

**CHINESE PHILOSOPHY
IN CLASSICAL TIMES**

EDITED, ANNOTATED, AND TRANSLATED

BY E. R. HUGHES, M.A.

READER IN CHINESE PHILOSOPHY AND
RELIGION IN OXFORD UNIVERSITY



No. 973

165
CHINESE PHILOSOPHY
IN CLASSICAL TIMES

Edited, Annotated, and

Translated by E. R. HUGHES, M.A.

For this new edition (third impression) of Mr Hughes's now well-known work, some emendations have been made in the text which are referred to in his new preface.

The period covered by the volume is what Sinologues call 'classical' (the last six centuries B.C.), and the matter is arranged in eight parts: (I) From Tribal Religion to Philosophical Inquiry; (II) Reasoning About Ethics and Politics Becomes a Habit; (III) The Rise of Materialistic Utilitarianism and the Confucianist Reply; (IV) Analytical Minds at Work on the Problems of Knowledge; (V) The Individualistic Philosophy of the Tao Experts; (VI) Four Different Attempts at a Synthetic Philosophy; (VII) Religious Philosophies of Educated Men; (VIII) Three Han Confucianists Dogmatizing.

ALSO IN EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY

*A Selection from the Theology and
Philosophy Section*

The Koran (Rodwell's translation). No. 380
Hindu Scriptures (Edited by Dr Nicol
Macnicol). No. 944

The Ramayana and Mahabharata. Con-
densed into English verse by Romesh Dutt,
No. 403

Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*. No. 92
Descartes's *A Discourse on Method: Medi-
tations on the First Philosophy*; and,
Principles of Philosophy. No. 705

Saint Augustine's *Confessions*. No. 200

Saint Francis's *The Little Flowers*; *The
Mirror of Perfection*; and, *The Life of St
Francis*. No. 485

Spinoza's *Ethics*; and, *On the Correction
of the Understanding*. No. 481

Thomas à Kempis's *The Imitation of Christ*.
No. 484

EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY: Larger Format

See back flap

ERNEST RICHARD HUGHES, born in London, 5th January 1883. M.A., Oxon. Missionary in the interior of China, 1911-29. In Shanghai, 1929-31. Reader in Chinese Religion and Philosophy in Oxford University, 1934-41; seconded to Chungking, 1942. Books include *The Invasion of China by the Western World*, 1937.

CHINESE PHILOSOPHY IN CLASSICAL TIMES

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY
E. R. HUGHES



LONDON J. M. DENT & SONS LTD
NEW YORK E. P. DUTTON & CO INC

All rights reserved
by
J. M. DENT & SONS LTD
Aldine House · Bedford Street · London
Made in Great Britain
at
The Aldine Press · Letchworth · Herts
First published 1942
Last reprinted with minor revisions 1954

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE (1954)	v
PREFACE (1942)	ix
INTRODUCTION	xiii
BIBLIOGRAPHY	xliii
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS . .	xliv-xlv

PART ONE

FROM TRIBAL RELIGION TO PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

CHAP.

I. The Initial Stage:

A. The Old Order Changing	1
B. Refining the Primitive Art of Divination . .	7

II. New Powers of Reasoning coming into Play:

A. Confucius and the Discovery of the Self-conscious Moral Individual	12
B. Tzu Ssu: a Philosophical Mind Searches for Reality	31

PART TWO

REASONING ABOUT ETHICS AND POLITICS BECOMES A HABIT

III. Mo Ti, the Rise of Religious Utilitarianism	43
IV. Confucius's Disciples: the Tradition of 'the Master' Evolving	68

PART THREE

THE RISE OF MATERIALISTIC UTILITARIANISM AND THE CONFUCIANIST REPLY

V. Shang Yang: the Totalitarian	77
VI. The <i>Great Learning</i>	88
VII. Mencius: Political Philosopher and Psychologist . .	96
VIII. The Filial-Piety Scripture	112

PART FOUR

ANALYTICAL MINDS AT WORK ON THE PROBLEMS
OF KNOWLEDGE

CHAP.	PAGE
IX. Hui Shih	120
X. Kung-sun Lung	122
XI. Later Mohist Thinkers	129

PART FIVE

THE INDIVIDUALISTIC PHILOSOPHY OF THE TAO EXPERTS

XII. <i>Tao Te Ching</i> : a Text-book on Man's Freedom in his Natural Environment	144
XIII. Chuang Chou, the Poet of Freedom	165
XIV. Five other Writers in the <i>Chuang Tzu Book</i>	200

PART SIX

FOUR DIFFERENT ATTEMPTS AT A SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY

XV. The Yin-Yang and 'Five-Forces' Scientific School	212
XVI. Hsun Ch'ing and his Spiritual Philosophy	226
XVII. Han Fei and his Mystic Materialism	254
XVIII. The Metaphysics of the <i>Changes Scripture</i>	269

PART SEVEN

RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATED MEN

XIX. The Ritualists of the <i>Record of Rites</i>	275
XX. <i>Huai Nan Hung Lieh</i> : the Theories of a Group of Syncretists	287

PART EIGHT

THREE HAN CONFUCIANISTS DOGMATIZING

XXI. Tung Chung-shu	293
XXII. Pan Ku and the <i>Pai Hu T'ung Yi</i>	309
XXIII. Wang Ch'ung	317

to try and herd with birds and beasts. If I cannot live amongst my fellow men, what can I live with? If the Way prevailed in the Great Society, there would be no occasion for me to try to change it.' (xviii. 6.)

2. *Confucius's Preoccupation with the Individual.*

(a) *His Careful Study of the Individual.*

The disciple Tsai Yü used to sleep during the day. The Master said, 'Rotten wood is no good for carving. . . . What is the use of reproving him? . . . In the beginning I used to listen to what people said and trust them to act. Now I both listen to what people say and observe what they do. It was my experience with Tsai Yü which made me change.' (v. 9.)

The Master said, 'So! I have never seen any one¹ who could see his own faults and press the charge home in his own breast.' (v. 26.)

The Master said, 'I have never seen a man who was really resolute.'² Someone said that there was Shen Ch'eng, to which the Master replied, 'Ch'eng! Why, he is all desires. How could he become resolute?' (v. 10.)

The Master said, 'For my part I have never seen any one with a real passion for human-heartedness and a real hatred of what is inhuman. A man with a real passion for human-heartedness will not put anything above it. A man with a real hatred of what is inhuman will become human-hearted to the extent that he will not deliberately have anything inhuman affecting his self. Are there any who are able to devote their strength for a single day to being human-hearted? I have never seen any. (Nevertheless) I have never seen any who had not the strength to achieve this.' (iv. 6.)

The Master said, 'Is human-heartedness something

¹ The appeal to personal experience seems to have been a characteristic of Confucius's way of thinking, and is one of the ways in which he laid an indelible mark on his people's minds.

² *Kan* was chiefly used in connection with the courage of soldiers. Confucius came to be aware of what we call 'moral courage.'

remote? If I want to be human-hearted, behold, human-heartedness has arrived.' (vii. 29.)

The Master said, 'You can rob the three levies (of Lu State) of their due control, but you cannot rob the humblest man of his aims.'¹ (ix. 25.)

The Master said, 'A wise man does not get perplexed: a human-hearted man does not get unhappy: a courageous man does not get frightened.' (ix. 28.)

Fan Ch'ih was strolling with the Master below the Rain Dance altars, and he asked about filling up the measure of his spiritual power, the disciplining of the vice in him, and the discernment of states of delusion. The Master said, 'What admirable questions! To put service first and reward second, that, I suppose, is not filling up the measure of your spiritual power! To attack your own evil without attacking other people's, that, I suppose, is not disciplining the vice in you! In a passing fit of rage to be regardless of your own safety *and* that of your parent, that, I suppose, is not a state of delusion!'² (xii. 21.)

The Master said, 'A man of real power in personality is sure to have the gift of speech, but a man with the gift of speech not necessarily has the real power of personality. A human-hearted man is sure to have courage, but a brave man not necessarily has human-heartedness. (xiv. 5.)

Tzu Lu asked about becoming a complete man, and the Master said, 'If one had the wisdom of Tsang Wu Chung, the freedom from private desires of Kung Ch'o, the courage of Chung Tzu of P'ien, and the skill of Jan Ch'iu in the arts,³ and refined these (qualities) by means of ritual and music, that is good enough to make a complete man.' He added, 'But how can we insist on this to-day? When a man sees the chance of profit to think of the right, when he

¹ The control of the Lu State militia was at this time usurped by three dominant clans. They divided the levies into three parts. *Chih* (aims): it is tempting to translate this by 'will,' but this abstraction of faculty psychology is at odds with the Chinese *hsin* (mind-heart) psychology.

² We have to suppose a sarcastic quirk here. Cp. xiii. 19. Confucius describes Fan Ch'ih as a *hsiao jen* (small man), and small men he regarded as very often morally pretentious men.

³ Archery, charioteering, etc.

sees danger ahead (for his prince or parents) to throw his life into the scale, in a long-drawn-out emergency¹ not to forget his lifelong professions, that also is good enough to make a complete man.' (xiv. 13.)

The Master said, 'In their nature at birth² men are nearly alike, in their habits they are vastly different.' (xvii. 2.)

The Master said, 'It is only the wisest and the stupidest who do not change.' (xvii. 3.)

(b) His Discovery of the Virtue of Human-heartedness.

The Master said, 'It is only the human-hearted man who is capable of really liking men and really disliking them.' (iv. 3.)

The Master said, 'If a man be really bent on human-heartedness, then there is no wickedness (in him).' (iv. 4.)

Tzu Kung asked, if (a ruler) wished to include all his people in his benefits and was actually able to bring aid to every one of them, what then? Might he be described as human-hearted? The Master said, 'This has not much to do with human-heartedness. He would undoubtedly be a sage. Even Yao and Shun were distressed (at not reaching this level). A human-hearted ruler wants security for himself, and so he makes others secure. He wishes to get a wider sphere of influence, and so he extends other people's sphere of influence. The ability to draw parallels from matters very near to oneself may be called the art of human-heartedness.' (vi. 28.)

Chung Kung asked about human-heartedness, and the Master said, 'In public behave as you would in the presence of an honoured guest. Set the people their public tasks as if you were conducting a great sacrifice. The treatment you would not have for yourself, do not hand out to other people. Then there will be no resentment against you in the state, no resentment in your clan.' (xii. 2.)

(The Sung official) Ssu-ma Niu asked about human-

¹ An alternative rendering is 'a bond of long standing.'

² For 'congenital nature' (*hsing*) cp. Mencius and Hsun Ch'ing. The term *hsing* occurs only twice in the *Analects*, in Confucius's mouth only here.

heartedness, and the Master said, 'The human-hearted man is cautious in what he says.' Niu asked whether he really meant that human-heartedness was this, and the Master replied, 'Since doing is so difficult, can a man be otherwise than cautious in speaking?' (xiv. 3.)

(Somebody stated that) to refrain entirely from love of mastery, from boasting of one's accomplishments, from resentments and from covetous desires, (these qualities) warranted the description of human-heartedness: whereat the Master said, 'They warrant one's saying that they are difficult to do. But if you say "human-hearted," then I am not sure.' (xiv. 2.)

The Master said, 'The man bent on public service,¹ if he be the human-hearted kind of man, under no circumstances will he seek to live at the expense of his human-heartedness. There are occasions when he will lay down his life to preserve his human-heartedness.' (xv. 8.)

(c) *His Reinterpretation of Good Breeding and a Sense of Honour.*²

Wealth and high station, these are what men would like to have; but if they cannot be obtained in conformity with principle [*Tao*] they must not be held. Poverty and low station, these are what men dislike; but if they cannot be avoided³ without contravention of principle, they must be accepted. If a man of honour discards human-heartedness, how can he ever continue to bear the name? Not even while he is eating does a man of honour ignore human-heartedness. Whatever the urgency, whatever the danger, he sticks to it. (iv. 5.)

The Master said, 'If the man of breeding be light-minded, people will not look up to him, and what he learns will not stay by him. The first thing is loyalty and keeping his

¹ It should be remembered that Confucius as a teacher was largely engaged in training men who were aiming at state service.

² The quotations under this heading could have been made twice as many. Presumably on most occasions the remarks were addressed to the men whom Confucius was training. No one statement should be taken as a definition. Rather he has an idea and tries it out.

³ The sense demands *mien*, or some such word, for *te* (obtain).

word. He will have no friends who do not come up to his standard; and if he does wrong, he will not shirk mending his ways.' (i. 8.)

The Master said, 'A man of honour is not a mere tool.' (ii. 12.)

The Master said, 'Amongst men of honour there is nothing to cause selfish rivalry. This is certainly the case even with archery.¹ It is with a bow and a gesture of giving precedence that (the competitors) advance to shoot and then when they retire and drink to each other. Their rivalry is one between men of honour.' (iii. 7.)

The Master said, 'The true man of honour in relation to the Great Society has no private preferences, or otherwise. He sees these matters in relation to the right.' (iv. 10.)

The Master said, 'A man of true breeding sets his heart on spiritual power in himself: the man of no breeding sets his heart on land. . . .' (iv. 11.)

The Master said, 'The desire of a man of honour is to be slow in speech and quick in action.' (iv. 24.)

The Master said, 'Moral power does not live alone. It is sure to have neighbours.' (iv. 25.)

The Master described Tzu Ch'an² as having four (characteristics) of the Way of a man of honour. In his private capacity he was modest, in the service of his superiors respectful, in his provision to meet the people's needs benevolent, in his organization of their forced labour just. (v. 15.)

The Master said [? to his disciples], 'Be trustworthy in every respect, be devoted to the acquisition of learning, steadfast unto death for the Good. Do not enter any area which is running dangerous risks, nor live in one where the people are in rebellion. If the Way prevails among the states, you can make yourselves prominent; but if it does not prevail, then keep in retirement. If it prevails in

¹ These archery meetings had been held since the early days of the Chou regime. Duke Chou, for whom Confucius had so deep a veneration, seems to have established them in order to bring the feudatories together. The code of honour for them, as in the tourneys of Western chivalry, was an elaborate one.

² A famous statesman of a neighbouring state. His life overlapped that of Confucius. Cp. Part One, Chapter I, the quotation from the *Tso Chuan*.

your area, it is a disgrace to be poor and humble. If it does not prevail, it is a disgrace to be rich and honoured.' (viii. 13.)

A high official of Sung asked about 'men of honour,' and the Master said, 'A man of honour has no self-pity and no fears.' The official replied, 'Is that all that it means?' The Master said, 'When he examines his heart and finds no taint, what cause has he for self-pity or for fear?' (xii. 4.)

The Master said, 'Men of true breeding are in harmony with people, although they do not agree with them; but men of no breeding agree with people, and yet are not in harmony with them.' (xiii. 23.)

The Master said, 'A man of true breeding is easy to serve but hard to please; for if you try to please him by any other means than the Way, he is not pleased. When he sets men their tasks, it is as appropriate tools for appropriate jobs. A man of no breeding is hard to serve but easy to please: for you can please him by other means than the Way. But when it is a matter of setting men tasks, he expects them to be ready for anything.' (xiii. 25.)

The Master said, 'Men of true breeding have dignity but are not arrogant. Men of no breeding are arrogant but have no dignity.' (xiii. 26.)

The Master said, 'Men of true breeding are ashamed for their words to go beyond their deeds.' (xiv. 29.)

Tzu Lu asked about men of true breeding, and the Master said, 'They bring their personality into flower with a view to reverent action.' Tzu Lu asked if this were all, and the Master said, 'They bring their personality into flower in order that they may bring peace to other men.' Tzu Lu again asked whether this was all, and the Master said, 'They bring their personality into flower in order that they may bring peace to every family and clan. If they do that, could even Yao or Shun find fault with them?' (xiv. 45.)

Once when Confucius was in Ch'en State, the supply of food was exhausted, and his followers became so weak that they could not stand up. Tzu Lu came to the Master in a rage, saying, 'Then men of breeding have also (to suffer) utter penury?' The Master said, 'Men of breeding can

endure penury. Men without breeding in such circumstances are immediately swept off their feet.' (xv. i.)

The Master said, 'The man of honour who uses the right as his raw material and ritual as the means for putting it into effect, who modestly sets to work on what is right and faithfully carries it to completion, what a sense of honour he has!' (xv. 17.)

The Master said, 'The man of honour makes demands on himself: the man without a sense of honour makes demands on others.' (xv. 20.)

Tzu Kung asked whether men of honour also hate, and the Master said, 'They do. They hate those who proclaim abroad other men's evil. They hate those vulgar fellows who slander those above them. They hate those who are bold in action but have no idea of good form [lit. ritual]. They hate those who are presumptuous and obstructive.' (xvii. 24.)

3. *Confucius on the Relationship between Governor and Governed.*

Tzu Kung asked about governing, and the Master said 'Adequate supplies of food, adequate stores of munitions, and the confidence of the people.' Tzu Kung said, 'Suppose you unavoidably had to dispense with one of these, which would you forgo? The Master said, 'Munitions.' Thereat Tzu Kung asked if of the remaining two he had to dispense with one, which he would forgo. The Master said, 'Food; for all down history death has come to all men, (and yet society survives); but the people who have no confidence (in their rulers) are undone.' (xii. 7.)

Chi K'ang Tzu [a leader in the dominant clan of Confucius's state] asked Master K'ung¹ about governing. Master K'ung replied, 'Sir, to rule is to straighten things out. If you should take the lead in straightening things out, who would dare to unstraighten them?' (xii. 17.)

Chi K'ang Tzu asked Master K'ung about governing,

¹ Certain passages in the *Analects* and other books use 'Master K'ung' and not just 'the Master.' There is some evidence to show that the 'Master K'ung' was a later practice; but it may only indicate the practice of one school among his followers.

How do we know that Heaven embraces all . . . ? Because it embraces all in its possession of them and in its gifts of food.

Take then the Great Society. There are no large or small states: all are Heaven's townships. Take men. There are no young men or old, no patricians or plebeians: all are Heaven's subjects. This is so, for there is no one who does not fatten oxen and sheep and dogs and pigs and make pure wine and sacrificial cakes with which to do reverence and service to Heaven. Can this be anything else than Heaven owning all and giving food to all? Assuming then that Heaven embraces all and gives food to all, how could it be said that it does not want men to love and benefit each other?

Hence I say that Heaven is sure to give happiness to those who love and benefit other men, and is sure to bring calamities on those who hate and maltreat other men. I maintain that the man who murders an innocent person will meet with misfortune. What other explanation is there of the fact that when men murder each other, Heaven brings calamity on them? This is the way in which we know that Heaven wants men to love and benefit each other and does not want them to hate and maltreat each other.

The above chapter not only shows clearly that Mo Ti had a logical mind: it also introduces us to the three main characteristics of his teaching. These are, first, the logic of belief in Heaven and the spirits; second, the logic of all-embracing love; third, the logic of profit. A fourth is his insistence on political unity, not to say uniformity. Four sets of quotations follow under these headings.

1. The Logic of Belief in Heaven and the Spirits.

Chapter 28. On the Will of Heaven.

The word of our Master Mo: ¹ What is the explanation of the disorder everywhere? It is that our leaders in society are clear about less important matters and not clear

¹ This introductory expression occurs frequently, and makes one wonder whether these writings may not have been written for liturgical purposes.

there is a Ming-ling tree whose springs and autumns make five hundred years. In the old days there was a Ta-ch'un tree whose springs and autumns made eight thousand years. Right down to the present Grandfather P'eng¹ is famed for his immense age—although if all men matched him, how wretched they would be! . . .

A variant version of the story of the Leviathan and the Roc is here given, winding up with a quail laughing at the P'eng and describing its flight among the bushes as 'the perfection of flight.' Chuang Chou says that this is due to the difference between small and great. He then continues:

Thus it is that the knowledge of some men qualifies them for a small office and for effecting unity in one district, whilst the moral power of another man fits him to be a ruler and proves itself throughout a whole country. These men have a view of themselves which is like the quail's view of himself.

On the other hand, Master Yung of Sung State just laughs at these men. If the whole world should admire or criticize him, he would neither be encouraged nor discouraged. Having determined the difference between what is intrinsic and what extrinsic, he disputed the accepted boundaries of honour and dishonour. In this he was himself, and there are very few such men in the world. Nevertheless he was not really rooted.

Take Master Lieh. He could drive the wind as a team and go, borne aloft, away for fifteen days before returning. Such a man attains a happiness which few possess. Yet in this, although he had no need to walk, there was still something on which he was dependent [viz. the wind]. Supposing, however, that he were borne on the normality of the heavens and earth, driving a team of the six elements in their changes, and thus wandered freely in infinity-eternity, would there be anything then on which he was dependent?

Thus it is that I say, 'The perfect man has no self, the spirit-endowed man no achievements, the sage no reputation.'

¹ The Methuselah of Chinese tradition.

was not rigid enough to bear lifting. If I had cut it up to make ladles, they would have been too shallow for the purpose. There was indeed no purpose for which it was not too big, so I broke it to pieces as useless.'

Master Chuang said, 'Sir, you were stupid over the use of big things. For example, there was a man of Sung State who possessed a salve which healed chapped hands. His family, one generation after another, had been washers of silk. A stranger who had heard of this salve offered him a hundred ounces of gold for it. The clan, when called together to consider the matter, said, "We have been washing silk for generations and have only made a few ounces of gold. Now in one morning we can make a hundred ounces. Let us sell the salve." The stranger, having obtained the salve, went and told the King of Wu, who was having trouble with Yueh State and had made the unknown man commander of his ships. He engaged the men of Yueh in winter time [when hands get chapped], and in the battle on the water he defeated the Yueh forces. For this he was rewarded with land and made a noble. The ability to heal chapped hands was in both cases the same, but in the one case it meant a title of nobility, in the other it meant being tied down to washing silk. The difference lay in the way of using the salve. Now, Master Hui, you possessed a gourd as big as a five-bushel measure. Why then did you not consider it as a huge cup in which you could float on the rivers and lakes? instead of which you were distressed that it was too shallow to be a ladle. The conclusion, sir, is that it looks as if you had a dull mind, doesn't it?'

Master Hui said, 'I have a huge tree. . . . Its great trunk is so knobby and its small branches so twisted that you cannot put the measuring tools square on them. It stands by the public road, but no carpenter casts a glance at it. Now, Master Chuang, your words are big but of no use. Every one agrees in rejecting them.'

Master Chuang said, 'Have you never seen a wild cat, its body crouching low as it waits for its prey? It springs from

this side to that, now high, now low—and it gets caught in a trap and dies in a net! There is the yak, so big that it looms over one like a cloud in the sky. That is being really big; and yet it is no use for catching mice. Now, sir, you have a huge tree and you are distressed because it is of no use. Why do you not plant it in the village of non-existence, in the open country of nothingness. Beside it you could wander in inaction; and beneath it you could be free to sleep. No axe would cut it down, nothing would injure it, for there would be no purpose for which it might be used. Would you not be free from trouble then?’

Chapter 2. The (Inner) Harmony of (Opposing) Things.¹

Tzū Ch’i, a man from Nan Kuo, leant against a low table as he sat on the ground. He looked up to heaven, and his breath died down. Without a sound he seemed to lose his partnership (of soul and body). Yen Ch’eng Tzū Yu, who was standing before him in attendance, said, ‘How is this, that you can make your body like a sapless tree and your mind like dead ashes? At this moment the person leaning against the table is not the person who was leaning against it before.’

Tzū Ch’i said, ‘Yen, this is a good question you are asking. At the moment, you must understand, my self was gone clean away. You have listened to the music which man makes, but you have not listened to the music of the earth; or you may have listened to the music of the earth, but you have not listened to the music of Heaven.’

Tzū Yu said, ‘May I ask you for an explanation of this?’

Tzū Ch’i said, ‘The great mass of breath (in the atmosphere) is called the wind. There are times when the wind does not move. When it does move, a myriad apertures are aroused to make sounds. Have you never listened to the *liao liao* of the wind? You know the cavities and holes in the rugged heights of the mountains and the woods—with trees a hundred spans in girth. There are, as it were,

¹ ‘Things’ in this chapter, as often elsewhere, includes not only things in Nature, but also institutions and ideas of every kind.

noses and mouths and ears, square sockets and round depressions, mortars and ditches and pools. So there is a roaring and a snoring, a whistling and a sizzling, a howling and a yowling. The wind dies down and there is a tiny melody: it comes at full blast and there is a great diapason. There is a lull and every hole is devoid of sound. . . .'

Tzū Yu said, 'Since the music of the earth is just a matter of all kinds of holes, and human music a matter of pipes, may I ask what the music of Heaven is?'

Tzū Ch'i said, 'All this blowing varies in a myriad ways. Who then can there be who excites all this and makes each way be itself and all of them be self-produced?'

(Supreme Knowledge and Partial Knowledge, and the Conditions under which they arise.)

Great knowledge includes everything: small knowledge is restricted. Great speech has no pungency to it: small speech (may be pungent but) it is just chatter.

Whether men are asleep and soul has communion with soul, or whether they are awake and the body is freed and its contacts are the basis of intercourse, the mind is day by day engaged in struggle. There are indecisions, griefs, reservations, small fears giving rise to perturbation, great fears giving rise to recklessness.

Consider the mind. In some men it shoots forth like a bolt from a cross-bow, assuming mastery of right and wrong. In others it holds back, merely guarding (the opinions) they have won. In others it decays like the decline of the year, in other words, day by day crumbling away to nothing. In others it is sunk in creaturely activity from which it cannot be drawn back. In others it is sealed with hates, in other words like an old drain (choked with muck). Thus the mind has one foot in the grave, and there is no way of reviving it [lit. bringing it back to the light of the sun].

(Consider the emotions.) Joy and anger, sorrow and delight, anxiety and regret, the fire of sex passion¹ and the

¹ Emending the character *pien* to *luan*.

lamentable. Thus man's life is like a passing dream,¹ is it not? Unless it be that I alone am dreaming and other men are not dreaming.

Men follow the dictates of their made-up minds, and there is no one who does not do this. But how can *a priori* knowledge take the place of the mind choosing for itself? This does happen, but it is the ignorant who allow it to happen. To make the distinction between right and wrong apart from the making up of the mind is equivalent to 'going to Yueh to-day and arriving there in the past.'² It amounts to making nothing be something. But if nothing can be something, even a divine Yü³ could not have knowledge, and there would be nothing we could do about it.

Take speech. It is not just an emission of breath. The man who speaks has something to say, and what he has to say is by no means absolutely predetermined [i.e. apart from the speaker]. Are we to infer that the words exist (waiting to be said) or that they do not exist until they are said? And this is a question of whether we can prove a distinction between human speech and the chirping of fledgelings.

The question has to be asked: how the Tao becomes obscured so that there is the distinction of true and false. Also, how is speech obscured so that there is the distinction of right and wrong? The Tao cannot go away (for a moment) and cease to be here; neither can words be here [i.e. have been spoken] and be impossible. The obscuring of the Tao is in relation to one-sided thinking, and the obscuring of speech is in relation to the embroidery of eloquence. Thus it is that there are the distinctions of right and wrong made by the Confucianists and the Mohists, the one affirming what the other denies, and denying what the other affirms. If then we want to affirm what they (both) deny and deny what they affirm, there is no other way than that of a clearer understanding.

¹ Emending the character *man* to *meng*.

² The famous paradox by Hui Shih. Cp. Part Four, Chapter IX.

³ The Sage-king Yü.

(We have to realize that) a thing is both a 'That' and a 'This,' and it cannot see itself as a 'That.' If you know yourself, then you know. (Otherwise you do not know.) Thus it is that I maintain that the 'That' proceeds from the 'This,' also that the 'This' is linked to the 'That.' The 'That' and the 'This' together, life interpreted under conditions (of time)! After all, now there is life, now death; now death, now life. What is possible at one time is impossible at another: and what is impossible at one time is possible at another. Being linked to the right is being linked to the wrong, and being linked to the wrong is being linked to the right. That is why the sages do not follow these distinctions and so become enlightened by Heaven,¹ and are linked to the 'This.'

(As has already been stated) a 'This' is also a 'That,' and a 'That' is also a 'This.' Then in addition, a 'That,' as also a 'This,' is equally affirmable and deniable, with the result that we cannot infer either that they exist, or that they do not exist. Do not let them get to the point of being a pair of opposites. This is called (reaching) the axis of the Tao; for an axis from the outset is in position at the centre of a circle and meets the requirements of every change endlessly. Since both the right and the wrong are endlessly (changing), therefore I maintain that there is no other way than that of illumination. . . .

The possibility of the possible and the impossibility of the impossible—it is the Tao in action which brings this about. Thus a thing is described as being so [i.e. what it is]. How is it just what it is? Through the so-ness in its being just what it is. How is it not what it is? Through the not-so-ness in its being just so. A thing never varies in having what makes it what it is, nor in having what makes it possible. There is not anything which is not what it is, nor which is impossible. Thus it is that there are roof-slats alongside of solid pillars, ugliness alongside of beauty, and to be great [*kuei*], to alter [*kuei*], to flatter [*kuei*], to be

¹ *T'ien*, the transcendental side to Nature.

marvellous [*kuei*];¹ all these through Tao have the unity of mutual interpenetration. For a thing to be separated out (from the mass) is for it to become a thing. For it to become a (complete) thing is for it to de-become. Every single thing both becomes and de-becomes,² both processes being to and fro in the unity of mutual interpenetration.

Only the man of all-embracing intelligence knows this unity of mutual interpenetration. Because he has this intelligence, he cannot be made use of but takes up his abode in its common functioning. His functioning has utility, for to be of (real) use is to interpenetrate and be interpenetrated; and to penetrate and be interpenetrated is to achieve. To arrive at achievement is about all a man can do. Following on from that comes stopping; and to stop without knowing that one is stopping that is—Tao.

For a man to wear out his spirit and intelligence in an effort to *make* a unity of things, and to be ignorant of the fact that they are in agreement, this is to be described by 'The Morning Three.' What do I mean by that? Well, there was a certain monkey-keeper who had charge of their diet of acorns. He ordered three in the morning and four at night for each one. The monkeys were all angry about this. The keeper said, 'Very well, then, you can have four in the morning and three at night.' The monkeys were all pleased. Thus in name there was actually no change for the worse, whilst scope was given to feelings of pleasure and anger and the arrangement was in conformity with those feelings. It is in this way that sages by means of the surface distinctions of 'the right' and 'the wrong' make harmony, and yet take their ease in Heaven's levelling out. By levelling out I mean going two ways at once.

¹ The modern pronunciation of these four characters given here as *kuei* is as follows: *k'uei*, *kuei*, *ch'üeh*, and *kuai*. The traditional rhyme of the first is *k'uei*. Chuang Chou's selection of these four somewhat unconnectable concepts here is with a view to showing that there must be some connection since the ideographs exist and, what is more, are expressed by the same sound in speech. *N.B.*—I have no reason to suppose that that sound was actually *kuei*, but it must have been something like it.

² The text is emended, a *pu* being added to the *wei* to make a double negative. Without this sense seems hardly possible.

The knowledge which the men of old had was perfect in one respect. How this was so, is as follows. There were men who held that before there began to be (so many) things (in the world), that was perfection, a state of completion to which nothing could be added. Then there came a second stage in which there were a large number of things, but they had not begun to be carefully differentiated. Next to this came a stage when things were differentiated, but there had not begun to be a distinction between right (things) and wrong (things). This ornamentation (of things) as right and wrong was the process which brought about the waning of the Tao in the world, and the same process brought about the rise of personal preference. And it is equally out of the question to infer either that there really is progress and regress or that there is not. If we say there is, it is a case of 'Chao's fine playing of the lute.' If we say there is not, it is a case of 'Chao's inability to play the lute.'¹ Chao Wen's playing and Shih Huang's wielding of the conductor's baton and Master Hui's leaning against a Wu tree: the three experts' knowledge was just more or less. Hence each went on till the last year of his life; but it was only they who prized their knowledge and regarded it as extraordinary compared to any one else's. Because they prized it they wanted to enlighten people with it. But other people were opposed to their enlightening and enlightening. The result was the confusion worse confounded of Master Hui's argument about hardness and whiteness—his son (you know) tried for his whole life to reach the conclusion of the argument and failed. If that is the meaning of progress, then I too (in this argument) am adding to the progress. If, however, it may not be described as progress, then there is no progress, not even with me (and my arguing!). These are the reasons why sages aim at the glorious light which comes from slippery doubts. It is why they cannot be used and on the contrary make

¹ Chao Wen is said to have been a music master in Cheng State. The reference here seems to be to a divided opinion about him, some, including himself, saying he was a fine player, and some that he was not.

their abode in common functioning. I describe this as increasing one's intelligence.

I will illustrate. Here are some words, and I do not know whether they are classifiable or not as right—for any things to be classifiable and not classifiable is for them together to make a new class, and then they are in the same position as the other classified things. However that may be, allow me to try and say what I want to say. Since there is such a thing as the beginning, there is also such a thing as a beginning before the beginning, and there is also such a thing as a beginning to before the beginning to before the beginning. Since there is such a thing as something, there is also such a thing as nothing; and then, since there is such a thing as before the beginning of something and nothing, there is also such a thing as a beginning to before the beginning of something and nothing. There we are! And I do not know which of the two, something and nothing, is something and which is nothing. Coming to myself and what I have just described, presumably it is a description of something, but I do not know whether it is really something or whether it is really nothing.

(It has been argued that) ¹ 'in the world of our experience (there is a sense in which) there is nothing bigger than the tip of a new-grown hair, whilst a great mountain is a tiny thing: that there is no greater age than that of a baby cut off in infancy, whilst Grandfather P'eng (with his 700 years) died in his youth: that heaven and earth were born at the same time that I was, and so all things in nature and I are one and the same thing.' Since they are one, you can still find words to express it, can you? ² And since it has been expressed, can it still be unexpressed? 'One plus the words about it makes two, and two plus the oneness (of the two) makes three.' If we go on like this, even the cleverest reckoner breaks down: and how much more the ordinary run of men!

¹ There follow quotations from Master Hui and his fellow sophists.

² Chuang Chou's position is that the use of words invariably involves comparison.

Thus it is that by going on from nothing to something we arrive at three. How much more if we go on from something to something! Don't let us go on! Let us stop here!

The Tao has never begun to have mutually exclusive distinctions. Words, on the other hand, have never begun to have permanency. Because this is so there are lines of division. With your permission I will mention them. The left involves the right. Reasoned statements (about a thing being on the left or the right, etc. etc.) involve judgments. Then divisions of opinion involve arguments. Then controversies involve quarrels. These may be called the Eight To-and-Fro's.¹ What is beyond the world of space, the sage holds within himself, but he does not reason about it.

What is within the world of space he reasons about, but he does not make any judgment on it. About the annals and the records of past kings he makes a judgment, but he does not argue, with the result that division of opinion is not really division of opinion, nor arguing really arguing. How that comes about is by reason of the sage embracing all things. The mass of men argue with a view to demonstrating to each other; which is why I say that arguing is not a revealing process.

The supreme² Tao cannot be talked about, and the supreme² argument does not require speech. (So also) supreme benevolence is not just being charitable, supreme purity not just being disinterested, and supreme courage not just brute violence. If the Tao were to glitter, it would not be the Tao. The speech which argues comes short of what it might be. The benevolence that is stereotyped does not succeed. The purity that is flawless does not engage confidence. The courage that is absolutely unyielding defeats its own end. . . .

Thus it is that he who knows how to stop at what he does not know is perfect. Who can know the argument which is not put into speech and the Tao that has no name? If

¹ Emending the text as Ma Hsü-lun suggests.

² The character *ta* (big) in many contexts conveys the impression of meaning authoritative or transcendent.

there should be the ability to know in this way, this knowledge might be described as 'the Store of Heaven.' Pour into it and it does not overflow. Pour out from it and it does not become empty. It does not know the source of its knowing. This is the meaning of 'storing up the light.'

.

(A Further Discussion of Rightness and Wrongness.)

Yueh Ch'ueh asked Wang Yi if he knew what there was that things had in common. He said, 'How should I know? Perhaps you know what there is that you do not know?' Yueh Ch'ueh said, 'How should I know about that? Does it follow that things are not known?'

Wang Yi said, 'How should I know? However it may be, I will try and put the matter into speech. Can there be any way by which I may know that what I call knowledge is not really not-knowledge? And can there be any way by which I can know that what I call not-knowledge is not really knowledge? Let me try to ask you some questions. If the people sleep in damp places their loins will hurt and one side of their bodies will be dead. But is that the case with an eel? If a man stays up in a tree, he will get frightened and go all of a tremble. But is that the case with a monkey? Which of these three knows the right place in which to live? Men eat flesh, deer feed on grass, centipedes find snakes sweet, and owls and crows guzzle mice. Which of these four knows the right taste? Monkey mates with monkey, and the buck with the doe. Mao Ch'iang and Li Ch'i [the two famous beauties] are regarded as very beautiful; and yet at the sight of them, fish dived deep into the water, birds flew high into the air, and deer fled from their presence. From my personal point of view, the basic principles of benevolence and justice and all the little tracks of rightness and wrongness are so inextricably confused that it is impossible for me to know how to differentiate them.'

Yueh Ch'ueh said, 'If you do not know what is profit

and what loss, then a perfect man, to be sure, does not know. Is not that so?'*

Wang Yi said, 'The perfect man¹ is a mystery. The great pools might be all scorched up, but he could not feel hot. The great rivers might be all frozen hard, but he could not feel cold. Thunder might split the mountains and the wind lash the sea, but he could have no fear. A man of that kind could mount the clouds and the air and ride the sun and the moon, wandering away beyond the bounds of the Four Seas. Neither Death nor Life brings change in him himself. How much less then can (so-called) principles of profit and loss?'

Master Chü Ch'iao approached Master Chang Wu with a question, saying, 'I heard from the lips of the Master [Confucius] that when (it is said that) the sage does not occupy himself with mundane affairs: does not seek profit or avoid loss, has no pleasure in the conscious pursuit (of things), does not play the official with the Tao, says nothing and says something, says something and says nothing, and wanders into the beyond, free of the dust and grime of the world: then for him, the Master, these words were quite fantastic. For me, on the other hand, they denote the practice of the mysterious Tao. In what sort of way do you regard this, my dear sir?'

Master Chang Wu said, 'This is a matter about which the Yellow Emperor² was perplexed. How then is Confucius competent to have knowledge on it? Not only so: you also are too hasty in your calculations. . . . You see a cross-bow and immediately expect broiled duck. I will speak to you inconsequentially on the matter. You listen inconsequentially.

'Sitting by the sun and the moon! Cradling space and

¹ *Re chih jen*, which I have translated as 'perfect man'; but this is rather unsatisfactory, in spite of the fact that, as the term got into general circulation, it came to have much this meaning. The Taoists invented the term, and I cannot help thinking that the men who first used it thought of *chih* in its literal sense of 'arrive'; hence the 'man who has reached the great objective.'

² The mythical Sage-emperor whom the Taoists exalted as the first to know the Tao.

time in one's arms! Blending and harmonizing them! Getting rid of the slippery uncertainties of distinctions and putting menials alongside honourable persons! Everybody babbling away, but the sage a blockhead (with nothing to say), as he mingles a myriad years (in himself) and becomes integrated, complete, balanced, whilst things, as they are, all go on pursuing their courses.'

How do I know that to love life is not to be in a state of illusion? How do I know that to hate death is not like a man who was lost in his childhood and now does not know his way home? Li Chi was the daughter of the warden at Ai. When Chin State first captured her her tears rained down and drenched her coat. But after she had arrived at the palace and had shared the king's (luxurious) bed and fed on all the rich food, she repented of her tears. How, sir, do you know that the dead do not repent of their original craving for life? The man who dreams at night that he is carousing, may when the morning comes be weeping, whilst the man who dreams he is weeping, may when the morning comes be out hunting. In a dream you do not know that you are dreaming, and you can even divine the dream you are dreaming. It is only when you wake up that you know you have been dreaming.

Not only so: there is the great awakening, and then we shall know that all this (present experience) is a great dream. Fools, however, regard themselves as awake now — so personal is their knowledge. It may be as a prince or it may be as a herdsman, but so sure of themselves! Both the Master (Confucius) and you are dreaming; and when I describe you as dreaming, I am also dreaming. And these words of mine are paradoxical: that is the name for them. And a myriad generations will pass before we meet a sage who can explain this, and when we meet him it will be the evening of our little day.

Suppose you and I have our argument. If I cannot beat you and you beat me, does it follow that you are right and I am wrong? If you cannot beat me but I beat you, does it follow that I am right and you are wrong? Is one some-

times right and sometimes wrong, or are both of us right or both of us wrong? If you and I do not have a common knowledge (about the matter), then other men are bound to be in the dark over it. Whom then can we employ to get to the truth of it? If we should employ a man who agrees with you, or one who agrees with me, or one who disagrees with both of us, or one who agrees with both of us; since one would agree with you and another with me and another disagree with both of us and another agree with both of us, how could any one of them get to the truth of the matter? Does it follow then that I and you and other men have not got a common knowledge? Are we then all waiting for Something [? Someone] else?

Arguing¹ is a relation (in time) of one mutable sound to another. Suppose the sounds are not relative to each other. That would be harmony (as of a chord in music).² The achieving of this harmony is by being a babe of Heaven. Conform to that indefinitely: thereby the passage of time is obliterated. What is the meaning of achieving harmony by being a babe of Heaven? The answer is this: 'To be' and 'not to be' are respectively 'being thus' and 'not being thus.' If to be is necessarily to be, then it is different from not to be. About this there can be no argument. Also if being thus is necessarily being thus, then it is different from not being thus. About this also there can be no argument. (That being so,) forget the passage of time, forget argumentative judgments. Be in awe of timelessness. Thus it is that you can dwell in timelessness. A penumbra asked a shadow, saying, 'There are times when you are moving, times when you are at rest: times when you sit down, times when you stand up. Why do you not work out one method and stick to it?' The Shadow said, 'Am I dependent on something else for being what I am? (If so) is the something else on which I am dependent itself dependent on

¹ The ensuing passage is a bugbear to the commentators, although the section on the 'law of identity' is clear enough. I follow Wang Hsien-ch'ien's order, but the grammar of this opening sentence seems to me to require a subject and the natural one is 'arguing.'

² The sense seems to require this addition.

CHAPTER XVII: HAN FEI AND HIS MYSTIC MATERIALISM

Han Fei (*d.* 233 B.C.) was like Shang Yang in that he found no scope for his talents in his own country and accordingly sought for an opening in Ch'in State. There he was less fortunate than Shang Yang. He was regarded with suspicion and put under detention. The duke's minister, afraid of Han Fei supplanting him in the duke's favour, secretly urged him to commit suicide. This he did, and that was the end of him as a man. But not as an influence, for he had great literary gifts, and his writings have survived.

The *Book of Han Fei* contains fifty-five chapters, or rather essays, less than half perhaps by Han Fei himself, but all showing on the whole the typical Legalist view of man as a creature to be ruled for his own good through his material desires and his fear of suffering. There are, however, traces of something higher in the book, as we might expect, seeing that Han Fei started his career as a disciple of Hsun Ch'ing. Thus in many parts of the book we find an unconscious emphasis on the necessity of being true to the truth of things. Further, the book shows a very marked appreciation of Taoist principles as set forth in the *Tao Te Ching*.

Han Fei clearly used his exceptional intellectual powers to master the implications of this way of thinking. In the last resort, however, he was concerned with politics, the material well-being of a nation. With this as his objective he examined previous Legalist theories and made a synthesis of them. The authority (*shih*) of the sovereign was vitally important, as Shen Tao had taught: also the undeviating administration of the law, as Shang Yang had insisted. But these two were not enough. There was need for statecraft (*shu*) on the part of the sovereign, if he was to keep his team of administrators both loyal to him and incorruptible upholders of the law.

In this book the Legalist School is seen at the peak of its development, a school of thought which, as the Introduction has explained, is the nearest counterpart in China to West European post-medieval political theory.

There is so much material in this book, and some of the chapters are so long, not to say discursive, that the quotations have been grouped under headings.

I. Concerning the Three Main Emphases in Legalist Theory.

Nothing is more valuable than the royal person, more honourable than the throne, more powerful than the authority of the sovereign, and more august than the position of the ruler. These four excellences are not

obtained from outside, nor secured from anybody else, but are deliberated in the ruler's own mind and acquired thereby. . . . This the ruler of men must keep firmly in mind. (Chapter 4.)

Master Shen [i.e. Shen Tao, fourth century] said, 'A flying dragon rides the winds, a floating serpent wanders through the mist on the water; but when the clouds disperse and the mist is gone, a dragon and a serpent are no different from a cricket or an ant. They have lost what they depended on. Thus the reason why a man of worth may be overpowered by a worthless one is that the able man's power is weak and his position humble. And the reason why a worthless man submits to a man of worth is that the able man's power is strong and his position high. Yao [the Sage-king] as a common man could not have governed three people, whilst Chieh [the villain-king] as Son of Heaven could bring the whole of society into confusion. Thus I know that authority and position are to be trusted, ability and wisdom are not particularly desirable. . . . It was when Yao ascended the throne and was king over the Great Society that what he commanded was done, what he banned was not done. From this angle I see that worth and wisdom are not enough to subdue a population whilst authority and position are enough to overpower men of worth.'

To this the reply is made, 'In the case of a dragon . . . riding the clouds, I do not regard the dragon as not depending on the clouds. . . . None the less, if worth is discarded and reliance put solely on authority, is it enough to produce good government? If it is, I have never seen it. There is something which goes along with the particular prestige of clouds and makes the dragon able to ride them . . . ; and this something is the dragon's, or the serpent's, special quality. . . . However thick the clouds and mist might be, the quality of the cricket or the ant is not up to the mark. In the case of a Chieh, seated on the throne and using the majesty of the Son of Heaven as clouds and mist, society nevertheless cannot escape great confusion; and

accord. It consists in keeping in one's own hands the power over life and death and the examination of one's ministers' capabilities. A master of men¹ keeps firm hold of this.

The law is the pattern on which the orders from government offices are modelled. The penalties of the law are sure to be kept in mind by the people. The rewards of the law are kept for those who carefully observe the law, whilst the punishments are for those who wickedly disobey orders. Thus the law is a guide to ministers. If a ruler be without statecraft, there is weakness above: if the ministers without the law, there is confusion below.

(Chapter 43, on *Fixing the Law*.)

That which enables the tiger to subject the dog is his claw and fang. Supposing the tiger cast aside its claws and fangs and let the dog use them, the tiger would in turn be subjected by the dog. The lord of men controls his ministers by his personal power of punishing and rewarding. Now supposing the ruler of men to discard the two handles of punishment and reward and let the ministers use them, the ruler would in turn be controlled by the ministers.

(Chapter 7, on *The Two Handles*.)

To subdue a tiger without the help of a cage, to suppress a culprit without the help of the law, or to impede a liar without the help of the tally, would worry Pen and Yü² very badly and be a difficulty for Yao and Shun. Therefore, to construct a cage is not to provide against rats but to enable the weak and timid to subdue tigers: to establish laws is not to provide against Tseng Ts'an and Shih Ch'iu but to enable the average sovereign to prohibit Robber Che; and to make tallies is not to guard against Wei Sheng [a model of probity] but to make the masses never deceive one another. Thus the right way is not to rely on Pi Kan's martyrdom in the cause of fidelity, nor to count on a rapacious minister's committing no deception, but to rely on

¹ The Legalist writers all used *jen chu* for sovereign (master of men), the Confucianists used *jen chun* (men's sovereign).

² Pen and Yü were two warriors, famous for their strength in battle.

the lord of men must specially mind those who will profit by his death. By way of illustration, though the sun and the moon are surrounded by haloes, the causes of their eclipses are inside themselves. Similarly, though the ruler guards against what he hates, the causes of his calamity consist in what he loves. For this reason, the intelligent sovereign will never undertake any inadvisable enterprise nor eat any inordinate food, but will listen to all about him and observe everybody closely in order thereby to scrutinize the faults of the interior and the exterior (of the palace): and he will reflect on the arguments for and against (brought to his attention,) and thereby learn the line of demarcation between different factions: he will compare the results of the evidence given, and so be able to insist on every utterance having an equivalent in fact. Holding that there is a parity between cause and effect, he will govern the masses in accordance with the law and gather material of all sorts for comparison and observation. Thus nobody will receive any undue reward or overstep the limits of his duties; every murderer will be sentenced to the proper penalty, and no criminal will be pardoned. If the ruler can do this, there will be no room left for villainous persons accomplishing their self-seeking purposes.

(Chapter 17, on *Internal Precautions*.)

Hold firmly to your decisions and make the (public) words and deeds of your subordinates identical with them. Cautiously take the handles (of reward and punishment) and hold them fast. Uproot others' desire of them: smash others' thought of them: let nobody covet them. If the ruler does not exercise care in keeping the gate locked and in good repair, tigers will get in: if the ruler does not take precautions for his sway, and if he does not protect his prestige,¹ traitors will make their appearance; for the man who murders his sovereign and takes his place and finds the whole people side with him in awe is rightly called a tiger, and the man who serves the country by his sovereign's

¹ Reading *shih* (prestige).

side and watches for his secret faults with villainous motives is rightly called a traitor. Scatter their partisans, arrest their supporters, lock the gate, and deprive them of all assistance. Then there will be no tigers in the country.

Be too great to be measured, too profound to be surveyed. Identify norms and names, scrutinize laws and manners, and chastise those doing as they please. Then there will be no traitors in the country. . . . Hence the saying, 'The ruler must not reveal his wants; for if he reveals his wants, the ministers will polish their manners accordingly. The ruler must not reveal his views; for if he reveals his views, the ministers will display their hues differently. If the likes and dislikes of the ruler be concealed, the true hearts of the ministers will be revealed. If the experience and wisdom of the ruler be discarded, the ministers will take precautions.' Accordingly the ruler, wise though he may be, should not bother but let everything find its proper place: talented¹ though he may be, he should not take action but observe the line his ministers take: courageous though he may be, he should not be enraged but let every minister display his prowess. So let the ruler put his wisdom aside, and he will discover his ministers' intelligence: let him put his worthiness aside, and he will discover his ministers' merits: let him put his courage aside, and he will discover his ministers' strength. In these circumstances ministers attend to their duties, magistrates have a definite work routine, and everybody will be employed according to his special ability. Such a course of government I affirm to be constant and immutable.

(Chapter 5, on *The Tao of the Sovereign*.)

II. *The Taoist Background to Han Fei's Political Theories.*

Tao is the beginning of the myriad things, the criterion of right and wrong. That being so, the intelligent ruler by holding to the beginning knows the source of everything, and by preserving the criterion knows the origin of good and evil. Therefore, by virtue of resting empty and

¹ Changing the places of *hsing* and *hsien*.

reposed, he waits for the course of nature to enforce itself so that all names will be defined of themselves and all affairs will be settled of themselves. Himself empty, he knows the essence of fullness: himself reposed, he becomes the corrector of motion. Who utters a word creates himself a name; who has an affair creates himself a form. Compare forms and names and see if they are identical. Then the ruler will find nothing to regret, since everything is reduced to its reality. . . . Tao exists in invisibility; its function lies in unintelligibility. Be empty and reposed and have nothing to do. Then from the dark see defects in the light. See, but never be seen. Hear, but never be heard. Know, but never be known. If you hear a word uttered, do not change it or move it, but compare it with the deed and see if word and deed coincide with each other.

(Chapter 5, on *The Tao of the Sovereign*.)

Virtue is internal.¹ Acquirement is external. 'Superior virtue [te] is non-virtue': this means that the mind does not indulge in external things. If the mind does not indulge in external things, the personality will become perfect. The personality that is perfect is to be called an 'acquirement.' In other words, true acquirement is the acquirement of personality.

In general virtue begins with non-assertion, develops with non-wanting, rests secure with non-thinking, and is impregnable with non-using. If it acts and wants, it becomes restless: if it is restless, it is not perfect. If it is put into use and thought about, it is not impregnable: if it is not impregnable, it cannot work successfully. If it is not perfect and cannot work successfully, it becomes self-assertive virtue. If virtue becomes self-assertive virtue, it is non-virtue. Contrary to this, if virtue is non-virtue, it has virtue. Hence the saying: 'Superior virtue is non-virtue, and therefore has virtue.'

The reason why men value non-assertion and non-thinking as emptiness is because by remaining empty one's

¹ This passage, of which about one-sixth is quoted, is in the nature of an exegesis of the *Tao Te Ching*, c. 38. There are ten other such passages expounding other chapters of the *Tao Te Ching*.

will is not ruled by anything. What happens is that ingenuous people consciously aim at non-assertion and non-thinking as emptiness, and the inevitable result is that, as they do this, they never forget emptiness. They are thus ruled by the will to emptiness. By 'emptiness' is meant the state of the will not ruled by anything. To be controlled (in one's will) by the pursuit of emptiness is *ipso facto* not emptiness. When he who rests empty does not assert, he does not regard non-assertion as being in a constant direction. If he does not regard non-assertion as being in a constant direction, he is then empty. If he is empty, his virtue flourishes. The virtue that flourishes is to be called 'superior virtue.' Hence the saying, 'Superior virtue is non-assertion without any pretension.' . . .

(Commentary on *Tao Te Ching*, c. 38.)

The Tao is the way of everything, the form of every principle [*li*]. Principles are the lines along which things are completed. Tao is the cause of the completion of everything. Hence the saying, 'It is Tao that rules everything.' Things have their respective principles and therefore cannot trespass against each other. Inasmuch as things have their respective principles and therefore cannot trespass against each other, principles are determinants of things and everything has a unique principle. Inasmuch as everything has its unique principle and Tao disciplines the principles of all things, everything has to go through the process of transformation. Inasmuch as everything has to go through the process of transformation, it has no fixed frame. Since everything has no fixed frame, the course of life and death depends upon Tao, knowledge of every conceivable sort conforms to it, and the rise and decline of every kind of affair is due to it. The heavens can be high because of it: earth can hold everything because of it: the Pole Star can have its majesty because of it: the sun and the moon can make constant illumination because of it: the Five Forces can keep their positions constant because of it: all the stars can keep their orbits right because of it: the