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EARLY CONFUCIANISM AND INHERITED THOUGHT
IN THE LIGHT
OF SOME KEY TERMS OF THE CONFUCIAN ANALECTS
I. THE TERMS IN *SHU CHING* AND *SHIH CHING*

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ABSTRACT

Early Confucianism and Inherited Thought in the Light of Some Key Terms of the Confucian Analects. Volume One, the Terms in Shu Ching and Shih Ching.

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The aim is to discover to what extent Confucius transmits traditional thoughts, whether and to what extent he uses the terms T'ien, Heaven, Te, virtue, Tao, way, Li, rites, Yi, righteousness, Jen, goodness to construct a new system of thought. The task of the first volume is to define these terms in Shu Ching and Shih Ching. The traditions in Shu and Shih are compared with each other.

According to Shu Ching, T'ien initiates things and principles, directs history through the virtuous king whose actions Heaven supervises through the agency of the people. The rulers tend to move towards unethical administration which causes disharmony. Heaven changes this trend towards the harmonious coexistence of all people by establishing a new ruler, or in the case of Chou, by using educative punishments. Te is the principal virtue of Chou thought, inherited from antiquity. Widely applied, it harmonizes society and the universe. Tao means one's "conduct" or "to advance"; it also refers to the king's way and the way of Heaven. Li, or rites, harmonize political conflicts and reflect the unity of the universe. Yi means the skill and juridical talent of the ruler for the good of the country. Jen is needed by the king in Heaven after life on earth.

According to Shih Ching, Heaven is an unexplainable tremendous majesty, initiator of the world, the people and ethical values, using the virtuous king together with his officials to administer the world. Te is the virtue of a king who is impartial, takes care of the sacrifices, is a pattern to the people, unites the empire and spreads Te. In family, Te means fidelity in marriage and filiality on the part of sons. For the most part, Tao merely means an ordinary road. Li refers to the rituals in the temple and the royal court. It is also a form of behaviour adopted by the duke and government towards the people. The king and his officials as Yi benefit the country and do not use wine excessively. Jen refers mainly to ethical good qualities.

Some of the terms have characteristics which mostly appear in those parts of the sources which probably date from a certain period.

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