of this group, dramatized his revolt against the ethical inhibitions of the period by drinking and playing on the guitar at his mother's death. Scorning the decencies of life, he would appear in public with his hair dishevelled and his robes untidy. With a temperament like this, Yüan was naturally disgusted with the fastidious and pompous manners of the scholars, whom he satirized in his essay 'The Life of these Honourable Gentlemen'. These he derided as being prudish, narrow-minded, circumspect in their action, and conservative in their belief. 'But,' continued Yüan Chi, 'have you ever noticed the lice in your pants? Seeking refuge in the deep seams, and hiding themselves in the worn cotton shreds, they consider their dwelling place safe. Their movements limited therein, they think their life well-regulated. Nevertheless, when fire spreads in the city, and houses are burned down and their inmates killed, no lice that *live* in the pants will be able to escape from death. Yet, what difference is there between these lice and those honourable gentlemen, who too are confined to their narrow sphere?' [17]

Another member of the group, Liu Ling (*c.* 221–300), was noted for his Bacchanalian propensities, which he defended in a spirited 'Eulogy on the Virtue of Wine'. Travelling in a cart drawn by a deer, he was wont to have a servant

following him with a jar of wine, and another with a spade, so that he could be buried wherever he fell, dead and drunk. An early advocate of nudism, Liu Ling would remain completely naked in his room. When surprised by visitors, the happy nudist would protest: 'With the whole universe as my dwelling place, my room here is just my clothing. Why, then, do you enter into my pants?' [18]

Such Taoist eccentricities, to be sure, were only the abnormal signs of a turbulent age, and as the times changed their vogue soon passed away. In the centuries following no sharp conflict developed between Taoism and Ju, as both were being threatened by the advent of a new rival, Buddhism. From then on a battle royal was fought between Taoism and Buddhism, both of which had so much in common and yet so much in opposition. While borrowing heavily from one another – the Buddhists the Taoist language, and the Taoists the Buddhist ritual – they were never wholly reconciled and the fight for supremacy continued for centuries. During the T'ang dynasty the Taoists rose once more to power when the T'ang emperors, whose surname was Li, adopted Lao -tan, whose surname was also Li, as their great ancestor. Hence the Taoist founder was honoured as the 'Most High Mythical Emperor', superior in rank not only to Buddha but also to K'ung Ch'iu; the Taoist religion was exalted as a state cult; and the *Classic of Tao* with a commentary by one of the emperors was engraved on stone tablets in the Taoist monasteries throughout the empire. At the same time the monopoly of bureaucracy by the Ju scholars was disputed by the Taoists, many of whom entered government service as well as the Board of Eruditi.

But this imperial patronage did not forestall the degeneration of Taoism from a metaphysical system to a vulgar cult. In the course of centuries Taoism suffered from the same fate as Buddhism in its downward plunge. As a matter of fact the decline of both was complete in the Sung dynasty, when the best of their teachings was pilfered by the K'ung scholars to form a new philosophy of their own. The rise of the Neo-Ju school, therefore, tolled the knell of both

Buddhism and Taoism as philosophies. Thus, after many vicissitudes, the K'ung doctrine, alone of the three, now came to dominate the Chinese scene as the only great school of thought, leaving to its rivals the dross of superstition.

Chapter Ten

THE SYNCRETIZATION OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

1. *A Tribute to the Sung Philosophers*

THERE was a noticeable difference in the achievements of the two great periods of Chinese philosophy, the Chou and the Sung. Just as the Chinese intellect suddenly burst forth into bloom in the earlier period with its colourful 'hundred schools', so it now ripened through the cultivation of the Sung scholars into a more mature, complete, and well-rounded system of philosophy that was to reign supreme in Chinese intellectual circles for more than 700 years. This fruition of thought was brought about by the K'ung followers who were versed in the Buddhist and Taoist ideologies, and who therefore were able to extend the horizon of the orthodox doctrine of ethics and politics to include cosmology and metaphysics. Limited by the materials at their disposal (for these scholars confined themselves to the authority of the K'ung classics), they had a hard time in trying to expound what they conceived of the origin of the universe and the theory of human nature. A tribute, therefore, is due to these Sung philosophers who succeeded in formulating a system of thought that has satisfied the inquiring mind of the Chinese people until the introduction of Western ideas in the recent years.

2. *In the Den of Tranquil Delight*

BEFORE we turn to this new philosophy let us pause briefly to have a look at the great personalities responsible for its creation. We shall begin with Shao Yung (1011–77), who, though poor, was happy in his Den of Tranquil Delight in the suburbs of the great city of Lo-yang. This retreat, a small cottage with an attached garden, was given to Shao

Yung by his friends so that he could have a place of shelter from wind and rain. Life was a rosy one for the Master of Tranquil Delight, by which name Shao Yung preferred to be called, for his was an ideal existence for a poor philosopher. With fruit and vegetables from his own garden, three or four cups of wine to exhilarate his spirit, the puzzles of metaphysics to ponder upon, and books and occasional visitors to keep him company, Shao Yung had nothing else in this world to desire.

Many of Shao Yung's friends were distinguished. Some entertained great ambitions to uplift the country, to improve society, and to attain moral perfection; while others, the more philosophical ones, even aspired to solve the imponderable mysteries of the universe. They were poets, essayists, historians, philosophers, and statesmen, two of whom had had brilliant careers at court. But those were evil times, and they had retired to Lo-yang, within a short distance from Kai-feng, the Sung capital, to avoid persecution by a powerful 'New Deal' faction at court, headed by Wang An-shih, a radical reformer, who was now in the saddle as premier of the empire. One of Shao Yung's great friends, Ssŭ-ma Kuang, for instance, had once led the conservative opposition, and many a hot controversy he had had with his opponent not only on political issues but also on literary ones. For it must be admitted that Wang An-shih, the radical thinker, was also a superb classical scholar. So the feud, as we see it to-day, was merely a family squabble between two camps of K'ung scholars who, having monopolized the government, now quarrelled violently among themselves on administrative measures as well as on the interpretation of the classics.

Among the visitors to the Den there were, besides the statesman-historian Ssŭ-ma Kuang, a number of promising scholars and budding philosophers. They were, to mention only a few, Chang Tsai (1020–76), who had given public instruction on the *Classic of Change* while sitting on a tiger skin, an emblem of fierce majesty; and the Ch'eng brothers, Ch'eng Hao (1032–85), genial and graceful, and Ch'eng I

(1033–1107), spirited and industrious, both brilliant young men who had plunged deep into the well of philosophy. Thus many a midnight candle the host and his guests must have burned as they discussed the heated intellectual questions of the day, for it was by these men that the Neo-Ju movement was initiated.

3. *The Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate*

THE only philosopher outside of Shao Yung's group who contributed substantially to the movement was Chou Tun-i (1017–75), a cosmologist. But even Chou was not unconnected with the group, as he was in fact the tutor of the two Ch'engs. Though six years younger than Shao Yung, Chou was considered the founder of the new philosophy, and he together with Shao Yung and Chang Tsai formed the great trio in the first stage of its development. Therefore, before we discuss the others, we shall first turn to Chou.

Chou Tun-i is credited with having introduced into the Ju philosophy the Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate, a formula probably of Taoist origin. The Diagram, so it has been claimed, was first devised by Ch'en T'uan, a Taoist immortal who lived in the tenth century. After a line of transmission, which can still be traced, it finally came to the hands of the philosopher Chou, who adopted it with a few modifications as the basis of his cosmological views, which he set forth in a famous treatise entitled 'The Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate Explained'. This work he consigned to his pupils, the Ch'eng brothers, who in turn passed it on to their students, until it came at last into the hands of Chu Hsi (1130–1200), in whom the Sung philosophy reached its culmination.

Whatever its origin, the Diagram, as 'explained' by Master Chou, was entirely orthodox in both content and purport. As has been pointed out, the *Classic of Change*, originally a work of divination and a K'ung classic, served conveniently as a bridge between the teachings of the Taoist and Ju schools. The term 'Supreme Ultimate', for instance, was

taken from an obscure passage in the *Change*, while the other ideas in Master Chou's cosmology, such as *yin* and *yang* and the five elements, had long been incorporated, as the reader may recall, into the K'ung philosophy by such Han scholars as Tung Chung-shu and others.

A classic itself essential for an understanding of the new philosophy, Master Chou's 'Explanations' of the Diagram should be studied with care. It begins with a theory of cosmic evolution, commonly accepted by later scholars, as follows:

The Ultimateless! And yet the Supreme Ultimate! The Supreme Ultimate through Movement produces the *Yang*. This Movement, having reached its limit, is followed by Quiescence, and by this Quiescence, it produces the *Yin*. When Quiescence has reached its limit, there is a return to Movement. Thus Movement and Quiescence, in alternation, become each the source of the other. The distinction between the *Yin* and *Yang* is determined, and the Two Forms (the *Yin* and *Yang*) are established.

By the transformation of the *Yang* and the union therewith of the *Yin*, Water, Fire, Wood, Metal, and Earth are produced. These Five Elements (or Ethers, *ch'i*) become diffused in harmonious order, and the four seasons proceed in their course. . . .

The true substance of the Ultimateless and the essence of the Two (Forms) and Five (Elements) unite in mysterious union, so that consolidation ensues. The principle of *Chi'en* (the hexagram ䷀ symbolizing the *Yang*) becomes the male element, and the principle of *K'un* (the hexagram ䷁ symbolizing the *Yin*) becomes the female element. The Two Ethers (*Yin* and *Yang*) by their interaction operate to produce the Myriad Things, and these in their turn produce and reproduce, so that transformation and change continue without end.[1]

The second part of the 'Explanations' contains Master Chou's ethical theory, in which man was regarded as the highest of all creations, and the sage the greatest of all men. Then the treatise continues:

Man alone, however, receives these (Ethers) in their highest excellence and hence is the most intelligent (of all beings). His bodily

form being thus produced, there is developed in his spirit intelligence and consciousness. The five principles of his nature react (to external phenomena) so that the distinction between good and evil emerges, and the myriad phenomena of conduct appear.

The sage regulates himself by the Mean and the Correct, by Human-heartedness and Righteousness; he takes Quiescence as the essential. Thus he establishes himself as the highest standard for mankind.[2]

After this the treatise goes on to stress further the relation between the moral and the physical worlds as well as the unity of the sage with the universe:

Hence the sage synchronizes with Heaven and Earth in his nature, with the sun and moon in his enlightenment, with the course of the seasons in his orderliness, and with the spiritual beings in his destiny. So good fortune comes to the superior man who cultivates sagehood; and evil befalls the mean fellow who refuses to follow it.[2]

In conclusion, Master Chou gives an exalted opinion of the *Classic of Change*, which he claims was here presented in its essence.

4. *The Magic of Numbers*

WE have already gained a glimpse of the life of Shao Yung, the second proponent of the Neo-Ju philosophy. Like most of his contemporaries, Shao Yung returned to the orthodox fold, after a period of wandering in the mythical path of Buddhism and Taoism, to become an expert in the *Classic of Change*. A versatile writer, he composed a volume of songs delineating the beauties of nature on the River Yi, a dialogue between a fisherman and a woodcutter on the questions of speculative and practical philosophy, and a treatise on cosmological chronology, upon which his fame rests. The last work also contains chapters on the 'Study of Phenomena', generally considered his best, in which he applied his theory of numbers to human affairs.

Shao Yung's philosophy, also based upon the *Change*, has its starting point in the eight trigrams supposed to have been invented by Fu Hsi, one of the mythical emperors of

antiquity.[4] Later, the trigrams, so tradition asserts, received systematic treatment in the hands of King Wen, founder of the Chou dynasty, and the Duke of Chou, and soon became the basis of metaphysics and occultism as set forth in the *Classic of Change*. Meanwhile, in the course of their development in the early Chou dynasty, these mysterious symbols had increased through a process of permutation – hence the name 'Change' – and combination to a total of sixty-four hexagrams. It is from these that Shao Yung now evolved his theory of numbers. In this he went further back than Chou Tun-i to the very fountain-head of metaphysics. The 'Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate Explained', we know, is a study of figures, whereas 'Cosmological Chronology' combines figures with numbers and presents the most fundamental concept of the *Change*.

In his arrangement of the hexagrams, Shao Yung claimed that he had gone back for authority to the original system of Fu Hsi, from which he derived his Primeval Diagram.[5] It has been asserted that, whereas King Wen devised his method for the use of occultism, the legendary Fu Hsi – a potential mathematical genius! – had hit upon a more advanced arithmetical order in his diagram.[6] In fact, certain Western scholars have pointed out the similarities between Fu Hsi's arrangement, as used by Shao Yung, and Gottfried Leibniz's Binary System of arithmetic, in which the first eight figures from 0 to 7 suggest the eight trigrams of the Chinese plan. It would be indeed interesting to study Shao Yung's theory of numbers in the light of Leibniz's discovery so as to see how closely connected the two are.

The Primeval Diagram, as worked out by Shao Yung, is a circular one consisting of sixty-four hexagrams with *Ch'ien*, the all-male hexagram, at the top of the circle, and *K'un*, the all-female hexagram, at the bottom, and the other sixty-two hexagrams in their respective positions as assigned by the author. A great deal of significance has been attached to this diagram, for it represents in fact a formula for the life cycle of the myriad creatures in their birth, growth, maturity, decline, and death. This is true of the flowers, which bloom in

the sunny *Ch'ien* position and wither in the cold *K'un* position, as of the seasons, the *Ch'ien* being the position for summer with the active *yang* principle in its zenith, and the *K'un* being that for winter with the passive *yin* principle predominant.

Even more interesting than the above formula, Shao Yung's diagram can be applied to the chronology of the universe. Thus he calculated that the entire life-span of the present world covered altogether a period of 129,000 years, which could be evenly divided into twelve cycles of 10,800 years each. While the first years of the first cycle saw the birth of the world, it was in the third cycle, some 27,000 years later, that the myriad creatures, including men, were born. In the sixth cycle, when the world began to enter the most auspicious position of the *Ch'ien* hexagram, some 37,000 years since the birth of men according to Shao Yung's calculation, came the reigns of Yao and Shun, the golden age in Chinese history. As for these modern times, so the same author tells us, they fall into the seventh cycle about 69,000 years since the creation of the world, which, as we can easily see, has yet another 60,000 years to run before it faces its final annihilation in the *K'un* position. But Shao Yung was an optimist, for he maintained that the destruction of this world would only mean the beginning of yet another with the same process of birth and death, growth and decay, going on *ad infinitum*.

5. *The Unity of Heaven and Man*

THE term 'Supreme Ultimate', first introduced by Chou Tun-i, now became the focus of philosophical discussion by the scholars of the time. But what the Supreme Ultimate actually is, it seems, was not clear in the minds of these thinkers. In Shao Yung's works, for instance, it was repeatedly referred to as the *tao*, the mind, or the nature. But to Chang Tsai, the third great philosopher of the Sung period, it was nothing more than *ch'i*, or ether. In Chang's opinion, it is this ether that forms the Great Void which,

though shapeless, contains nevertheless the substance of all existing things. For *ch'i* has the attributes of both condensing and dispersing. Thus when it condenses it gives shape to each individual thing and is hence visible; but when it disperses it becomes shapeless and void. Moreover, it is from this endless condensation and dispersion of the *ch'i* that the myriad things are formed and dissolved.

'At the time of its condensation, can one say otherwise than that this is but temporary?' asked Chang Tsai philosophically. 'But at the time of its dispersing can one conclude hastily that it is non-existent? Therefore the sage asserts only, after he has made a careful examination of the phenomena, that he knows the cause of decline and growth, but not the cause of existence and non-existence.' [7]

The *ch'i*, furthermore, is dual in nature, for it contains the two elements of *yin* and *yang*, which constantly wax and wane according to a fixed principle. And, because of this flux of the two forces, the *ch'i* is thrown continuously into action without being able to remain arrested in a state of void. For this reason, though there are hundreds of ways in which its condensation and dispersing take place, yet there is a definite order in the formation of things as there is also a definite shape in the constituency of things. This 'eternal order', which Chang Tsai did not here elaborate, became the *li* (metaphysical law) of the later philosophers.

Having made clear this fundamental concept, we are now ready to follow Chang Tsai in his contention that there is above all a unity in Heaven and Man. The ether (*ch'i*) being the very substance of which all creations, including Heaven, Earth, men, and the myriad creatures, are made, it goes without saying that there is a great deal in common not only among men themselves but also between men and the other creatures. In particular, our body is the body of the universe, and our nature the nature of the universe. Or, as Chang Tsai put it, 'The Plenum of Heaven and Earth is the substance of my being; the Pilot of Heaven and Earth is my nature.' Hence 'all the world and I are brothers, and all nature and I have the same origin.' [8] And just as we are

fraternal to our brothers by blood, so should we be to all men, even to those less fortunate like the deformed and the sick, the orphaned and the widowed. This then was the moral – dangerously akin to Mo Ti's universal love – that Chang Tsai drew from his metaphysical studies and expressed in his now famous 'Western Inscription' that he had written on the western wall of his study.

6. *Above Shape and Below Shape*

FOLLOWING closely on the heels of the three pioneers, Chou, Shao, and Chang, came the two Ch'eng brothers, in whose hands the Neo-Ju philosophy reached its formative stage. In fact, it was more than a happy coincidence that in the persons of the two brothers were linked together the philosophers of the Sung school, as the two Ch'engs were, as we have seen, the pupils of Chou Tun-i, the nephews of Chang Tsai, and, besides, frequent visitors to Shao Yung's Den of Tranquil Delight. They also, especially Ch'eng I, were destined to exert a powerful influence on Chu Hsi, the last and the greatest of the Neo-Ju group.

Though often mentioned together, the Ch'engs seemed to be not only different in their temperaments but also in their lives: Hao, the elder, had a long chequered official career, while I, the younger, preferred the quietness of the study to the busy life of a magistrate. Yet I's fame as a scholar was such that he was once summoned to serve, though only for a short time, as Preceptor to the young emperor. I's long life probably also added to his reputation as well as his achievement in philosophy. Here again the brothers showed a marked difference in their reasoning and views. As a matter of fact, they were responsible for initiating the two main currents of Neo-Ju thought: the dualistic *Li* (law) school, as represented by Ch'eng I, and the monistic *Hsin* (mind) school, the beginnings of which were clearly discernible in Ch'eng Hao.

The one great contribution made by the Ch'engs was the introduction of *li* (law) as an important concept in the new

philosophy. The word had been used by previous writers, but it was the Ch'eng brothers who first brought it to the attention of their fellow-scholars. Thus, according to Ch'eng I, *li* is an immaterial cosmic principle to be distinguished from *ch'i*, the ether, of which all material things are made. In other words, just as there is in everything, animate or inanimate, a primordial matter, so there is in everything a governing principle which is the law of its being. That law, moreover, is universal and eternal. So whereas *ch'i*, the embodiment of physical matter, might change and dissolve, *li*, the underlying principle of that object, remains unchanged and indestructible. In the words of the philosophers, *ch'i* as manifested in concrete objects is 'below shape', while *li*, the eternal principle that transcends time and space, is 'above shape'.

Up to this point the two brothers seemed to be in general agreement. But they differed in their interpretation of a passage in one of the 'Appendices' to the *Classic of Change*, which reads, ' What is above shape is called the law (*tao*): what is below shape is called the implement.' [9] Now, as Ch'eng I saw it, the distinction between the law and the implement was obvious since what is above shape cannot be the same as what is below shape. But to Ch'eng Hao this seemed otherwise. In the first place, he conceived of *li* more as a natural tendency than a fixed law. Thus he wrote, 'The myriad things have their *li*: follow it, and you will easily achieve what you want; oppose it, and you will run into difficulty.' [10] He also observed: 'The implement is the law, and the law the implement. What is important is to attain the law, no matter when or by whom.' [11] To maintain that the implement and the law is one and the same makes Ch'eng Hao a deviationist from the main school of Sung thought as represented by his brother Ch'eng I, and later by Chu Hsi.

7. *The Great Summation*

THOUGH usually mentioned together with the others, Chu Hsi lived about a hundred years after the Ch'eng brothers.

Because of this distance in time he was able to reap the benefits of his predecessors and to view their teachings from a clearer perspective. A great moulder and a superb scholar, Chu Hsi fashioned a supreme product by combining with the early Ju doctrine the cosmological discoveries of Chou Tun-i, the numerical wonders of Shao Yung, the theory of matter (*ch'i*) of Chang Tsai, and the concept of the law (*li*) of the Ch'eng brothers. As a result of this fusion in the hands of this master craftsman the Neo-Ju philosophy reached its highest development.

As a writer Chu Hsi was most versatile and prolific. His complete works, in sixty-two volumes, cover practically every branch of Chinese learning, namely, the classics, history, philosophy, and literature. In the classical field Chu's position was undisputed. From the fourteenth century on for more than 500 years his commentaries and expositions of the K'ung classics were officially recognized as the standard works required of all candidates in the civil service examination. In consequence, Chu Hsi's influence on the K'ung classics became so great that they were studied solely in the light of his interpretation, and it is no exaggeration to say that in the course of time the Chu orthodoxy became the K'ung orthodoxy.

The most brilliant mind since Masters Meng and Hsün, Chu Hsi was also the greatest single influence on Chinese thought. It was he and his group who first exalted the *Analects*, *The Great Learning*, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, and the *Meng-tzu* as the four great books of the K'ung school, second only to the Five Classics; it was he and his group who finally established the Ju hierarchy, raising Master Meng to the status of the Second Sage, thereby expelling Hsün Ch'ing, Meng K'o's rival, from the orthodox fold; it was also he and his group who succeeded in laying a metaphysical foundation for the ethical and political teachings of the K'ung school.

As a philosopher, Chu Hsi formulated from the findings of his predecessors a complete system of thought, metaphysical as well as ethical. He started by asserting once more the nature of the two inherent forces in the universe, *ch'i* and *li*, as

taught by Ch'eng I. Repeating the latter's idea that every physical object in nature, whether sentient or otherwise, has inherent in it a *li* (law) which makes that thing what it is, Chu Hsi states further as a corollary to this theory that the congregation or sum total of all this multitudinous *li* in all the objects constitutes a complete world of its own embodied in the Supreme Ultimate. This last, therefore, is the ultimate standard of all things and the universal law of Heaven, Earth, and Man. As such, it is also the metaphysical world, or the 'world above shape', invisible, incorporeal, transcendental, and yet inherent in everything and pervading everything. On the other hand, there is the physical world, or the 'world below shape', made up of the myriad objects that are visible, corporeal, and concrete. These, moreover, while owing their *raison d'être* to *li*, are formed by the condensation of *ch'i*, or ether, as a result of the continuous interaction of the *yin* and *yang* elements in the universe. 'Hence, men or things, at the time of their production, must receive the *li* in order that they may have a nature of their own', wrote Chu Hsi; 'they must also receive the *ch'i* in order that they may have a bodily form.' [12]

Like any other object, man too is a composition of both *li* and *ch'i*. This *li*, which is none other than human nature, is the same for all men, but it is the *ch'i* in its various proportions and densities that makes men different. In an often-quoted passage Chu Hsi asserted: 'He who receives a *ch'i* that is clear becomes a sage, whose nature is like a pearl lying in cold, translucent water. But he who receives a *ch'i* that is turbid will become a fool or a knave, whose nature is like a pearl lying in muddy water.' [13] The problem of self-cultivation, therefore, is how to restore the pearl of human nature to its original lustre – a problem that brings us face to face with the familiar moral concept of the K'ung school.

In solving this question we must first discover what that muddy substance is that obscures the lustre of man's original nature. It is, according to Chu Hsi, man's desire, which is the root of all evil. 'If one could only realize that it is one's desire that causes this obscuring, then there would be

enlightenment,' said Chu Hsi. 'It is to this point alone that all efforts should be directed.'[14]

Following Ch'eng I, Chu Hsi maintained that to cleanse the pearl of human nature, in order to restore its brilliancy, one must aim at two things in particular: the exercise of attentiveness and the extension of knowledge. The first idea is quite simple. It means that one should constantly – yes, even reverently – bear in mind the existence in one of a 'luminous spiritual something' which one should carefully guard from the contamination of murky desires. As for the second, the Ch'eng-Chu idea is based upon a significant passage in *The Great Learning*, previously quoted, that the way of self-cultivation lies ultimately in the 'extension of knowledge', which can be achieved through the 'investigation of things'. Connecting this idea with his metaphysical conception, Chu Hsi now made the proposition that the knowledge here referred to is none other than a knowledge of the celestial *li* that governs the activity of all things in the 'world below form', and that, furthermore, this knowledge can best be gained by investigating the individual *li* of each particular object, one at a time, until after much sustained effort one becomes in a moment of sudden illumination completely enlightened.

Thus we see that after more than a century of intellectual fermentation there evolved at long last a complete system of thought that was to exert the greatest influence on Chinese life. By no means a sower, Chu Hsi was rather a happy harvester who, now that the time was ripe, was reaping a rich crop from the philosophical field cultivated by the industrious mental workers of previous generations. His rôle, therefore, was essentially that of a great organizer, who established with his authority a new philosophy of the Sung period as a continuation of the orthodox teachings of the K'ung school. His interpretation soon became a standard one followed by all who desired admission to its great gateway.

To sum up, we must point out the manifold far-reaching influences of Chu Hsi and his circle. In the first place, these Sung scholars had instilled into the Ju dogma a new life just

as it was in danger of becoming stagnant and stereotyped. As a result of this infusion there was a renaissance of the great *tao* in the Sung period. Secondly, by incorporating into it the best that was in Taoism and Buddhism, the new philosophy succeeded in stealing the thunder from its rivals, weakening them so much that they never recovered. Thirdly, this rationalization of the Ju philosophy disposed of the last few religious elements that had strayed into the K'ung system. Once for all, the Neo-Ju rationalists put an end to the tendency to deify Master K'ung and to make his teaching a religion – a tendency that had occasionally asserted itself, as we have seen, in the Han and T'ang ages. Lastly, this attempt to humanize the K'ung doctrine had also the indirect effect of ultimately doing away with the ancient Sinitic conception of Heaven as a personalized god. This was in line with the position Master K'ung took, who refused to discuss the question of religion one way or the other. And now, with the mysteries of the creation satisfactorily explained in terms of metaphysics, it is obvious that there would be no further use for an almighty god as the ruling deity of men. At least, this was the belief of the Chinese intellectuals, who, like Master K'ung, kept aloof from spiritual beings while at the same time showing a sovereign contempt for the superstitions of the common people. In fact, the mind of Chinese scholars has been so long divorced from all religious ideas and beliefs that to this day they remain confirmed atheists in the best tradition of the Neo-Ju school.

Chapter Eleven

THE INTUITIVE MIND VERSUS THE SCIENTIFIC

1. *A Philosophical Debate at the Goose Lake Monastery*

ATOP Goose Lake Mountain, in northern Kiangsi, stands the Goose Lake Monastery, a scenic Buddhist retreat, where a historic debate once took place between the leaders of the two schools of Neo-Ju philosophy. It was there in the summer of 1175 that Chu Hsi encountered the two Lu brothers, Lu Chiu-ling (1134–82) and Lu Chiu-yüan (1139–93), better known as Lu Hsiang-shan, both brilliant scholars and exponents of the Mind (*Hsin*) school. The meeting was arranged by a mutual friend, Lü Tsu-ch'ien (1137–85), who after a visit with Chu Hsi accompanied him to the Goose Lake Monastery, where they were met by the Lu brothers. The latter were known to have entertained philosophical opinions different from Chu Hsi's, and it was with a view to reconciling their differences that Lü Tsu-ch'ien brought the three friends together.

This was certainly a great occasion. Here was Chu Hsi at the height of his career, and there were his opponents, the Lu brothers, especially Hsiang-shan, still young and aggressive and with a great philosophical world to conquer. The meeting, however, had a bad start when in answer to Lü Tsu-ch'ien's polite inquiry about his latest poetic writings, the elder Lu began reciting a recent poem of his. After the first four lines, in which the poet asserted that 'the mind alone has been transmitted by the sages of yore,' Chu Hsi cast a furtive glance at Tsu-ch'ien, saying, 'I see Tzŭ-shou (Lu Chiu-ling) has been sailing along in his brother's boat!' [1]. Thereupon Hsiang-shan, the more impetuous younger brother, broke in to say that he too had composed a poem on their way to Goose Lake. Then he started to read his verses, and when he came to the couplet:

The work of easy simplicity abides forever great;
But affairs undertaken piecemeal will float or sink in the end.[2]

Chu Hsi changed colour at the criticism that was apparently directed at him. Thus ended in ill-humour the first greeting of the philosophers.

The next day, in preparation for the conference, the Chu-Lü group drew up a number of statements that represented their basic ideas. But when these were handed out for discussion they were all refuted by the Lu brothers, who remained firm in their conviction. Thus the controversy raged on, with the learned scholars lashing at each other with their tongues. More than a duel of wits, it was in fact a mighty verbal bout on the vital questions of philosophy. Neither, however, would yield any ground; at the same time, neither succeeded in gaining the upper hand of the other, and so the battle of words came at last to an inconclusive end. An interested audience there was, for quite a few other scholars had gathered for the occasion. But, since there was no moderator or judge, the debate failed to bring the worthy opponents any closer together than when they had started. When the meeting finally broke up the rival philosophers parted as friends, but far from reconciled in their views.

Owing to a fundamental difference in their philosophies, such a reconciliation was naturally impossible. To begin with, the Lu brothers believed in the existence of one world instead of the two of Chu Hsi. Moreover, this world of the Lu school is none other than that of the 'original mind'. 'The universe is my mind, and my mind is the universe,'[3] so said Lu Hsiang-shan. He also maintained that, in order to attain moral perfection, the mind alone, which was the greatest and noblest of the senses, was all that needed to be cultivated. Like Chu Hsi, Lu Hsiang-shan believed that man's mind, being innately good, could be restored to its original state through human effort; but he disagreed with Chu Hsi as to the methods of the mind's restoration. While criticizing Chu Hsi's investigation of each individual object one at a time as piecemeal, and his painstaking effort in the pursuit

of knowledge as futile, Hsiang-shan advocated a simpler method of cultivation to be carried out chiefly through contemplation, reflection, and sudden enlightenment – a practice dangerously akin to that of the Ch'an school of Buddhism. Also, like the Ch'anists, Lu Hsiang-shan scorned bookish knowledge, even that of the classics, and asserted that once one had grasped the essence of knowledge, 'all the Six Classics would serve only as footnotes.' [4] This indeed was a great departure, not only from Chu Hsi, but from Master K'ung himself. It is no wonder then that Lu Hsiang-shan has been accused of being a Ch'anist in everything but name. This criticism, perhaps, is prejudiced, but whatever we believe, there is little doubt that Lu Hsiang-shan did lean more heavily towards Buddhism than any other teacher of his school.

2. *The Principle of the Bamboo*

EVER since the twelfth century the differences and similarities between Chu and Lu have been burning issues with the K'ung scholars. Chu Hsi's interpretation of the classics and his metaphysical disquisitions had long been accepted as orthodox and taught publicly in schools, but his supremacy did not prevent the teachings of Lu Hsiang-shan from gaining currency among a selected group of scholars. From these there finally rose Wang Yang-ming [5] (1472–1529), a great thinker of the Ming dynasty, in whose hands the philosophy of the Mind school became firmly established as a worthy rival of the Chu orthodoxy.

Wang Yang-ming, a remarkable general and statesman, was the greatest philosopher after Chu Hsi. His crowning success as a soldier came in 1519, when he suppressed the rebellion of Prince Ch'en Hao, who had aspired to the throne. The swiftness with which Wang Yang-ming struck at the pretender's army, thus nipping the conspiracy in the bud, and the efficiency with which he conducted his numerous anti-banditry campaigns won him the fame of a military genius. But it is chiefly as a philosopher and scholar that Yang-ming is honoured by posterity.

Early initiated in the mysteries of philosophy, Wang Yang-ming had had several encounters with Taoist and Buddhist recluses in his youthful days. For some times, he was almost a lost lamb straying in the byways of heterodoxy[6] before he found his way back to the orthodox fold. After that he remained loyal to the cause of *tao*, and when in his thirties he set out on his lecturing career he was already a mature K'ung scholar. But even then Yang-ming had moments of grave doubt, and for a long time was equally bewildered and exasperated by Master Ch'u's principle of investigation. Previously he had discussed the subject with one of his friends and they had resolved to practise it right away so as to start early on their way to sagehood. Chu Hsi, as we remember, had taught that one should investigate the *li* or principle of physical objects as a concrete method of extending one's knowledge, which would ultimately lead to moral perfection. But how should one start? 'Let's concentrate on the bamboo in the front courtyard,' the friends agreed.[7] Immediately they set to work, and for days and nights the two tried to enter into the spirit of the bamboo, thinking hard and deep. But the result was not as happy as they had anticipated. Though their energies were exhausted and their bodies worn out, their minds remained as blank and hollow as the bamboo they had been investigating. At last, after seven weary days and nights, Wang Yang-ming, who had held out longer than his friend, gave up too sighing, 'Alas! We can be neither sages nor worthies for we lack the great strength to carry on this investigation!'[8]

Nevertheless, the idea continued to trouble Yang-ming throughout his early years until one day a sudden enlightenment came to him during a critical period of his life. At that time, because of a court intrigue, he was living in banishment in Lung-chang, a primitive mountainous town of aborigines and escaped convicts in remote Kweichow. It happened that the few followers he had with him were sick, and he himself had to chop wood, carry water, and boil rice for them. Then the miracle occurred. One night, as he lay awake at the sound of the midnight watch, perhaps ponder-

ing deeply on the ways of attaining sagehood, the light suddenly dawned upon him. It was a supreme moment of discovery when 'eureka' was the happy word. All excited, he rushed from his bed, shouted, and danced about the room. To his astonished followers, who had gathered about him, he proudly announced, 'My nature, of course, is quite sufficient. I was wrong in looking for principles in external objects.' [9]

3. *Intuition, not Investigation*

WANG YANG-MING'S discovery, in other words, superseded the claim of the investigation of things as the sole means of moral cultivation. He had been greatly disappointed, as we have seen, in his attempt to understand the *li* of the bamboo, and now he came out with a principle of his own. It is that the mind is the supreme legislator as well as the embodiment of all the principles of the universe. So instead of taking the tedious and slow process of investigating each individual object, as advocated by the philosophers of Chu Hsi's school, Yang-ming insisted that one should simply concentrate on the mind, which is the only thing necessary to know, for, said he, 'Apart from the mind, there is neither law nor object.' [10]

But how can we prove that everything in the universe is dependent on the mind? The same doubt must have been in the bosom of one of Yang-ming's friends when he said to the philosopher, pointing to the flowers and trees on a distant cliff: 'You say that there is nothing under heaven outside the mind. But how about those flowers and trees on yonder high mountain, which blossom and wither of themselves. What have they to do with my mind?'

'When you cease to regard these flowers,' Yang-ming replied, 'they cease to exist for you. But when you look at them, their colours at once strike your eyes. From this you can easily see that these flowers are not unrelated to your mind.' [11]

Wang Yang-ming also contended that for all moral purposes the only thing needed to be done was to bring forth

'the intuitive knowledge' of the mind. This is a new term taken from a passage in the *Meng-tzu*, and is similar in conception to Lu Hsiang-shan's 'original mind'. This intuitive faculty, according to Yang-ming, is a godsend, shared alike by sages and villains, with the only difference that whereas the sage has preserved it intact in its purest state, the villain has contaminated it by his evil contacts and selfish desires. But whatever one does, this faculty is inherent in one's nature, enabling him to distinguish intuitively between right and wrong. Moreover, if the villain or anybody else has lost his intuitive knowledge through abuse or corruption, he could yet make good his loss by diligently cultivating his mind until one day it would return to him.

To prove the existence of such an intuitive faculty, scholars of Master Yang-ming's school were fond of telling the following oft-repeated story of an unusual encounter between a burglar and a pedant. It seems that the latter, having caught a burglar one sultry summer night, tries to reform him by appealing to his intuitive knowledge of what is good and evil. 'I'm sure,' says the scholar, 'your intuitive goodness will tell you not to commit further trespasses.' But, instead of being convinced, the burglar laughs and says mockingly, 'Please tell me, sir, where is my good conscience?' At that, the weather being extremely oppressive, the kindly scholar asks his excited visitor to take off his jacket. But still the heat seems to be too much for him. So the host suggests, 'Why not take off your pants too?' To this the burglar protests vigorously, 'That won't be quite proper!' Thereupon the scholar shouts triumphantly, 'Ah! Here is your intuitive goodness!' [12]

We are not told whether the burglar actually gained enlightenment through this unusual incident; nor are we informed of the ways and means whereby one could develop one's intuitive faculty with sagehood as the promised goal. The school of Master Yang-ming sounded an optimistic note when it declared that 'the streets are full of sages,' [13] just as Master Meng before it had said that 'all of us could be Yaos and Shuns.' [14] A happy thought it certainly is that

we are all potentially perfect, but the question still remains as to exactly what should be done to attain sagehood. Despising Chu Hsi's pedantic advice on learning, Wang Yang-ming suggested that the extension of one's intuitive knowledge could best be achieved through intense thought, calm meditation, and constant self-control. This is all good advice, but still vague, if not just as hard to practise as the investigation of the bamboo's principle.

4. *The Unity of Knowledge and Practice*

WHILE elaborating on the teachings of the Mind school as first propounded by Lu Hsiang-shan, Wang Yang-ming went a step further by asserting the unitary character of knowledge and practice. Action, he believed, is interrelated with knowledge, and the reason that we fail to do good is due mainly to our failure to understand what good is. On the other hand, knowledge by itself is meaningless, and only he who knows how to apply his knowledge to the affairs of life can attain a complete development of his intuitive faculty, in which the highest good abides.

Once Master Yang-ming was asked by his students why people who knew that filial piety should be due to parents, and fraternal love to brothers, failed to put either into practice. Could this mean, the students further inquired, that knowledge and action were after all two separate things? To resolve this doubt, Yang-ming maintained that these people failed in filial and fraternal conduct simply because of their lack of real understanding; then he continued, 'I have said that knowledge motivates action, and that practice implies the execution of knowledge. Knowing is the beginning of action, and doing is the completion of knowledge. When one knows how to attain the desired end, though one speaks only of knowing, the doing is already included; likewise, though he may speak only of action, the knowing is also implied.' [15]

In the same conversation Wang Yang-ming used as an illustration one's love of beauty and one's dislike of an evil odour. The recognition of beauty in an object, he believed,

belongs to the province of knowledge, whereas the love of a beautiful object involves action. Now as soon as one sees a lovely thing one falls in love with it at first sight. The spontaneity of this feeling is due to the fact that knowing and doing are unitary. It is not evoked after one has first seen the object and then deliberately made up his mind to love it. The same is true of smelling an evil odour. It repulses one as soon as it reaches one's nostrils without one's having to make up one's mind to dislike it. But a man with his nostrils stuffed may not smell the malodorous object in front of him. Not knowing that it is actually offensive, he may not even dislike it. The failure to know is therefore coincident with the failure to act.

The particular trend of Wang Yang-ming's thinking, like that of Lu Hsiang-shan, makes it susceptible of Buddhist influences. Indeed, undercurrents of Ch'anist ideas are detectable here and there in a number of his metaphysical statements. But it is just as unfair to accuse him of being a Buddhist thinker as it is to accuse Lu Hsiang-shan of being one. In both, the main pattern of their teaching is humanistic rather than other-worldly. There is nothing in them of that ascetic and pessimistic outlook on life characteristic of Buddhist thinking. At the same time the works of these two philosophers, though separated by a distance of more than three centuries, show clearly that they are part and parcel of the great tradition of the Ju school. They both have a deep respect for antiquity and a genuine admiration of the sage kings. Furthermore, Wang Yang-ming's emphasis on action makes him diametrically opposed to Taoist non-action as well as to Buddhist passivity. Yang-ming, in fact, not only preached action, but practised himself what he taught; more than any other teacher of the K'ung school, he was a typical man of action, as much esteemed for his statecraft and military genius as for his scholarship and philosophical profundity.

Yang-ming, too, made a lasting contribution to Chinese thought. His ideas, which have grown with the centuries, attract lively discussion even to this day.[16] Though in his

emphasis on the intuitive faculty and inner cultivation he seems to have discouraged the rise of the scientific spirit as found in Chu Hsi's investigation of external objects, yet in all fairness to Yang-ming it must be said that Chu's empirical idea gave little promise of an actual beginning in science, and still less of discoveries and inventions. This was because the K'ung scholars of that time, lacking in scientific equipment and knowledge as well as in scientific mentality, had limited the scope of their investigation to men and society alone and would have nothing to do with the broad phenomena and universal principles of nature. In other words, they were still treading in the old ruts of ethics and politics in the manner of Master K'ung, and consequently, in spite of the efforts of the Sung philosophers, nothing new and independent could be expected of them. On the other hand, to Wang Yang-ming at least was due the credit of having diverted these K'ung pedants from their vain bookish pursuit to the more interesting study of the rich and resourceful mind. In this he represented the last important phase of the Neo-Ju movement and was directly responsible for having successfully roused men's attention to the profundities of human nature while at the same time instructing them in the proprieties of individual and social life.

5. *Centuries of Dreary Scholarship*

THE dearth of Chinese philosophy in the centuries following Wang Yang-ming's death in 1529 contrasts unfavourably with its earlier fecundity. The sudden outburst of intellectual vitality in the Sung age seemed to have exhausted itself, and Chinese scholars now resigned themselves to the uninspiring work of scholarship and criticism. So far as philosophy is concerned, these were the most dreary centuries in Chinese history, with the friends and foes of the Neo-Ju schools following slavishly on their masters' heels and quibbling over hair-splitting issues in the old classics.

Worst of all, the Chinese creative genius was being impaired by the literary examination, the main avenue to

officialdom which, from the Ming dynasty, had degenerated into a mere contest of skill in the composition of a type of mechanical essay known as the 'Eight Legs'. Following a rigid artificial pattern, this type of essay is divided into eight well-balanced parts, each developing a different phase of the topic, which is always a quotation from the K'ung classics. Because of this limitation its contents are confined to the Ju school of thought, particularly the interpretations as made by Chu Hsi and his followers. Obviously, such a strait-jacket composition leaves little room for the exercise of imagination and originality. As a result, the Chinese intellectuals who were trained in the art of composing these 'eight-legged' essays, became limited in their outlook and trammelled in their thinking. Hence there emerged a type of scholar who, while opposed to all independent thinking and real literary merit, was authoritarian, dogmatic, narrow-minded, and little interested in subjects outside the orthodox canons. It is a pity that the best minds of the nation should have been thus wasted on such trivial compositions! Since this was the case, however, it was natural that in the wake of the Neo-Ju movement there should be such a long period of intellectual stagnation.

Actually, this kind of examination did more harm than service to the cause of the K'ung school. Of course, it helped in making the Ju dogma predominant in Chinese intellectual circles, but it also helped to kill the true spirit of Master K'ung's teaching and to misrepresent the great Master to the Chinese people as an autocrat and a pedant. Though deeply revered and idolized, he was nevertheless being divested of human qualities and values. The vitality of his teaching, which had saved it from the destruction of the Ch'in fire, was gone; instead it became stereotyped and much adulterated. What irony that Master K'ung, the great educationalist, whose method was to 'skilfully lead men on' and whose intellectual curiosity was immense, should have now found himself the object of blind worship and the instrument of a senseless educational policy that stressed mere memory work, rhetorical feats, unremitting thought

control, and subservience to the despotic authority of the monarch!

6. *A Textual Criticism that Claims to be Scientific*

In a sense, the dearth of philosophy from the sixteenth century was partially made up for by remarkable progress in the exegetical studies of the K'ung classics. As philosophers, the Ming and Ch'ing scholars were negligible, but as critics they were outstanding in their painstaking efforts, in the profundity of their learning, and in the proper approach they made towards textual criticism. They were remarkable encyclopaedists, lexicographers, anthologists, commentators, philologists, and exegetes, who succeeded in gathering an abundant harvest from the scholarly labours of the previous centuries. They also made great progress in an effort to determine the authenticity and correctness of the numerous texts of the K'ung school as well as those of the other philosophical schools. With the facility of printing now greatly extended and the circulation of books made easier, they did at least this one great service: they gave to posterity a good, reasonable, and well-annotated text which can still be read with confidence and satisfaction.

The Ch'ing scholars, especially, revolted against the metaphysical leanings of the Sung thinkers. In protest they styled themselves 'followers of the Han learning' to show that they obtained their inspiration from a period earlier than the Sung, and were therefore in point of time nearer to Master K'ung, and in spirit closer to the original Ju teaching. 'The classical learning of the Han period should be followed,' wrote an early nineteenth-century critic, 'because it was closest to the sages, and also because it appeared before the rise of the two doctrines [Buddhism and Taoism].' [17] In the opinion of these scholars it was the teaching of these two religions that had corrupted the Sung writings and rendered them truly 'unorthodox'.

It was at that time that Chinese historical criticism, properly speaking, had its beginning. Yen Yüan (1635–1704), founder of the school, is credited with developing a

scientific methodology in the study of classical and historical literature Though deploring the alien elements in the Sung writings, these men nevertheless continued the tradition of Chu Hsi in their critical criterion as well as in their philological approach to the ancient texts. And while they failed to evolve an experimental science, these Ch'ing scholars did produce a higher criticism based upon scientific evidence and inductive reasoning. To mention only one example, a prominent scholar of the period, Ku Yen-wu (1613–82), so it was claimed, offered 160 evidences in order to prove satisfactorily the ancient pronunciation of a disputed word. When such a prodigious effort was expended on a single phonological question the thoroughness and solidarity of the Ch'ing scholarship can well be imagined.

Moreover, such elaborate study of the ancient texts was by no means a pure waste of time and energy. The exegetes defended themselves by asserting that an understanding and verification of the sages' words was a prerequisite to a correct interpretation of the sages' minds and ideas. It is like the laborious ascent of the steps that lead to the main hall, which indeed cannot be gained otherwise. In one respect at least, these scholars made great strides. By sweeping aside all subjective ideas and traditional authority they succeeded in detecting a number of spurious classics that were hitherto considered as genuine. These include, for instance, the *Ritual of Chou*, the 'Ten Wings' (Appendices) of the *Classic of Change*, and the *Classic of Filial Piety*, all of which were now assigned to a much later period than had been claimed, and credited to hands much less distinguished than those of the Duke of Chou, Master K'ung, and Master Tseng, to whom the authorship of the above works had been respectively attributed.

Foremost among this group of textual critics, and a philosopher in his own right, was Tai Tung-yüan (1724–77), in whom the Ch'ing scholarship culminated. A story about Tai's intellectual alertness as a child gives an unmistakable insight into his later achievements as a scholar. When a boy of ten, so the story goes, Tai was taught by his teacher that

the introductory section in *The Great Learning* began with the words of Master K'ung as transmitted by Master Tseng, and that the other ten chapters were all Tseng Ts'an's expositions recorded by his pupils.

'But,' the boy asked his tutor, 'how do we know that this is true?'

'Master Chu Hsi said so,' answered the unsuspecting pedagogue.

'When did Master Chu live?'

'In the Sung dynasty.'

'When did Master K'ung and Master Tseng live?'

'In the Chou dynasty.'

'How many years intervened between the two dynasties?'

'Two thousand years.'

'Then how could Master Chu know what happened two thousand years ago?'[18]

At this the teacher was dumbfounded; and so would all scholars be who founded their assertions on authority and not on critical evidence and logical reasoning.

Chapter Twelve

THE SAGE PUTS ON A NEW LOOK

1. *New Wine in Old Bottles*

THE Ch'ing reaction against the Neo-Ju philosophy took a new turn by the end of the nineteenth century. The Han learning, to which the Ch'ing scholars had previously paid their allegiance, was in substance that of the Old Text school represented by Ma Yung and Chêng Hsüan. But the new intellectuals in the last years of the Ch'ing dynasty yearned to return to the early Han period at the time of Tung Chung-shu, when the Old Texts had not yet been unearthed and only the Modern Texts were studied in the offices of the Eruditi. The battle of the two Texts, as the reader will recall, had been waged inconclusively for a number of years in the Han dynasty until finally synthetists like Chêng Hsüan and others incorporated what they deemed best in the Modern Texts into the Old, thus putting an end to the raging dispute. This, however, also spelled the doom for the Modern Scripts, very few of which survived the clever manipulation of their opponents.

Now a battle-cry for the revival of the long-neglected Modern Scripts was raised. As was natural, the Modern Classicists of the Ch'ing period rallied around Tung Chung-shu and his *Kung-yang Commentary*, which once more became the centre of intensive research. But, unlike Tung, these Ch'ing scholars were also political reformers who saw in the teachings of Master K'ung a powerful weapon for their political sallies. To them, of course, Master K'ung was more than a mere transmitter of ancient lore; he was a throneless king, a saviour of mankind.

But what was the motivating force behind this new movement? To answer this question we must pause for a moment to examine briefly the Chinese political situation in the last

years of the nineteenth century. This was an age of rapid decay in the colossal Manchu empire as a result of a widespread unrest among the oppressed Chinese masses within and the encroachment of the Western powers from without. In the early days of the Ch'ing dynasty the Chinese intelligentsia had to bury themselves in harmless classical studies to avoid persecution by the suspicious and relentless Manchu rulers. But now their scholarly successors found a worse enemy in foreign imperialists who threatened the very existence of the nation itself. Political reformation seemed the only way out of this emergency and, since China was thoroughly grounded in the K'ung dogma, some of the scholar-reformers began to adopt the daring tactics of trying to advance their own political ideas behind the broad façade of Master K'ung.

The leader of this movement was K'ang Yu-wei (1858–1927), a prodigy who earned for himself the nickname 'sage' because of his predilection for that word in his numerous conversations. True to this appellation, Sage K'ang soon saw in himself an image of the great Sage K'ung. An ambitious young man, he was ready to set forth his political programme in the name of Master K'ung. As the latter had advocated his reforms on the authority of the sage kings of antiquity, so would K'ang Yu-wei present Master K'ung in the rôle of a great reformer, a man of social vision, who could serve as a pattern for K'ang's own political activities. Moreover, according to K'ang Yu-wei, Master K'ung actually wrote, or rather fabricated, all the Six Classics as a weapon of propaganda, while the sage kings like Yao and Shun, who might not have existed at all, were most probably the children of Master K'ung's imagination. And if that were the case, why couldn't he, K'ang Yu-wei, also adopt the same strategy that Master K'ung had so successfully employed?

Nothing could be more fantastic than this assumption of Sage K'ang, who surpassed even Tung Chung-shu in his distortion of the historical facts concerning Master K'ung. The arguments which K'ang Yu-wei advanced in support of

his contentions were mostly fallacious and arbitrary. For instance, he asserted, contrary to all historical records, that the Chou classics actually survived the Ch'in fire and were handed down intact to the Han scholars. Such statements only underlined the fact that K'ang Yu-wei was more of a charlatan than a scholar, who used the Ju dogma as a peg on which to hang his political theses. For the same reason he attributed to Master K'ung the dishonesties he himself would have committed had he been in the Master's place. But in spite of all that we have said it cannot be denied that K'ang Yu-wei did make an important contribution to Chinese thought by his independent thinking and his audacity in attacking old traditions and established authorities. Though far from being a sound critic himself, he nevertheless contributed to criticism a spirit of doubt, a spirit that was destined to bear fruit among the Chinese scholars of the present century.

2. *A World Utopia*

MORE interesting than all these pseudo-scholarly attempts at reconstructing Master K'ung is K'ang Yu-wei's conception of a new world Utopia. This he called *Ta Tung*, the Great Commonwealth, from a passage in the *Record of Rites*,[1] generally attributed to Master K'ung. The passage provided Sage K'ang, then twenty-six, with inspiration for a lofty picture of an ideal state, which he depicted colourfully in a book of several hundred thousand words.

Before we proceed to examine K'ang Yu-wei's *Book of the Great Commonwealth* we must first of all present K'ang's theory of historical evolution based upon the concept of the 'three eras' in the *Kung-yang Commentary*. These are, first, the era of world confusion, corresponding to the time of Master K'ung, in which men were governed by force or at best by *li* (propriety); second, the era of approaching peace, in which the people are well educated and take a prominent part in government affairs as in the modern period; third, the era of great peace, the last stage of human progress, in which there will be unity, harmony, and brotherhood for the

whole world. 'In the future,' wrote K'ang Yu-wei, the youthful idealist, 'there will be unity on this great earth irrespective of the size of the countries and the distance between them. With the national states abolished, the racial distinctions eliminated, and traditions and cultures all in harmony, there will be one world of peace.' Then he added naïvely, 'This has long been prophesied by Master K'ung.'[2]

Of these three eras, the one that engrossed K'ang Yu-wei's attention most is the last, which according to him will see the rise of a world government built on the concept of unity, equality, and brotherhood. Summarized briefly, K'ang's plans for the global Utopia are:

1. That all national states be abolished, and a world government, divided into a number of administrative areas, be established;
2. That both the central government and the district governments be elected by the people;
3. That the family system be abolished; and that the marriage contract between men and women be valid for not more than a year;
4. That hospitals be built for expectant mothers; nurseries, kindergartens, and schools for children;
5. That all grown-ups be assigned by government to agricultural, industrial, and other productive work;
6. That the sick be admitted free to the community hospitals, and old people to homes for the aged;
7. That the above-mentioned institutions be made the best equipped in each world district and strive to give their inmates the greatest possible comfort and happiness;
8. That all men and women, when they come of age, be conscripted to serve in one of those institutions for a certain number of years;
9. That public dormitories and cafeterias be built and their use enjoyed by everyone in proportion to the amount of labour or service he has given to the state;
10. That the severest punishment be meted out to the idle and unproductive;
11. That special rewards be given to those who make new discoveries, or who make special contributions to the community;
12. That cremation be practised for the dead with the cremating grounds in the vicinity of the fertilizer factories.[3]

All these, as the reader can easily see, are a hodgepodge of indigested and incongruous ideas introduced from the West at the end of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, that such a strange conglomeration of ideas, many of which would be a real shock to Master K'ung, should be couched in the language of the K'ung school is not a matter for surprise. It shows merely that Master K'ung had such great authority in those days that even radical propaganda like this had to be made in his name. But this also clearly demonstrates not only the peculiar mentality of the young Sage K'ang, who was in the habit of reading his own notions into the works of others, but also his unscrupulous practice of crying and selling his own political wares under the well-established K'ung trademark.

After these ideological preparations K'ang Yu-wei launched forth into the world of politics. Though only a 'blue-gowned scholar', he repeatedly sent to the throne memorials advocating an ambitious programme of national reform.[4] These, of course, went unanswered and unnoticed. But in 1898 K'ang's persistent outcries finally attracted the attention of the young monarch Kuang Hsü (1875–1908), who took the K'ung zealot as his last pawn in a desperate game to ward off the evil influence of his aunt, the powerful Empress Dowager, better known as the Old Buddha. The new faction, headed by K'ang Yu-wei, soon gained the patronage of the emperor, who together with K'ang enjoyed a wonderful time of feverish activity by issuing edicts, one after another, to abolish the many corrupt and reactionary practices that were fast undermining the nation. But these reform measures were hardly under way when the conservative elements at court, thoroughly infuriated and alarmed, succeeded in enlisting to their support the Empress Dowager, who soon put an end to Kuang Hsü's frantic efforts by deposing him in a *coup d'état* and taking over herself the reins of government. Thus, after barely a hundred days, the reform movement collapsed. K'ang Yu-wei fled for his life to Hong Kong, leaving behind him a number of his followers to become victims of the Old Buddha's rage.

3. *An Abortive Attempt to deify Master K'ung*

PARADOXICALLY enough, the Chinese Revolution of 1911 found K'ang Yu-wei, the arch rebel of 1898, an ultra-conservative and a loyal supporter of the fallen Manchu monarchy. In the early days of the new republic K'ang also identified himself with an abortive movement to enthrone Master K'ung as head of a state religion. Political conditions at that time, it seems, were by no means unfavourable to such an anachronistic proposal. The young nation established by Sun Yat-sen and his followers had been suffering from its birth throes; and what was worse, the government was actually in the hands of Yüan Shih-k'ai, an ambitious war-lord, who had been entertaining hopes of becoming an emperor himself. Naturally, Yüan was not adverse to the idea of exalting Master K'ung, long regarded by many as a symbol of official loyalty to the throne. In fact, the movement was so opportune that it might have carried the day had it not been for strong opposition from a group of university-trained intellectuals.

Before we come to the story of the movement itself we want to make clear the important point that, contrary to the assertions of many prominent Western scholars and missionaries,[5] the orthodoxy of the K'ung school can in no way be considered a religion. As a matter of fact you may, if you please, call the K'ung dogma an ethical system, a code of ritual, a way of life, a philosophy, history, literature, culture, etc.; that is, anything but religion. To be sure, ancestor worship, which was a cult of the Chinese people, and filial piety, which goes with it, are the two main props of the K'ung system, but these do not necessarily make the K'ung teaching a religion, just as the sacrifices at Master K'ung's temples do not make him the 'First Holy One'. The salient fact remains that Master K'ung did not make any claim to godship, nor did he teach a faith that was supernatural and sanctimonious. This clearly indicates that Master K'ung originally had nothing to do with religion. Moreover,

despite the later acts of homage heaped on him, there has never been evolved a K'ung priesthood with all its paraphernalia. For all these reasons the Ju doctrine has never appeared as a popular faith in the eyes of the Chinese people. This further strengthens our belief that, though there is a teaching in the heart of every religion, not every teaching is a religion, and least of all, the teaching of the K'ung school.

But, inspired by the example of Christianity as a state religion in many Western countries, the K'ung partisans of the early twentieth century clamoured vociferously to make the K'ung orthodoxy the national religion of the Chinese people. Most prominent among this group was Ch'en Huan-chang, a returned student from America and the author of an impressive two-volume dissertation in English on the *Economic Principles of Confucius*. Ch'en was a disciple of Sage K'ang, and together the two braced themselves for a great campaign to propagate Master Kung's teachings in these republican times. As a result of their propaganda K'ung societies for the study and exaltation of the Master's teachings mushroomed throughout the country, and when the Constitutional Convention met in 1915 the K'ang group demanded that a clause be included in the new constitution to establish the K'ung doctrine as a state religion. The uproar that followed this proposal was terrific and the staunch champions of the K'ung school met with as staunch an opposition from the revolutionary camp. Even Yüan Shih-k'ai, who undoubtedly favoured such an official sanction of the Ju orthodoxy,[6] saw fit not to press the issue too far. Consequently, after much squabbling and name-calling, the Draft Convention adopted a compromise resolution endorsing the moral superiority of the K'ung teaching, but not hailing it a national religion. The constitution, anyway, was never adopted and, when it was finally scrapped, gone with it was the last hope of the K'ung partisans. Their abortive attempt at deifying Master K'ung, therefore, indicated only the desperate plight of the conservatives at the dawn of a new era.

4. *Down with K'ung & Sons!*

ABOUT the same time that the K'ung controversy was creating a furore among the constitutionalists there emerged a new revolutionary force that was to awake with a thunderous voice the intellectual stupor of the young republic. For a number of years, even in the monarchical days, the old classical education, in which the K'ung learning predominated, was giving way to a new system patterned after that of the West. Modern subjects like science were being introduced in place of the K'ung classics, which were no longer noisily recited by youngsters as in the olden days. Even more important than that, the fettering examination of the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties had been abolished, so that scholars would no longer waste the best part of their lives on the brain-wrecking 'Eight-legged' essays. With this liberation there developed a new type of Chinese intellectual trained in the knowledge of the West and anxious to lead the country, which had barely emerged from her medieval anchorage, on a hazardous voyage into the modern world. In their zeal to reach their destination amidst storms and tempests these young pilots of the new ship of state proposed to dump overboard all the ancient cargoes of learning, among them the age-old K'ung classics.

The most outspoken representative of this anti-K'ung group was Ch'en Tu-hsiu,[7] professor at the National University in Peking and editor of the monthly *The New Youth.* Working together with him was Hu Shih, who led the Chinese in a literary renaissance unprecedented in history. In addition to introducing a vernacular language and literature to the people, the *New Youth* group also attempted to liberate the Chinese mentality from its feudal bondage, using as their weapon the scientific and democratic ideals of the West. If the political revolution of 1911 paved the way for the republican form of government, the literary revolution that followed shortly after in 1917 extended further the intellectual horizon of the Chinese nation.

As we have just mentioned, the greatest obstacle in the path of these literary revolutionists was the K'ung orthodoxy that had monopolized Chinese thought for nearly 2,000 years ever since the epoch-making decree of Emperor Wu in 136 B.C. The historical teaching of K'ung Ch'iu, when considered dispassionately, had both its merits and drawbacks. It must also be admitted in all honesty that the main stream of Ju philosophy was by no means entirely stereotyped and decadent beyond recovery. Witness its regeneration in the hands of the Sung and Ming thinkers! But, on the other hand, it also cannot be denied that in the last three or four centuries since the Ming dynasty, numerous elements that were extremely backward and feudalistic had crept into the K'ung school and made it a veritable Augean stable impossible of being cleansed. At the same time, while the classical scholars of the Ch'ing period were burying themselves in textual and philological studies to escape political persecution, the unscrupulous henchmen of the ruthless Manchu rulers were utilizing the Ju doctrine, which they had greatly abused and corrupted, as an instrument for the enslavement of the Chinese people. As a result of this purposeful misrepresentation the name of K'ung had become all that was obnoxious and bigoted, and its teaching a conglomeration of authoritarian dogma whose poison soon corroded the soul of the nation. That was how things stood in the early days of the Chinese Republic; so it was no wonder that the K'ung conservatives should appear so repugnant to the *New Youth* torch-bearers. With great zeal, the latter now put the anti-K'ung movement into full swing.

As spokesman for the group, Ch'en Tu-hsiu first disposed of the idea of the 'K'ung religion' by asserting that, since the K'ung doctrine had in it 'absolutely nothing like the form or substance of a religion,' it could not be made into a state dogma. Furthermore, as a system of ethical teaching, which is in fact all that it amounts to, its ideals are incompatible with modern life, science, and the republican form of government. Therefore, Ch'en Tu-hsiu averred that it should be discarded as one discards an old worn-out hat. These

anti-K'ung scholars also accused the Ju dogma of being used as a tool of regimentation by the 'imperial puppets' to monopolize the thought of the world and to restrict human freedom. They likewise made capital of the traditional subjection of Chinese women, blaming it all on Master K'ung and his 'cannibalistic doctrine of *li*,' and declared that the emancipation of women, to be patterned after Nora, a heroine of Ibsen's *Doll's House*, demanded a prior emancipation from the K'ung orthodoxy. Thus they laid at Master K'ung's door everything that was feudalistic, retrogressive, and corrupt in Chinese society – in fact, all the evils that had prevented China from progressing towards becoming a strong modernized nation. In the fury of their charge they raised the battle cry 'Down with K'ung and Sons!'

As was to be expected, this fierce onslaught headed by Ch'en Tu-hsiu, and supported by all the wide-awake young men of the period, was too much for the tottering K'ung faction. Crushed and crestfallen, they began to yield ground. Indeed, things had gone from bad to worse for them. By this time Yüan Shih-k'ai, their political boss, had died heartbroken after an unsuccessful attempt to make himself emperor of China; and K'ang Yu-wei, their spiritual protagonist, had withdrawn from public life after having incurred the wrath of the nation by his part in an abortive *coup d'état* (1917) to restore Pu Yi, the abdicated Manchu emperor, to the Chinese throne.[8] With their leaders defeated and discredited because of these monarchical plots, the entire K'ung camp now packed up to depart in disgrace into the darkness of oblivion.

5. *An Afterglow*

THE K'ung doctrine, however, has been granted a brief respite before being brought to its last judgement. The fiery assaults of its opponents notwithstanding, its tenacious hold on Chinese life for over twenty centuries cannot be lightly shaken in the space of a few decades. To be sure, the pattern of Chinese society of olden times started falling apart, and its foundation was undermined when the large family system,

the basis of Master K'ung's ethical and political teachings, collapsed with the impact of the West. But since no revolution of such an immense size and scope can be accomplished in a generation, the venerable tradition of the K'ung school still endures amidst all the vicissitudes of the last half century.

Signs are not lacking that Master K'ung has actually inspired many of the new movements in recent years. Most closely connected with him was a movement for the preservation of China's national culture, which came as a reaction against the wholesale importation of foreign ideas and books by the new intellectuals. To offset their influence, Chang T'ai-yen, a famous classicist, started a crusade to diffuse the K'ung learning among the students of his university. He was joined by another group of scholars who maintained that, instead of complete Westernization as advocated by Hu Shih and others, the panacea for China's trouble was a revival of her ancient heritage, the best that is in her civilization. Supporters of the latter proposal adopted as their slogan: 'Western knowledge for practical affairs; Chinese culture for the basic pattern of life.' And, of course, for a country that had long been moulded by the K'ung teaching, Chinese culture meant K'ung culture. To be sure, no one to-day would openly avow a complete return to the K'ung authority as did K'ang Yu-wei and Ch'en Huan-chang; but there have been many 'middle-roaders' who in their insistence on keeping alive the torch of ancient learning maintain a spiritual kinship with the Ju tradition and end up, whether consciously or unconsciously, as latter-day K'ung apologists.

Also noteworthy is a tendency among Chinese scholars towards re-evaluating and reconstructing a new K'ung philosophy in the light of Western knowledge. Prominent among this group is Liang Sou-ming, who after a critical examination of the relative merits of the philosophies and civilizations of the East and the West came forth to champion the wisdom of the Orient, whether it be Gautama Buddha's or K'ung Ch'iu's, against that of the Occident. For his part,

Liang believed that the teaching of the K'ung school, 'in its philosophy of change as "production and reproduction", in its doctrine of Reason as a universal principle of existence, and in its theory of incessant transformation resulting from the constant operation of the universal active and passive forces, offered the most suitable philosophy for China in a modern dynamic world.' [9] It is obvious that Liang Souming, despite his many protests, is at heart a K'ung follower, to whom the only way out for China to-day is still by the same beaten path that leads ultimately to the K'ung school.

Delving even deeper into the fountain-head of Chinese philosophy with a view to evolving a new system of his own, Fung Yu-lan, a prominent scholar, makes the greatest single philosophical contribution to contemporary China in his *New Rational Philosophy*, published in four parts dealing separately with its metaphysical, ethical, historical, and methodological aspects. Fung's historical study of Chinese philosophy, undertaken for the first time in China, is also the best on the subject.

On the political front, the K'ung dogma is likewise not altogether without its influence. Even revolutionists like Sun Yat-sen saw fit to introduce into his 'Three People's Principles' a large dose of the K'ung ethics as a stimulant for the moral rejuvenation of his fellow-countrymen.[10] This is not strange, because for any one to divorce himself entirely from Master K'ung's tenets is to dissociate himself from the spiritual heritage of the Chinese race, which no political leader can afford to do. The influence of Wang Yang-ming is also clearly shown in Sun's philosophical contention that 'action is easy, but knowledge difficult.' Later, when the Kuomintang came into power in 1927, some of its theorists like Tai Chi-t'ao, who were K'ung followers at heart, began openly to exalt the Master's teaching by declaring that the regeneration of the Chinese race lay in the restoration of her ancient culture and virtue – these, of course, have long been immersed in the traditions of the K'ung school. Likewise, the New Life Movement inaugurated by Chiang Kai-shek in 1934 was inspired by the K'ung virtues of *li* (propriety),

yi (righteousness), *lien* (integrity), and *ch'ih* (honour), a practical application of which, so it was believed, would help the country to stand on her feet again.

At about the same time, the Kuomintang government began to encourage the study of the K'ung classics, which had been discarded from the school curriculum. The government also restored Master K'ung to his pedestal of honour as China's first and greatest teacher by observing his traditional birthday on the 27th day of the eighth month in the lunar calendar, now shifted to August 27th, as Teacher's Day, a national holiday. Though no sacrifices were offered to Master K'ung on this occasion, memorial services were frequently conducted in his honour. His lineal descendant, the seventy-seventh generation removed, was once more ennobled in his 'ducal' residence at Ch'ü-fu, the Master's birthplace. There, in 1935, an architectural survey of the great K'ung temple, many of its buildings erected in 1730 and now in a state of dilapidation, was being made with a view to its renovation, which would cost the tax-payers in those pre-inflationary days around a million and a half dollars. If it had not been for the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, which wrecked the project, the magnificent K'ung temple, with all its halls, pavilions, monuments, and gateways dressed with a new look, would have stood to-day to impress pilgrims with the ever-reviving greatness of the sage. But as it is, the hope for the revival of Master K'ung proves to be ephemeral in the world of both men and ideas – an afterglow soon to disappear behind the western mountains.[11]

6. *Verdict Unknown*

IT is an uncomfortable thought to all worshippers of authority that the K'ung dogma, which was so strongly entrenched in the human mind in the past centuries, should now be in danger of being stripped of its power and prestige by the people's court. In spite of the above-mentioned attempts at its restitution, it now appears almost certain that the day will never dawn when the K'ung orthodoxy will

regain its strong hold on the intellectual life of the Chinese nation. The former adoration of the intelligentsia is over, and gone with it is the Master's authority and influence. The younger generation, brought up in the days of the 'Down-with-K'ung and-Sons Movement', will never look at Master K'ung with the same eyes of awe and respect as did their ancestors. It is indeed epoch-making that the greatest idol humanity has ever built should now be in the process of being dethroned, if not broken!

But against these sweeping conclusions the reader may protest. He may say, for instance, that history will repeat itself and that the present may be merely another period of eclipse of the K'ung doctrine as in the days of the First Ch'in Emperor. It will be remembered that at that time, only a few decades after the Ch'in proscription, the Master had risen, phoenix-like, from the ashes of his buried followers and his burnt works to play a rôle greater than any he had ever played in his lifetime. Might it not be, the wise reader may ask, that again Master K'ung might be raised to a throneless kingship in the intellectual realm in future generations?

In our opinion, however, this kind of revival is not likely to happen. Times have changed, and so has the basic structure of Chinese society, especially the family system, on which the K'ung doctrine is based. Moreover, the gap between the Ch'in and Han and the subsequent ages was not so wide as is that between the Manchu monarchy and the young China of 1954; nor were the changes then as radical and thoroughgoing as they are now. But, most important of all, there is to-day a phenomenal transformation in Chinese mentality that is revolutionary in both its scope and intensity. Whereas the Han people readily returned to Master K'ung's kindly concepts of etiquette and morality in their reaction against the tyranny of Ch'in, the Chinese people of these modern times, who have been newly liberated from the fetters of tradition and, furthermore, baptized in the liberal ideas of the West, would never willingly go back to any enslaving orthodoxy of the past, not even an enlightened

K'ung dogma stripped of its undesirable elements. No longer isolated and self-contained, China will look audaciously ahead into the future instead of returning to the past. The past, of course, will be studied, examined, and even treasured, but not to be upheld as an unerring criterion for all future efforts. Chances indeed are slight of the revival of the K'ung doctrine as a dominant influence on Chinese life.

But how about the genuine and humanized K'ung Ch'iu, that dignified but affable schoolmaster of Chou, shorn of the authoritarianism that has been superimposed upon him? How about those wise, pure words of his not yet spoiled by later contamination? And how about the underlying spirit of the Ju philosophy without its extraneous matter?

These are indeed weighty and intriguing questions, in the answers to which will be found a true light on the subject. First of all let us reiterate our belief that the 'de-deification' of Master K'ung is after all a good thing for all concerned – not only for the Chinese nation in general, but also for Master K'ung himself. By detaching and disentangling from him all that is false and superficial we shall be able to see more clearly the real K'ung Ch'iu, who, we believe, will loom large in the pages of history as an intellectual figure. Next, as a result of this 'debunking', Master K'ung's achievements in his own time will be better appreciated, just as his contributions to posterity will be more highly valued. Moreover, this process makes possible a sifting of his teachings; the good ones to be treasured as a part of the national heritage, and the worthless to be rejected as too obsolete for modern usage. In this way, too, many of the unpleasant things now attributed to Master K'ung will be discounted and the charges cleared up. Lastly, a new Chinese philosophy, we believe, should be formulated to replace the Ju dogma that has already spent its strength and served its purpose. But this should not be done without first incorporating into the new system the best elements in the Ju as well as in the other philosophies. This synthesis of Chinese thought, once half-heartedly attempted by the Sung scholars

because of their limitations, would contribute substantially towards the creation of a new world philosophy that is, if we are able to read the signs of the times, in the process of being initiated.[12] But all these are at best mere conjectures or wishful thinking; the time is yet premature to predict what will ultimately happen to Master K'ung and his philosophy.

The verdict of posterity is unknown.

Appendix I

PERIODS OF CHINESE HISTORY

Legendary Emperors	
Fu Hsi (Conqueror of Animals)	
Shen Nung (Divine Husbandman)	
Huang Ti (Yellow Emperor)	?2698–2599 B.C.
Sage Kings	
Yao	?2357–2258 B.C.
Shun	?2255–2208 B.C.
Yü (Founder of Hsia Dynasty)	?2205–2198 B.C.
Tang (Founder of Shang Dynasty)	?1765–1760 B.C.
Wen (Founder of Chou Dynasty)	
Wu (son of Wen; Founder of Chou Dynasty)	?1122–1116 B.C.
Three Dynasties	
Hsia	?2205–1766 B.C.
Shang (or Yin)	?1766–1122 B.C.
Chou (Feudal Age)	1122?–256 B.C.
Western Chou	1122?–771 B.C.
Eastern Chou	
Spring and Autumn Period	722–481 B.C.
Period of the Warring States	403–221 B.C.
Empire	
Ch'in	221–207 B.C.
Han	206 B.C.–A.D. 220
Former Han	206 B.C.–A.D. 8
Hsin (Wang Mang)	9–23 A.D.
Later Han	25–220 A.D.
Three Kingdoms	221–264 A.D.
Tsin	265–316 A.D.
Northern and Southern Dynasties	317–588 A.D.
Sui	589–618 A.D.
T'ang	618–907 A.D.
Five Dynasties	907–960 A.D.
Sung	960–1279 A.D.
Yüan (Mongol)	1280–1368 A.D.
Ming	1368–1644 A.D.
Ch'ing (Manchu)	1644–1911 A.D.
Republic	1912–

Appendix II

CHINESE PHILOSOPHERS IN THE CLASSICAL AGE

B.C.	*Chinese Historical Events*	*Confucianists*	*Taoists*	*Mohists and Legalists*	*Greece and Rome*	*India*
1400	Mid-Shang (Yin) Dynasty					*Rig-Veda* (1400–1000)
1100	Chou Dynasty 1122–256	The *Classic of History*, the *Classic of Poetry*, the *Classic of Change* produced during these centuries				
	King Wen					
	King Wu					
1000	Duke Chou					
900						
800						
	722. Beginning of the Ch'un Ch'iu (Spring and Autumn) Period					
700						The *Upanishads* (*c.* 600)
600	536. First Written Law Code	K'ung Ch'iu (551–479)	Lao-tan		Pythagoras (*c.* 530)	Gautama Buddha (563?–483?)
500		Tseng Ts'an Tzŭ-ssŭ	Yang Chu	Mo Ti (479?–390?)	Heraclitus (*c.* 500)	
	481. End of the Ch'un Ch'iu Period				Socrates (*c.* 470–399)	
					Plato (427–347)	
400	403–221. Warring States Period	Meng K'o (370?–290?)	Chuang Chou (369?–286?)	Shang Yang (d. 338)	Aristotle (384–322)	
					Epicurus (341–270)	
300		Hsün Ch'ing (320?–235?)		Han Fei (d. 233)		
	Ch'in Dynasty 255–207					
	221. First Emperor					
200	Han Dynasty 206 B.C.–A.D. 220	Tung Chung-shu (179?–104?)				
	140–87. Emperor Wu					
		136. Confucianism made orthodox			Cicero (106–43)	
100	Imperial Catalogue compiled					
A.D.		Liu Hsin (d. 23)			Seneca (d. 65)	
		Pan Ku (32–92)				
		Wang Ch'ung (27–100?)				
100						

Adapted from *Chinese Philosophy in Classical Times*, by E. R. Hughes

Notes*

CHAPTER ONE

1. Page 15. For a discussion of this subject, see Hu Shih, 'On the Ju,' in his *Recent Essays on Learning* (Chinese), Shanghai, 1935, 3–102; Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (Chinese), II, Appendix, 1–61; Ch'ien Mu, *An Interlinking Chronology of the Ante-Ch'in Philosophers* (Chinese), 85–8, 92; and Ch'ien Mu, *An Outline of Chinese National History* (Chinese), Shanghai, 1948, I, 65–6.
2. Page 15. The Duke of Chou (12th century B.C.), one of the great figures in ancient Chinese history, was highly praised by Master K'ung as a model statesman. He helped his father, King Wen, and his brother, King Wu, to establish the Chou dynasty and to institute the feudal system that lasted for many centuries.
3. Page 19. *Lun-yü* (*The Analects*), Bk XV, Ch. 38.
4. Page 22. In the course of the Ch'in fire, as told later in Ch. VII, most of the K'ung classics were destroyed. But they were restored later by the Han scholars. It is believed that these Han versions are substantially the same as those handed down by Master K'ung himself.
5. Page 22. Master K'ung once called himself a transmitter who believed in and loved the ancients. (*Lun-yü*, VII, I.)
6. Page 23. The *Chou Li* (*The Ritual of Chou*) was supposed to have been written by the Duke of Chou, but his authorship has been generally discredited by scholars, and the book itself is now considered as a much later work, probably at the time of the Warring States (5th–3rd century B.C.). Also of dubious origin are the *Kuan-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Kuan*), a Legalist book attributed to Kuan Chung, a great statesman of the 7th century B.C. and the *Tao Teh Ching* (*The Classic of Tao*), attributed to Lao-tan, a senior contemporary of Master K'ung. After such elimination, the *Ch'un Ch'iu* (*Spring and Autumn*) becomes the first Chinese book written by a known author.
7. Page 23. *Meng-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Meng*), Bk III, Pt ii, Ch. 9.

* (1) All Chinese Classics and other standard works that are quoted here are given their original titles in transliteration with English translations in parenthesis. In the case of *Lun-yü* and *Meng-tzŭ*, the usual practice of indicating Bk and Ch. without referring to any specific edition is followed. (2) The Szu-pu Pei-yao and Szu-pu Ts'ung-k'an editions are both standard libraries of Chinese books published respectively by the Chung Hwa Book Co. and the Commercial Press in Shanghai. (3) Other Chinese books, to which references are made, are indicated as such in parenthesis. Most of these books are included in Bibliography, Part Two: Chinese Books.

8. Page 23. Cf. Meng K'o's somewhat exaggerated claim that 'When Master K'ung completed the *Spring and Autumn* rebellious ministers and villainous sons were struck with terror.' *Ibid.* These words, however, make a good testimony to the significance of the book which, though unimportant to us, had nevertheless a great influence in its time when the lessons of history it contains were still fresh in the minds of its readers.
9. Page 24. For a list of the sage kings and their periods, see Appendix I. All these kings were noted for their great virtue. Yao and Shun were model rulers who, instead of leaving the throne to their lineal descendants, yielded it to their sage ministers, i.e. Yao to Shun, and Shun to Yü. Yü, the founder of Hsia, the first Chinese dynasty, was the saviour of the Chinese people from a devastating flood that had overrun the land. When the last of the Hsia kings, who came to the throne some 400 years later, proved to be a tyrant, he was overthrown by the virtuous Tang, who established the Shang dynasty. Likewise, after some 600 years, the Shang came to an end during the reign of Chou Hsin, another tyrant, and it was succeeded by the Chou dynasty, whose founders, as we have already noted, were King Wen, King Wu, and the Duke of Chou. Some modern critics, however, doubt the existence of Yao, Shun, and Yü as well as the historicity of the Hsia dynasty. Still others believe that the entire story of these sage kings was invented by the Confucianists to give authority to their political teachings.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Page 28. *Hsiao Ching* (*The Classic of Filial Piety*), Ch. 1.
2. Page 29. The exception is Yu Jo, who is also mentioned as Master Yu in *Lun-yü*, 1, 2, 12, 13, etc.
3. Page 30. *Ta-hsüeh* (*The Great Learning*), Introduction, 'The Text of Confucius.'
4. Page 30. *Ibid.*
5. Page 31. Liu Hsiang, *Shuo-yüan* (*Collection of Anecdotes*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk IV, p. 2.
6. Page 32. *Meng-tzü*, V, ii, 6 and 7.
7. Page 32. In his *Spirit of Chinese Culture* Francis Wei, however, says, 'We have sufficient reason to refuse the acceptance of ... the *Doctrine of the Mean* as written by Tzŭ-ssŭ' (p. 70).
8. Page 33. *Chung-yung* (*The Doctrine of the Mean*), Ch. 5.
9. Page 33. *Ibid.*, Ch. 20.
10. Page 33. *Ibid.*, Ch. 22.
11. Page 34. *Ibid.*, Ch. 12.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Page 37. See Mei Yi-pao, *The Ethical and Political Works of Motse*, p. 25.

2. Page 40. In Ch'ien Mu's *Interlinking Chronology*, pp. 187–210, he distinguishes three prototypes of the traditional Lao-tzŭ. He also identifies the Lao-tzŭ who wrote the *Classic of Tao* as a writer of the 4th century B.C.
3. Page 41. *Tao Teh Ching* (*The Classic of Tao*), Ch. 60.
4. Page 41. *Ibid.*, Ch. 57.
5. Page 42. *Ibid.*, Ch. 11.
6. Page 42. *Ibid.*, Ch. 5.
7. Page 42. *Ibid.*, Ch. 6.
8. Page 42. *Ibid.*, Ch. 38.
9. Page 42. *Ibid.*, Ch. 12.
10. Page 43. *Ibid.*, Ch. 48.
11. Page 43. *Ibid.*, Ch. 42.
12. Page 44. The best account of the origin of Mo Ti's name is to be found in Ch'ien Mu's *Interlinking Chronology*, pp. 84–91.
13. Page 44. These criminals were called Mo (black) because their foreheads were tattooed in black.
14. Page 44. Before joining Master K'ung, Tzŭ-lu, for instance, was said to have adorned his head with cock feathers. Both cock and pheasant feathers showed their wearers to be countryfolk.
15. Page 44. Mo Ti's probable dates are 480–390 B.C.; the places of his birth have been variously given as Sung, Ch'i, Lu, and Ch'u.
16. Page 45. Holth, *Micius*, p. 60. Cf. *Chuang-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Chuang*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk x, Ch. 33, 'The Empire', p. 15.
17. Page 45. *Chuang-tzŭ*, Bk x, Ch. 33, p. 15.
18. Page 45. *Mo-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Mo*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk vi, Ch. 25, 'Economy in Funerals', p. 6.
19. Page 46. Liang Chi-chao, *History of Chinese Political Thought during the Early Tsin Period*, p. 110.
20. Page 48. See H. A. Giles, *Chuang Tzŭ*, pp. 368–9.
21. Page 49. Cf. Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, II, 'The Works of Mencius', 'Prolegomena', p. 102.
22. Page 49. For the story of Tzŭ-ch'an, the first Chinese law-maker, see Ch. vii, p. 107.
23. Page 50. The story of Tzŭ-ch'an and his brothers appears in *Lieh-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Lieh*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk vii, 'Yang Chu', pp. 5–6.
24. Page 51. *Chuang-tzŭ*, Bk vi, Ch. 17, 'Autumn Floods', pp. 14–15.
25. Page 51. *Ibid.*, Bk i, Ch. 2, 'On Levelling All Things', p. 25.
26. Page 51. *Ibid.*, Bk i, Ch. 2, p. 23.
27. Page 52. Fung Yu-lan, *Chuang Tzŭ*, p. 121.
28. Page 52. *Chuang-tzŭ*, Bk x, Ch. 32, 'Lieh Yü-k'ou', p. 12.
29. Page 52. *Ibid.*
30. Page 52. *Ibid.*, Bk vi, Ch. 18, 'Supreme Joy', pp. 17–18.
31. Page 53. *Ibid.*, Bk vi, Ch. 18, pp. 18–19.
32. Page 53. *Ibid.*, Bk iv, Ch. 11, 'On Tolerance', p. 18.

33. Page 53. *Chuang-tzŭ*, Bk IV, Ch. 11, 'On Tolerance', p. 18.
34. Page 54. *Ibid.*, Bk V, Ch. 12, 'Heaven and Earth', p. 3. The Yellow Emperor (Huang Ti), legendary founder of the Chinese race supposed to have lived *circa* 2700 B.C., is a favourite deity of the Taoists.
35. Page 54. *Ibid.*, Bk V, Ch. 13, 'Heaven's Tao', p. 16.
36. Page 54. *Ibid.*
37. Page 54. *Ibid.*
38. Page 54. *Ibid.*
39. Page 54. *Ibid.*
40. Page 55. *Ibid.*, Bk IX, Ch. 29, 'Brigand Chih', p. 18.
41. Page 55. *Ibid.*, Bk IX, Ch. 29, p. 20.
42. Page 55. *Ibid.*, Bk IX, Ch. 29, p. 21.
43. Page 56. For a list of these puzzles and their solutions, see H. A. Giles, *Chuang Tzŭ*, pp. 450–3.
44. Page 56. Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, p. 87.
45. Page 57. *Shih Chi* (*The Historical Records*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk LII, Biography, Ch. 10, 'Chang I', p. 1.
46. Page 57. Lionel Giles, in his translation of *Sun Tzu, the Art of War*, calls it 'the oldest military treatise in the world.' Cheng Lin, who translates the same work, doubts Sun Wu's authorship, but believes that it was written around 510 B.C. Many Chinese scholars to-day, however, deny the existence of the man Sun Wu and attribute the book to a much later date in the Warring States period.
47. Page 58. It has long been a Chinese belief that the site of a house or graveyard should be chosen in harmony with those natural forces such as wind and rain (*feng-shui*).

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Page 59. For an account of the various dates assigned to Meng K'o, see Lo Ken-tse, *A Critical Biography of Mencius* (Chinese), pp 9–24. The conclusion Lo reaches is that Meng K'o was born *circa* 370 B.C. and died *circa* 290 B.C. Ch'ien Mu's dates for Meng K'o are 390–305 B.C., thus making him live twenty years earlier. (*An Interlinking Chronology*, pp. 172–3.)
2. Page 59. This small principality was not, in the opinion of most critics, the town of Tsou, where Master K'ung's father was commandant and where Master K'ung was born.
3. Page 60. Liu Hsiang, *Lieh-nü Chuan* (*Biographies of Noteworthy Women*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk I, 'Model Mothers', 'The Mother of Meng K'o of Tsou', p. 10.
4. Page 60. Han Ying, *Han Shih Wai-chuan* (*Han's Marginal Commentary on Poetry*), Szu-pu Ts'ung-k'an Ed., Bk IX, Ch. 1, p. 76.
5. Page 60. Liu Hsiang, *ibid.*, p. 10. Cf. Han Ying, *ibid.*, p. 76.
6. Page 61. Liu Hsiang, *ibid.*, p. 11.
7. Page 62. *Meng-tzŭ*, Bk III, Pt i, Ch. 2.
8. Page 63. *Ibid.*

9. Page 63. *Meng-tzŭ*, Bk I, Pt ii, Ch. 13.
10. Page 64. *Ibid.*, I, i, 1.
11. Page 64. *Ibid.*, I, i, 3.
12. Page 65. *Ibid.*, I, i, 4.
13. Page 65. *Ibid.*, I, i, 6.
14. Page 65. In *Meng-tzŭ*, II, ii, 6, Meng K'o is said to have been a minister (or 'high dignitary' in Legge's translation, *The Chinese Classics*, II, 95) of Ch'i.
15. Page 66. *Meng-tzŭ*, I, ii, 6.
16. Page 68. *Ibid.*, III, ii, 9.
17. Page 69. *Ibid.*
18. Page 69. *Ibid.*
19. Page 69. *Ibid.*, III, i, 5.
20. Page 69. *Ibid.*, III, ii, 9.
21. Page 70. *Ibid.*, III, ii, 10.
22. Page 70. Shen Nung, a mythical Chinese emperor of hoary antiquity, was supposed to have first taught the Chinese how to till the soil with the plough – hence his name, the Divine Husbandman. His descendants were conquered by the Yellow Emperor, the grandfather of the Chinese race.
23. Page 72. *Meng-tzŭ*, III, i, 4.
24. Page 73. *Ibid.*, IV, i, 17.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Page 75. *Meng-tzŭ*, VI, i, 6.
2. Page 75. *Ibid.*
3. Page 76. *Ibid.*, VI, i, 2.
4. Page 76. *Ibid.*, VI, i, 3.
5. Page 76. The Bull Mountain was in the south-east outskirts of the Ch'i capital.
6. Page 77. *Meng-tzŭ*, VI, i, 8.
7. Page 78. *Ibid.*, II, i, 6.
8. Page 78. *Ibid.*, VI, ii, 2.
9. Page 78. *Ibid.*, II, i, 6.
10. Page 79. *Ibid.*, VII, i, 21.
11. Page 79. *Ibid.*, IV, i, 10.
12. Page 80. *Ibid.*, IV, ii, 33.
13. Page 80. *Ibid.*, IV, ii, 12.
14. Page 81. *Ibid.*, VI, i, 19.
15. Page 81. *Ibid.*, II, i, 2.
16. Page 81. *Ibid.*
17. Page 82. *Ibid.*, VI, i, 7.
18. Page 82. *Lun-yü*, IV, 1.
19. Page 82. *Meng-tzŭ*, VI, i, 9.
20. Page 84. *Ibid.*, II, i, 1.
21. Page 84. According to the traditional 'well-field' system, which is

supposed to have existed in the feudal period, arable lands in a fief were divided into units of nine squares of 100 *mu* (a *mu* is about one-sixth of an acre) each, like the Chinese character for a 'well' 井. The eight outer squares were dealt out to eight peasant families for cultivation, each family holding 100 *mu* of land. This was their private field, on which they worked and from the produce of which they fed their family of many mouths. In addition, the eight families tilled together the central square of the 'well', which was the public field, its yearly yield going to the granary of the feudal lord, the hereditary master of the land.

22. Page 85. *Meng-tzŭ*, II, i, 5.
23. Page 86. *Ibid.*, I, i, 7.
24. Page 86. *Ibid.*, I, i, 3.
25. Page 86. *Ibid.*, VII, ii, 14.
26. Page 87. From the 'Great Declarations' in *Shang-shu K'ung-ch'uan* (*K'ung's Version of the Classic of History*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk VI, Ch. ii, p. 3.
27. Page 88. *Meng-tzŭ*, I, ii, 8.
28. Page 88. *Ibid.*, IV, ii, 3.
29. Page 89. *Ibid.*, IV, i, 14.
30. Page 89. *Ibid.*
31. Page 89. The story of Hsiang Shu's peace conference, as told in the *Tso Commentary*, is found in Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. V, Pt ii, pp. 532–5.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Page 90. The most probable date of Hsün Ch'ing's birth is 320 B.C.
2. Page 91. Some Chinese critics consider this part of Hsün Ch'ing's chapter 'On the Twelve Philosophers' as spurious. But there is no good reason for excluding it from the authentic text of his works except that it is also this portion which makes its writer unpopular with the K'ung scholars.
3. Page 92. *Hsün-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Hsün*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk XV, Ch. 21, 'Enlightening Ignorance', pp. 3–4.
4. Page 93. *Ibid.*, Bk IV, Ch. 8, 'The Merits of Ju', p. 2.
5. Page 93. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
6. Page 95. *Ibid.*, Bk XI, Ch. 17, 'On Heaven', p. 10.
7. Page 95. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
8. Page 95. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
9. Page 95. *Ibid.*, Bk XV, Ch. 21, p. 9.
10. Page 96. *Ibid.*
11. Page 97. *Ibid.*, Bk XVII, Ch. 23, 'Human Nature is Evil', p. 1.
12. Page 98. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
13. Page 98. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
14. Page 99. See Dubs, *The Works of Hsüntze*, p. 213. Cf. also *Hsün-tzŭ*, Bk XIII, Ch. 19, 'On Ritual', p. 1.

15. Page 100. *Hsün-tzŭ*, Bk XIII, Ch. 19, 'On Ritual', pp. 4–5.
16. Page 100. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
17. Page 100. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
18. Page 100. Hughes, *Chinese Philosophy in Classical Times*, p. 249.
19. Page 101. Here Hsün Ch'ing indulged himself in a happy pun, for the Chinese word 樂 means both music (pronounced as yüeh) and joy (pronounced as lo).
20. Page 101. *Hsün-tzŭ*, Bk XIV, Ch. 20, 'On Music', p. 1.
21. Page 101. *Ibid.*
22. Page 102. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
23. Page 102. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Page 106. *Lun-yü*, VII, 14. Chinese gowns to-day are still buttoned on the right.
2. Page 111. *Han-Fei-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Han Fei*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk II, Ch. 6, p. 5.
3. Page 111. *Yen-Wen-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Yen Wen*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., 'The Great Way', Pt ii, p. 16.
4. Page 116. *Shih Chi*, Bk VI, 'Reign of the First Emperor of Ch'in', 34th Year, p. 17.
5. Page 116. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
6. Page 117. The First Emperor of Ch'in was addicted to magic and had in his court many adepts, who promised him the elixir of life and immortality. Failing to produce the immortal drug, these magicians had to flee for life for fear of the emperor's punishment. At the news of their flight, according to the *Shih Chi*, the emperor was thrown into such a rage that 'He ordered the imperial inquisitors to hold an examination of the scholars (Ju), who placed the blame one upon the other. At this the Emperor himself selected those who had violated the prohibitions, numbering more than 460, and had them all buried alive at Hsien Yang (the Ch'in capital).' This account, however, is confusing, for it fails to explain why the K'ung scholars should become the scapegoats of the deserted magicians.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Page 118. See Duyvendak, *The Book of Lord Shang*, p. 128.
2. Page 119. *Shih Chi*, Bk XCIX, Biography, Ch. 39, 'Shu-sun T'ung'. p. 6.
3. Page 124. 'Tung Chung-shu, the greatest representative of Confucian thought of the (Han) dynasty, was well known in history for his method of praying for rain, which consisted in closing all southern gates of the city and forbidding all use of fire while our Confucian philosopher stood on the northern gate spraying the passers-by with drops of water' (Hu Shih, 'The Establishment of Confucianism as a

State Religion during the Han Dynasty', in the *Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, LX, 34).

4. Page 126. Tung Chung-shu, *Ch'un Ch'iu Fan Lu* (*Copious Dew in Spring and Autumn*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk 1, Ch. 2, 'Jade Cup', p. 7.
5. Page 128. One theory has it that the *Ritual of Chou* was actually forged by Liu Hsin himself in order to justify Wang Mang's usurpation of the Han throne. This is just as unlikely as its claim to have been written by the Duke of Chou.
6. Page 131. A *chung* is equivalent to four pecks.
7. Page 131. Wang Ch'ung, *Lun Heng* (*Animadversions*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk XXX, Ch. 85, 'Autobiography', p. 2.
8. Page 132. Hu Shih, 'Han Confucianism' in Zen, *Symposium on Chinese Culture*, p. 46.
9. Page 132. Wang Ch'ung, *ibid.*, Bk XXIV, Ch. 71, 'Divination', p. 5.
10. Page 132. See Hu Shih, *ibid.*, p. 46.
11. Page 135. The Thirteen Classics are as follows:
    1. *I Ching* (*The Classic of Change*).
    2. *Shu Ching* (*The Classic of History*).
    3. *Shih Ching* (*The Classic of Poetry*).
    4. *Chou Li* (*The Ritual of Chou*).
    5. *I Li* (*The Book of Etiquette and Ceremonial*).
    6. *Li Chi* (*The Record of Rites*).
    7. *Tso Chuan* (*The Tso Commentary*).
    8. *Kung-yang Chuan* (*The Kung-yang Commentary*).
    9. *Ku-liang Chuan* (*The Ku-liang Commentary*).
    10. *Hsiao Ching* (*The Classic of Filial Piety*).
    11. *Lun-yü* (*The Analects*).
    12. *Meng-tzŭ* (*The Works of Master Meng*).
    13. *Erh-ya* (the oldest Chinese dictionary).

CHAPTER NINE

1. Page 136. To the Chinese of those days the 'Western World', i.e. India and Central Asia, was the land of the Buddha.
2. Page 138. For those sage kings, see Appendix: 'Periods of Chinese History'.
3. Page 138. Han Yü, *The Works of Mr Ch'ang-li* (Han Yü), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk XI, 'On the Origin of Tao', p. 4.
4. Page 139. *Ibid.*
5. Page 139. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
6. Page 140. Such as 'the cauterizing of heads, fingers burnt with incense, ... clothes sold to buy offerings, good money flung away, ... right living abandoned, ... and fanatics slicing themselves in a frenzy.' Han Yü, *ibid.*, Bk XXXIX, 'A Memorial on the Buddha's Bone'. p. 5.
7. Page 140. *Ibid.*
8. Page 140. A city in modern Kwangtung province, north of Swatow.

9. Page 140. Nestorian Christianity, founded by Nestorius, a famous patriarch of Constantinople in the 5th century A.D., was first introduced to China in 635 under the title of the Luminous Doctrine. The Nestorian tablet, unearthed in 1625, was first set up in a Nestorian church in the T'ang capital at Chang-an in 781. Zoroastrianism, the religion of the ancient Persians, founded by its prophet Zoroaster, and Manichaeism, originated by Mani in the 3rd century A.D., were first introduced to China in the 7th and 8th centuries. These three religions were called collectively by the Chinese the 'San Hu' or the 'Three Foreign' religions.
10. Page 141. i.e. to 'live without working on the farm and raising silkworms and mulberry trees.' Liu Tsung-yüan, *The Works of Liu Ho-tung* (Liu Tsung-yüan), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk xxv, 'Seeing off Monk Hao Ch'u', p. 10.
11. Page 141. *Ibid.*
12. Page 142. *Ibid.*
13. Page 143. Li Ao, *The Works of Li Wen-kung* (Li Ao), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk II, 'Restoration of Human Nature', Essay One, p. 9.
14. Page 144. Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (Chinese), II, 772.
15. Page 144. Suzuki, *Essays on Zen Buddhism*, First Series, p. 7.
16. Page 145. See Wei, *The Spirit of Chinese Culture*, p. 110.
17. Page 148. Fung Yu-lan, *ibid.*, I, 616.
18. Page 149. Liu I-ch'ing, *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü* (*A New Version of the Shih-shuo*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk III, Ch. 23, 'Profligacy', p. 29.

CHAPTER TEN

1. Page 154. Huang Li-chou, *Sung Yüan Hsüeh-an* (*Scholarly Records of Sung Yüan Confucianism*), annotated by Miu T'ien-shou, pp. 68–9.
2. Page 155. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
3. Page 155. *Ibid.*
4. Page 156. See Appendix: 'Periods of Chinese History'.
5. Page 156. Literally, the 'Pre-Heaven' or 'Pre-natal' Diagram.
6. Page 156. Both Fu Hsi's and King Wen's systems are found in the *Classic of Change*. See Plates I, II, III in Legge, *The Yi King* (*Classic of Change*), in *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XVI.
7. Page 158. Chang Tsai, *Complete Works of Master Chang*, Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk II, 'Essay on Grand Harmony', p. 3.
8. Page 158. Huang Li-chou, *ibid.*, p. 149.
9. Page 160. *I Ching* (*Classic of Change*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk VII, Appendices, p. 10.
10. Page 160. Ch'eng Hao and Ch'eng I, *Complete Works of the Two Ch'engs*, Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk XI, 'Discourses of Mr Ming-tao (Ch'eng Hao), p. 5.
11. Page 160. *Ibid.*, Bk I, 'Discourses of the Two Masters', p. 3.
12. Page 162. Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, p. 299.

13. Page 162. Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (Chinese), II, 918.
14. Page 163. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Page 165. Lu Chiu-yüan, *Complete Works of Hsiang-shan* (Lu Chiu-yüan), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk XXXIV, 'Discourses', Pt i, p. 24.
2. Page 166. *Ibid.*
3. Page 166. *Ibid.*, Bk XXXVI, 'Chronological Biography', p. 3.
4. Page 167. *Ibid.*, Bk XXXIV, p. 1.
5. Page 167. Wang Shou-jen is better known by his literary name Wang Yang-ming.
6. Page 168. He built a retreat in the Yang-ming Grotto – hence his name – where he engaged in the Taoist practice of regulating breathing and nourishing life.
7. Page 168. Wang Yang-ming, *Complete Works of Yang-ming*, Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk III, 'Records of Transmission', Pt iii, p. 23.
8. Page 168. *Ibid.*
9. Page 169. *Ibid.*, Bk XXXII, Appendix I, 'Chronological Biography', p. 7.
10. Page 169. *Ibid.*, Bk I, 'Records of Transmission', Pt i, p. 4.
11. Page 169. *Ibid.*, Bk III, Pt iii, p. 14.
12. Page 170. Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, p. 313.
13. Page 170. Wang Yang-ming, *ibid.*, Bk III, p. 20. See also *ibid.*, Bk III, pp. 10, 23, etc.
14. Page 170. *Meng-tzŭ*, VI, ii, 2.
15. Page 171. Wang Yang-ming, *ibid.*, Bk I, p. 3.
16. Page 172. Cf. Sun Yat-sen's theory that 'knowing is more difficult than doing.' See Ch. XII, p. 189.
17. Page 175. Chiang Fan, *An Account of the Transmission of Han Confucianism in our own Dynasty*, Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Vol. I, 'Preface', by Yüan Yüan, p. 1.
18. Page 177. Actually there were about 1,700 years between K'ung Ch'iu and Chu Hsi. This story has been retold in Liang Chi-chao, *A General Study of Ch'ing Learning* (Chinese), pp. 56–7.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Page 180. This often quoted passage is as follows: 'When the great *tao* flourished, the world was a common state, rulers were elected according to their wisdom and ability, and mutual confidence and peace prevailed. Therefore, people not only regarded their parents as parents, their children as children, but also those of others as their own. Old people were able to enjoy their old age; young men were able to employ their talents; juniors respected their elders; helpless widows, orphans, and cripples were well cared for. Men had their

respective occupation, and women their home. ... This was the period of the Great Commonwealth.' *Li Chi* (*The Record of Rites*), Szu-pu Pei-yao Ed., Bk VII, Ch. 9, p. 1.

2. Page 181. Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (Chinese), II 1015.
3. Page 181. Liang Chi-chao, *A General Study of Ch'ing Learning*, pp. 133–5.
4. Page 182. K'ang's reform programme includes the institution of a constitutional monarchy and a parliament, the abolition of civil service examination based upon the 'Eight-Legged' essays, the dismissal of incompetent officials, the elimination of government red tape, etc.
5. Page 183. For the assertion of Western scholars that the K'ung dogma is a religion, read H. A. Giles, *Confucianism and its Rivals*, Soothill, *Three Religions of China*, etc.
6. Page 184. Yüan Shih-k'ai had previously issued a decree on February 8th, 1914, regarding the sacrifices to Master K'ung, saying, 'The doctrine of Master K'ung and the classical literature are unsurpassed for their excellence. The offerings and sacrifices are historical, and it is therefore appropriate that the Republic follow the old custom.'
7. Page 185. Ch'en Tu-hsiu was also one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party, but was later expelled from it as a Trotskyist.
8. Page 187. The Monarchist movement was started by Chang Hsun, a disreputable war lord who seized power in the second decade of the century.
9. Page 189. MacNair, *China*, p. 326.
10. Page 189. Sun Yat-sen maintained in his sixth lecture on the 'Principle of Nationalism' that it was important to restore the moral standards of ancient China, which he enumerated as: loyalty and filial piety, kindness and love, faithfulness and justice, harmony and peace. He further quoted and discussed the famous passage in *The Great Learning* on regulating the mind, making sincere the purpose, etc.
11. Page 190. As late as the 1940s there was an attempt to revive the K'ung dogma by Cheng Hsiao-hsü, premier of the once Japanese-controlled puppet regime, Manchukuo. Cheng was a devoted K'ung follower of the reactionary type, and his attempt, like that of K'ang Yu-wei and Yüan Shih-k'ai, brought more discredit than good to the K'ung cause.
12. Page 193. Noteworthy among these recent attempts at philosophical synthesis are the following books:
    1. Charles A. Moore (Ed.), *Philosophy – East and West*, 1944.
    2. Filmer S. C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West*, 1946.
    3. Oliver Reiser, *World Philosophy, a Search for Synthesis*, 1948.
    4. Filmer S. C. Northrop, *Ideological Differences and World Order, Studies in the Philosophy and Science of the World Cultures*, 1949.

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Part One: Proper Names and Characters

Part Two: Titles of Books

The Pelican History of the World

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KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE

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