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AN EXPOSITION OF
THE I-CHING
OR BOOK OF CHANGES

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CH'ENG WEI-SHIH LIEN of HSÜAN TSANG



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CHAPTER XI

Paragraphs 1—3 of Wen Yen

文言曰，元者善之長也，亨者嘉之會也，利者義之和也，貞者事之幹也。

君子體仁，足以長人，嘉會足以合禮，利物足以和義，貞固以幹事。

君子行此四德者，故曰乾元亨利貞。

1. WHAT IS CALLED *YUAN*, THE ATTRIBUTE OF ORIGINATION (UNDER CH'EN), IS (IN MAN) THE FIRST AND HIGHEST OF ALL EXCELLENCES; WHAT IS CALLED *HENG*, THE ATTRIBUTE OF PENETRATION, IS (IN MAN) THE UNION OF ALL THAT IS BEAUTIFUL; WHAT IS CALLED *LI*, THE ATTRIBUTE OF UTILITY-HARMONY, IS (IN MAN) THE HARMONY OF ALL THAT IS RIGHT; AND WHAT IS CALLED *CHENG*, THE ATTRIBUTE OF CORRECTNESS-FIRMNESS, IS (IN MAN) THE CORRECT MANAGEMENT OF ALL AFFAIRS.

2. THE SUPERIOR MAN, EMBODYING BENEVOLENCE, IS FIT TO PRESIDE OVER MEN; BRINGING ABOUT THE HARMONIOUS WORKING TOGETHER OF ALL THAT IS BEAUTIFUL, HE IS FIT TO SHOW IN HIMSELF THE UNION OF ALL POLITE MANNERS; BENEFITING ALL CREATURES, HE IS FIT TO EXHIBIT THE HARMONY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS; CORRECT AND FIRM, HE IS FIT TO MANAGE ALL AFFAIRS.

3. THE FACT THAT THE SUPERIOR MAN PRACTISES THESE FOUR VIRTUES JUSTIFIES THE APPLICATION TO HIM OF THE FOUR ATTRIBUTES OF CH'EN—

ORIGINATION, PENETRATION, UTILITY-HARMONY,
AND CORRECTNESS-FIRMNESS.

Meaning of Title

The Wen Yen Treatise is one of the Ten Appendices ascribed to Confucius, and treats of the first two hexagrams only, because Ch'ien and K'un are the two fundamental hexagrams, "the Doorway of the *I*", through which the other sixty-two hexagrams come into being (乾坤其易之門耶).¹ "This treatise shows the wealth and depth of meaning underlying the first two hexagrams," says Chu Hsi, "and the other hexagrams may be treated after the example supplied here."² The first character *Wen* (文) generally means literary or artistic composition, while the second character *Yen* (言) means words or sentences or remarks. When coupled together to form the title of this supplementary treatise on the Ch'ien and K'un hexagrams, the two words have been given different interpretations by different scholars. Lai Chih-teh (來知德) and Liu Hsien (劉瓛) define Wen Yen as "Remarks on the meaning of Ch'ien and K'un in accordance with the literary text" (依文以言其理). This definition has been criticized by other authorities as being too commonplace and ignoring the distinctive feature of the treatise, inasmuch as all the Ten Appendices of Confucius may be regarded as his remarks on the meaning of the hexagrams in accordance with the texts of King Wen and the Duke of Chou. According to Liang Wu Ti, Emperor of the Liang dynasty, Wen Yen means "Remarks by King Wen", his idea being that Confucius, in endeavouring to expound the meaning of Ch'ien and K'un, quoted all the remarks of King Wen on the two hexagrams as the introduction to his treatise. Perhaps the most widely accepted definition is that offered by Chu Chen (朱震) of the Sung dynasty who, in his Commentary on the *I-Ching*, called *Han Shang I Chuan* (漢上易傳), says: "Wen Yen is the poetical treatise which consists of remarks arranged in certain varying orders and repeated over and over again on the meaning of the Four Attributes and the Six *Yaos* (of the first two hexagrams). It contains passages in the form

1. Great Treatise, Sect. II, Ch. VI.

2. 本義：此篇申彖傳之意，以盡乾坤二卦之理，而論卦之說，固可以例推。

of questions and answers postulated for the effective exposition of the interplay of ideas." (文言者，錯雜四德六爻反復成文，又設爲問答往來相錯，亦文也). This definition agrees with the meaning of the first character *Wen* (文) as given in the *Shuo Wen* (說文),¹ namely, "intermingling in varying patterns" (文交錯也)。

First Attribute: Origination

In what sense does the first attribute of Ch'ien, *i.e.*, *Yuan* or Origination, signify the first and highest excellence in human nature? An answer to this question involves consideration of the inner correspondence between the Cosmic and the Human, and careful thought concerning the supreme importance of Origination as an attribute of Spirit and Love as a quality of Man. It has been pointed out that man is a spiritual being, the centre of his consciousness being essentially rooted in Divine Spirit; so that when he has perfected himself and become one with Spirit, the divine attributes of the latter will spontaneously manifest themselves through him as moral qualities. Among the attributes of Spirit, Origination holds the first and foremost place. Without it, the other attributes or functions would be incapable of expressing themselves, for it is impossible to conceive the creation of a *harmonious* and *correct* order of things when things themselves have not come into existence. This is why supreme importance is attached to the "Yuan" attribute of Ch'ien. This attribute corresponds to the first cardinal virtue of man, namely, benevolence or love. If love is strong enough, it leads a man to develop all the other virtues. As taught in the Christian Bible: "Thus, 'faith and hope and love last on, these three,' but the greatest of all is love. Make love your aim, and then set your heart on spiritual gifts."²

This analogy between "Origination" and "the first and highest of all excellences" has been elucidated by the great Confucian scholar, Ou Tien.³ Ou quotes the following remark by Confucius from the Great

1. The *Shuo Wen* is the standard dictionary of Chinese words.

2. *Corinthians* 13:13

3. 區大典經學講義：聖辯，天地之大造曰生，大德者大業也，即生理也。乾元爲生物之始，故爲生物之首。又一陰一陽之謂道，繼之者善，故人物產衆，爲善之繼，則陰陽元氣爲善之首，故曰：元者善之長也。

Treatise; "The great attribute of Spirit and Earth is their creativeness" (天地之大德曰生). This signifies, according to Ou, that the great excellence of Spirit and Earth consists in eternal creation. Since Spirit and Earth are but the manifestation of the Yin and Yang aspects of Ultimate Reality (the Tao), the spiritual man who aspires to the Tao and seeks to be one with it must share and reflect its excellence. This is the very idea of Confucius when he says in the same appendix: "One Yin and one Yang constitute what is called the Tao, and whoever follows it shares its excellence." (一陰一陽之謂道，繼之者善也). In other words, any sterling excellence in man is but the reflection of the supreme excellence of the Tao, the First Cause of all things. It reminds one of Jesus Christ's saying: "Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, that is, God."¹ The truth, then, is this: all goodness is in God, and the divine attribute of Origination is "the chief quality of goodness" (元者善之長也).

Second Attribute: Penetration

In regard to the second attribute of Ch'ien, why does "Penetration" correspond in man to the union of all beauty? It could be answered that Spirit manifests itself in man not only as Goodness but also as *Beauty* and *Truth*, and beauty can be expressed both in man's physical form and actions and in his intellectual and artistic creations. The clue to this analogy and correspondence lies in the fact that the creative power of Spirit penetrates all spheres of existence without a single exception, and whatever is permeated by its life-force assumes definitely beautiful forms. Take, for instance, the annual cycle of creation with its four main stages corresponding to the four seasons. The *coming together* of most of the beautiful products of Nature takes place in Summer when the Yang forces of Ch'ien have *penetrated* the vegetable and animal kingdoms prior to their withdrawal in Autumn. It is the periodic *penetration* of the creative Yang forces of Ch'ien throughout Nature that brings about the annual renewal of the world and the subsequent appearance and assemblage of all its *beautiful* objects. Now, when applied to the plane of human life, the attribute of Penetration suggests that the *assemblage* of men in families

and in society and the *synthesis* of their beautiful *characteristics* are brought about by the co-operation of spiritual forces *permeating* all the members, uniting father and son, brother and sister, husband and wife, friend and friend, and superior and subordinate. The same is also true of the assemblage of noble and beautiful souls who gravitate towards one another on a higher plane of being under the influence of spiritual aspirations which permeate their minds. Finally, on the *all-pervading* plane of Divine Spirit, we have the perfect union of all spiritual values—Beauty, Truth, and Goodness. In these ways, the attribute of Penetration is understood as corresponding to "the assemblage of all that is beautiful in man" (亨者嘉之會也).

Third Attribute: Harmony - Utility

In discussing the third attribute of Ch'ien, Utility - Harmony, the question to consider is: in what respect does Utility - Harmony signify the harmony of all that is right in man? To answer this question, we have to recall what has been explained in the Commentary on the T'uan of this Ch'ien hexagram, namely, that this attribute of Harmony - Utility corresponds to the season of Autumn when things attain their fruit-bearing stage, when harvests are reaped, when the world enjoys the *utility* of its products, when all things assume the *right* forms in *harmonious* order. Such a *harmonious* order of things is achieved only as a result of the harmonious co-operation of the Yin and Yang principles. In other words, only when Yin and Yang co-operate harmoniously with each other will all things on earth fulfil their natures in the *right* manner and become advantageous to the world in general (荀爽曰：陰陽相和，各得其宜，然後利矣). This is the reason why the attribute of Harmony-Utility is explained as "the harmony of all that is right". When applied to the plane of mankind, the attribute suggests that only when man is in a harmonious state of mind can he form a *right* judgment on, and exercise a *right* discrimination between, the relative values of different things and different events in life; and, further, that this harmonious state can only be maintained if he lives and moves in a *righteous* manner (義) in harmony with the spirit of the times (和). Thus, *harmony* of being and *righteousness* of living are most

1. Mark 10 : 18

intimately interrelated. It is interesting to point out that the Chinese character for Harmony-Utility, *Li* (利), is composed of two radical parts, namely, *tao* 刀, which means a knife or sword, and *he* 禾, which is a radical part of another word meaning harmony (和). (利以刀故主分, 分故能裁制事物使各宜也, 利又从禾, 有中和之義).¹ The point is that the function of Righteousness is to separate things like a knife or sword so as to discriminate between the right and the wrong, the true and the false, the straight and the crooked, the good and the evil. Furthermore, *li* means "sharp" and the concept of a sharp knife suggests the idea of capital punishment, which in ancient China was always carried out in Autumn only. Even here in this connection, the meaning of righteousness is borne out, because righteousness often compels the dispenser of the law to punish where love may most likely inspire him to forgive and forget. On the above considerations, it is maintained that the attribute of Harmony-Utility corresponds to the harmony of all that is right in man. A more detailed explanation of this analogy will be given in a later section of this chapter.

Fourth Attribute: Correctness-Firmness

We now come to the last attribute of Ch'ien, namely, Correctness-Firmness. What has this attribute of Spirit to do with the correct management of human affairs? The crucial point to consider is that this attribute signifies that Yin and Yang have not only co-operated with each other but have effected their *correct mutual adjustment* by the gradual withdrawal of the latter towards the end of a cycle of creation, whether earthly or cosmic. It is this correct adjustment of the creative forces at the end of the year (the attribute of Correctness-Firmness corresponds to the season of Winter) which renders possible the storing-up of Nature's resources and the *correct* fulfilment of all living things in Winter. When applied to man, the analogy signifies that the *correct adjustment* of an individual within the cosmic relation of things and his *firm* establishment in the right place in the world are absolutely essential if he is to succeed in managing the affairs within his sphere of activity. Being correct and firm, he becomes

1. 李道平：周易集解疏。

the central power, smoothly and energetically managing all affairs, just as the trunk (幹) of a tree, which springs right up from its strong roots, is the central part that supports the branches and leaves (荀爽曰：陰陽正而位當，則可以幹舉萬事，大戴記保傳篇引易逸文曰：正其本萬事理，故可以幹舉萬事). Hence the attribute of Correctness-Firmness signifies in man the correct management of all affairs.

Paragraph 2 of this Chapter deals with the correspondences between the Four Attributes of Ch'ien and the Five Cardinal Virtues of Man—Benevolence, Righteousness, Propriety, Wisdom, and Faith—the first attribute, Origination, corresponding to Benevolence; and the last, Correctness-Firmness, corresponding to Wisdom and Faith. Now, according to Chou Tun-i (周敦頤), the first of "the Five Sages" of the Sung dynasty and the teacher of two of them, these five qualities of man's inner being are the direct expressions of Eternal Truth. In Paragraph 3 of his *I T'ung Shu* (易通書), i.e., the Exegesis of the *I-Ching*, he writes:

"Truth is eternally actionless. It transcends good and evil. It is benevolence, when it manifests itself as virtuous love; as right action, it is Righteousness; as proper conduct, it is Propriety; as creative understanding, it is Wisdom; as adherence to principle, it is Faith." (誠無爲，幾善惡，德愛曰仁，宜曰義，理曰禮，通曰智，守曰信。)

Quality of Benevolence

Throughout the centuries Chinese sages have taught that Truth, Spirit, and man's Inner Self are one, so that when the superior man, as a result of self-perfection, attains union with Truth, his understanding and moral qualities will spontaneously appear as the pure manifestation of that Truth. Conversely, if the superior man cultivates and practises the cardinal virtues in his daily life and seeks to embody them in his person, he will live on a higher level of being and his spiritual realizations will lead him on and up towards his ultimate goal. Now, of all moral qualities Benevolence or Love is the first and most important. This fact is not only emphasized by the Chinese sages but is also beautifully set forth in the Christian Bible:

I may speak with the tongues of men and of angels,
 but if I have no love,
 I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal;
 I may prophesy, fathom all mysteries and secret lore,
 I may have such absolute faith that I can move hills
 from their place,
 but if I have no love,
 I count for nothing;
 I may distribute all I possess in charity,
 I may give up my body to be burnt,
 but if I have no love,
 I make nothing of it.

Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy;
 Love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude,
 glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness,
 always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best,
 always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears.¹

It is clear, then, that Love is the very essence of life with everybody, and from it comes the inmost vitality of man. The superior man, if he desires to "preside over men as a competent ruler" (長人), must have this love or benevolence. He must fill his whole nature with perfect benevolence. Confucius said, "The superior man does not, even for the space of a single meal, act contrary to benevolence. In moments of haste and confusion, he sticks to it. In seasons of danger, he sticks to it." (君子無終食之間違仁，造次必於是，顛沛必於是。)² St. John said, "We know that we have passed from death into life because we love our brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death," and "He that loveth not knoweth not God."

The importance of benevolence as a characteristic of the ruler of a state will be evident if we compare the reign of King Wen in China with that of Emperor Nero in Rome. We learn from *The Great Learning* that "as a sovereign, King Wen rested in benevolence" (為人君，止於仁)。

1. Corinthians 13:1-8

2. *Confucian Analects*, Book IV, Chapter V.

Nero, on the contrary, indulged in ruthless persecutions of his mother, wife, minister, and teachers as well as philosophers and Christians. The destinies of these two rulers and the influence they left upon their countries are too well-known to require description here. Suffice it to say that they bear out very clearly the truth that only the superior man who personifies benevolence is fit to preside over men as their ruler. (君子體仁足以長人)。

Origination and Benevolence

The correspondence of Benevolence to the attribute of Origination has been explained previously. This premier virtue of a ruler, who is supposed to be the source of good government, may well correspond to that first attribute of Spirit which signifies the origination of all things. As has been repeatedly emphasized, the Principle of Analogy and Correspondence is of extreme importance in the interpretation of the *I-Ching*. The four attributes of Spirit and the five cardinal virtues of Man correspond not only to the four seasons of a year, but also to the five primary elements—Metal, Wood, Water, Fire and Earth—and the four cardinal points of a compass—East, South, West and North—and the Centre. The attribute of Origination corresponds to Benevolence, to Spring, to the Wood element, and to the cardinal point East. Now, why does it correspond to the element of Wood? There must be some inner meaning underlying this correspondence; but, perhaps, common sense may suffice to throw some light upon it. In the first place, the Chinese term for Benevolence is *Jen* 仁. This word *Jen* also means seed—the seed of a plant or tree, *i. e.*, Wood. Just as a tree springs up from a seed, so all spiritual qualities originate from Benevolence. Hence Benevolence corresponds to the Wood element. Secondly, the Chinese character *Jen* 仁 is made up of two component parts, (*i. e.*, 几 and 二), and these two component parts, when arranged in a different order, actually constitute the word *yuan* 元, meaning Origination. Hence, again, the correspondence of Origination to Benevolence and Wood. The third explanation is that the manifestation of this "yuan" attribute causes the renewal of the world and the fresh budding forth of vegetation (wood) in *Spring*. In this connection it may be pointed out that the first trigram formed as a result of the creative action of Ch'ien

upon K'un (☷) is the Chen trigram ☳, symbol of wood, and this trigram is placed on the *East* side in King Wen's diagram of the eight trigrams.¹ Finally, in the River Map which shows the positions of the Five Elements, the element of *Wood* appears on the East side. All these considerations underlie the correspondences of Origination, Benevolence, Wood, Spring, and East.

Penetration and Propriety

We now come to the correspondence of the spiritual attribute of Penetration to the cardinal virtue of Propriety. In what sense is the superior man who presents a "synthesis of all beauty" fit to show in himself the "union of all propriety?" It has been explained in the commentary on paragraph I of this Chapter that "synthesis of all beauty" is the definition of the attribute of Penetration. Now the Chinese term for propriety or decorum, *li* 禮, means also rites and ceremonies. Propriety or Decorum, according to the Chinese meaning of the term, involves the institution and observance of rites and ceremonies, the principal function of which is to add beauty and grace to human relationships—to provide the proper form for the conduct of man's personal life and of human behaviour in general. The German philosopher Keyserling has said that an educated Chinese is incapable of producing anything ugly, and that the masses in China possess an unrivalled standard of the sense of form.

The Chinese are perhaps strongly influenced by the intrinsic beauty of their ideograms. The sages of ancient China devised many fine systems of rites and ceremonies which have, throughout the centuries, governed the relations of men on important occasions, whether auspicious or inauspicious, military or civil (吉凶賓軍嘉). In the chapter on "The Influence of Rites and Ceremonies" (禮運) in the Book of *Rites*, Confucius said, "Rites and ceremonies were instituted by the sages of old in accordance with Spiritual Significance for the regulation of man's emotions and instincts,"

1. 乾初出震，震爲東方木，震爲仁。說文：木東方之行，禮月令某日立春盛德在木，凡果樹中實有生氣者曰仁，是仁爲木，木主春也，六書三篇：元从二从人，仁則从人从二，在天爲元，在人爲仁。故仁聖治而爲四德之首也。

and further, "All rites and ceremonies must be rooted in Spirit, carried out on Earth, classified according to man's activities, changed with the change of seasons, and graded so as to conform to the different status and professions of the people. They are spiritual nutrition to him who lives and moves in harmony with them. When universally observed, they will be closely connected with the consumption of goods, the exertion of physical strength, the cultivation of an acquiescent and complaisant attitude, the nourishment of the body, and such occasions as coming-of-age, marriage, funeral, sacrifice, shooting, riding, and audiences with the emperor and princes of other states." This shows that the influence of rites and ceremonies *penetrates* all aspects of life, ensuring *propriety of conduct* and beautifying the inter relationships of men on all occasions. One more important point must not be omitted,—it has been established that most beautiful works of art produced by artists of ancient times were articles used for sacrificial and ceremonial purposes. Thus, it could be interpreted that the superior man who presents a synthesis of beauty in his emotions, utterances, actions, and associations with people of all classes is fit to show in himself a union of all Propriety; and that the attribute of *Penetration*, which causes the coming together of all the beautiful products of Nature in *Summer*, corresponds to the virtue of *Propriety*.

The virtue of Propriety corresponds also to the element of *Fire* which predominates in Summer, and to the cardinal point *South*. The reason is that Propriety is generally associated with *warm* reverential feelings, and most rites and ceremonies are closely connected with the use of fire,—the burning of candles, for instance. In Chapter IV of his book, *The Fire of Creation*, Dr. Van Der Leeuw writes: "All great rituals are based on the one primordial Ritual, and are so linked up to that divine Ritual of Creation, that every action in the ritual here below corresponds to some very much greater reality in that eternal Ritual above. Thus from our human ceremonial, a constant stream goes up to join that mighty flood of *Creative Fire* which is the manifestation of God the Holy Ghost, while on the other hand the ritual performed on earth, being as it were attuned to the Grand Ritual above, can transmit something of the divine creative forces to the world surrounding the place where it is performed." This view shows the correspondence between Propriety or Rituals and the

element of Fire. Now, Summer is the season in which the Spirit of Fire is predominant. Lastly, the River Map in the Introduction reveals the element of Fire on the South side and that of Water on the North. This completes the process of ideation which seeks to explain the correspondences between Penetration, Propriety, Fire, Summer, and South.

Utility-Harmony and Righteousness

We now proceed to deal with the correspondence of the attribute of Utility-Harmony to the quality of Righteousness. This attribute *Li* (利) signifies harmony, utility, advantage and benefit. In the text the ideas of *harmony*, *benefit*, and *righteousness* are combined to form the notion that the superior man who benefits all things exhibits the *harmony* of *righteousness*. Now, what has the benefiting of all things to do with the harmony of righteousness? The meaning of this concept will become clear if we ponder for a while upon the difference between benevolence and righteousness. Benevolence is a unifying or all-embracing power, pouring itself out upon the world like sunshine and rain. Its essence is the positive attribute without consideration of worth or merit. It is said by the German philosopher, Keyserling, that love is, first and foremost, "yea-saying irrespective of value". Righteousness, on the other hand, according to the Chinese conception, involves a sense of justice, discriminating between right and wrong, demanding reward for good and punishment for evil. It follows therefore that righteousness discriminates while love unifies. The idea is that when a man minutely "discriminates between the right and the wrong, the crooked and the straight, the hard and the soft, the similar and the different," (仁主合一，義主分辯，分辨者，明是非曲直堅白同異之類是也), classifying things under different and opposing categories and determining his different attitudes towards them, he may indeed be in agreement with righteousness, but he may fail to attain the attribute of harmony in his being and bring about the desired harmonious order of things. The perfect ideal is not righteousness alone but harmony of righteousness.

How is this harmony of righteousness to be attained? The answer is: "by

benefiting all things," meaning all living things. A simple illustration may make this clear. In ancient times, before the institution of private ownership of land, it was right for a ruler to allow his people to fell trees from the mountains, to catch fish from the lakes and the sea, to hunt animals and shoot birds for their daily living; but, for economic reasons, it was equally right for him to prohibit his people from indulging recklessly and continually in draining Nature's resources. Obviously there was a conflict between these two aspects of righteousness. The conflict was resolved and harmony of righteousness attained when the ruler proclaimed and set apart definite periods of the year for the acquisitive activities of his people, so that, on the one hand, they all enjoyed within reasonable limits the bounty of Nature's products and, on the other, all things in the animal and vegetable kingdoms could have the opportunity of growing and developing to the limit of their utility. This indicates that the superior man who "benefits all things" is fit to exhibit the "harmony of righteousness". (利物足以和義).

Apart from the correspondence explained above, the attribute of Utility - Harmony and Righteousness correspond to the element of Metal, to the season of Autumn and to the cardinal point West. It has already been noted that the third attribute of Ch'ien, Utility - Harmony, corresponds to Autumn when things attain their fruitbearing stage, when harvests are reaped, when the world enjoys the utility of its products. As regards the correspondence between Utility - Harmony and the element of Metal, one of the functions of *metal* is to cut asunder or separate. A similar function is implicit in *Righteousness* inasmuch as this virtue has to distinguish or separate right from wrong, good from evil, justice from injustice. It is significant that the Chinese phrases for "decision" and "judgment"—*chueh tuan* (決斷) and *p'an tuan* (判斷)—which are so closely related to the function of Righteousness, are both associated with the idea of cutting or dividing. Philologists will testify that the English word "decision" is also connected with the idea of cutting or severing. Hence the correspondence between Metal and Righteousness. As regards the corresponding cardinal point *West*, the correct explanation seems to be that in the River Map the element of Metal appears on the *West* side, and that of Wood on the East. All these considerations combine to establish the correspondences

between Utility-Harmony, Righteousness, Autumn, Metal, and West.

Correctness-Firmness and Wisdom and Faith

According to the text, the last attribute of Ch'ien, that of Correctness-Firmness, enables the superior man to manage affairs. It is thought that only when the superior man has *correctly* adjusted himself within the cosmic relation of things and demonstrated his *firm* adherence to principles, is he able to manage all affairs in a correct manner. This view is well illustrated in the following passage from the Analects of Confucius:

Tzu Lu said, "The Prince of Wei is waiting to transfer the affairs of state to your hands. What will you consider the first thing to be done?"

The Master replied, "What is necessary above all is to rectify names."

Tzu Lu said: "Is that really so? You are wide of the mark! Why must there be such rectification?"

The Master said, "How uncultivated you are, Yu (alias of Tzu Lu)! A superior man, in regard to what he does not know, shows a cautious reserve.

If names are not correct, language will not be in accordance with the truth of things. If language is not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs of the state cannot be carried on successfully.

When affairs cannot be carried on successfully, the rites and music will not flourish; if the rites and music do not flourish, the punishments will not be properly awarded. When punishments are not properly awarded, the people will not know how to move hand or foot.

Therefore, a superior man considers it necessary that the names he uses may be spoken appropriately, and also that which he speaks may be carried out appropriately.

What the superior man requires is just that in his words there may be nothing incorrect."

Again, the Master said, "If a minister's conduct is correct, what difficulty will he have in assisting in government? If he cannot rectify himself, how can he rectify others?" (子曰：苟正其身矣，於從政乎何有，不能正其身，如正人何).² The effects of "correct names" and "correct conduct" demonstrate that the attribute of Correctness - Firmness enables a man to manage all affairs (貞固足以幹事).

The text does not point out the cardinal virtue corresponding to the attribute of Correctness - Firmness. This has given rise to conflicting opinions among commentators of the Han and Sung schools, the former asserting that this attribute corresponds to Faith, and the latter, to Wisdom. The view held by many other authorities is that Correctness - Firmness corresponds to both Wisdom and Faith which are more or less interrelated. Mencius says, "The richest fruit of wisdom consists in a right understanding of love and righteousness and not departing from them."³ Now, "right understanding" presupposes wisdom and the phrase "not departing from them" means "remaining ever faithful to them". (孟子言智之實，知斯弗去，知者智也，弗去者固也，即信也，正而固即智之實，謂智而信也). This presupposes firmness and tenacity of purpose. Hence the attribute of Correctness - Firmness—*i.e.*, correct understanding of Truth and *firm* adherence to it—corresponds to Wisdom and Faith.

In the commentary on the T'uan of the Ch'ien hexagram it has been explained that this fourth attribute, Correctness-Firmness, corresponds to the season of Winter in which Nature's resources and energy are stored up, indicating the complete withdrawal of the Yang forces at the end of the annual cycle of creation. It remains to explain how Wisdom and Faith also correspond to the two primary elements of Water and Earth and to the cardinal point North and the Centre. It is stated in the *Ch'ien Tso Tu* (乾鑿度) that "the two elements of Water and Earth are inseparable

1. *Confucian Analects*, Bk. XIII, Ch. III

2. *Confucian Analects*, Bk. XIII, Ch. XIII

3. *Works of Mencius*: Bk. IV, Part I, Ch. 27.

and include Wisdom and Faith." (乾鑿度：水土二行兼智與信也). Mencius also says that *wisdom* must be like that shown by Emperor Yü in directing the course of the *water* of the Flood (孟子曰：智者若禹之行水也). *Water* may be a great danger, but it is ever *faithful* to its own nature which is to flow downwards. (Cf. the K'an hexagram regarding Water. 坎卦：習坎有孚，水流而不盈，行險而不失其信). Hence the combination of Wisdom and Faith.

It is interesting to note here this saying from the Tao Teh Ching: "The highest goodness resembles water. Water greatly benefits all things, but does not assert itself." (上善若水，水善利萬物而不爭). The English sage, Ruskin, has set forth more or less the same view: "Of all inorganic substances, acting in their own proper nature, and without assistance or combination, water is the most wonderful." Now only a Master of Wisdom can selflessly serve and benefit all mankind as water does, acting in his own proper nature, without asserting himself or claiming credit for his success. This is perhaps what Confucius had in mind when he said, "The wise take delight in water; the virtuous take delight in hills"¹ (智者樂水，仁者樂山). Hence again the correspondence between Wisdom and Water.

The cardinal point that corresponds to Water is North, the chief reason being that in the River Map the element of Water appears on the North side. As regards the correspondences between Faith, Earth, and Centre, this much may be said: Both in the River Map and the Lo Scrip (河圖洛書), the element of Earth is in the Centre. All the other four elements of Metal, Wood, Water and Fire are closely related to the central element of Earth, just as the four cardinal points of a compass can only be determined in relation to a central point. In a similar sense, Faith is the most essential bond in keeping all classes of human beings within right relationships. Confucius teaches that an empire can exist without an army or without sufficient food, but it cannot exist without Faith. He says, "From time immemorial, death has been the lot of man; but if the people have no faith in their rulers, the state cannot be established."² (自古皆有死，民無信

不立). For Faith actually is the most essential tie keeping human beings together, both directly and indirectly. Hence its correspondence to the central element of Earth and the central point of the compass.

Paragraph 3 of the text of this Wen Yen Treatise teaches that it is possible for the superior man, through the culture of his inner being, to attain union with Spirit. The superior man, therefore, constantly practises these spiritual attributes and cardinal virtues till he becomes the very embodiment of them and so identifies himself with Ch'ien Tao, the creative spiritual source of life. It was through the cultivation and embodiment of these divine attributes that King Wen attained self-perfection and became the Sage-Founder of the Chou dynasty. And it is also these attributes which the superior man of Line 3 of the Ch'ien hexagram strives all day long to cultivate and embody in his own person.

Creative Spirit is for ever the ideal goal of the superior man. Just as the creative activities of Spirit are never-ceasing, so the endeavours of the superior man towards self-perfection are never slackened, until in time he appears aloft, high above all things, in perfect tune with the Tao or Spirit.

1. *Confucian Analects*, Book VI, Chapter 21.

2. *Confucian Analects*, Book XII, Chapter 7.