II. T'IEN, HEAVEN

1. Confucius and Agnosticism

There are two main interpretations of the concept of T'ien by Confucius. According to the first, Confucius's thinking comes very close to agnosticism. - T'ien is a natural and impersonal heaven. The following passages in the Analects have been cited as evidence for Confucius's agnosticism: "The Master never talked of prodigies, feats of strength, disorders or spirits". "Tzu-lu asked how one should serve ghosts and spirits. The Master said, Till you have learned to serve men, how can you serve ghosts? Tzu-lu then ventured upon a question about the dead, the Master said, Till you know about the living, how are you to know about the dead?" "Fan Chi'ih asked about wisdom. The Master said, He who devotes himself to securing for his subjects what it is right they should have, who by respect for the spirits keeps them at a distance, may be termed wise."[35] This conception is also partly based on Chu Hsi's interpretation, who equated the Confucian Heaven with a general principle, Li 理 "which is ultimate, eternal, but at the same time void and impersonal". However, there is the problem of how to interpret Chu Hsi. When Chu Hsi interprets the passage quoted above about keeping the spirits at a distance, Creel understands him to mean that, "while spirits exist, it is very difficult to know anything specific about them, and useless to expend one's energies (to borrow a Western example) in debates about 'How many angels can stand on the point of a needle?'"[36]

[35] AN. 7:20, p. 127; 11:11, p. 155; 6:20, p. 120. CREEL 1932, pp. 81, 82. Shigezawa says that Confucius "encouraged respect of the spirits and divinities but cautioned against becoming too familiar with them." Confucius "certainly deserves to be called a master rationalist." SHIGEZAWA 1962, p. 84. See also GRAHAM 1989, p. 10. Basing his argument on AN. 11:11 Ch'ien Mu says that Confucius did not become a religious leader. CH'IEN Mu 1977, p. 8. See also AN. 5:12, p. 110. WU K'ang 1963, p. 1. HU Shih 1963, p. 296. CHEN, Richard Min-jui 1974, pp. 56-61.

Dubs adds to the above mentioned passages AN. 3:13, which says "He who has put himself in the wrong with Heaven has no means of expiation left." He interprets this to mean that here Confucius rejects prayer for the sick and that a righteous life is the only true prayer. DUBS 1928, p. 84.

[36] CH'IEN Mu 1964, pp. 56, 57, 74. 天即理也. CHU Hsi 1952, p. 16. AN. 6:20 is explained by Chu Hsi: 專用於人道之所宜而不惑於神之不可知知者之事也. "Especially to use one's strength in *performing the duties* proper to human life, and not *to waste it in* puzzling over unknowable matter concerning the spirits, is the affair of the wise man." Creel quotes Soothill's translation: "not to be deluded about spirits which cannot be known." Creel says that this translation "is more difficult to justify from the text, and not in harmony with the general tone of the commentary." CREEL 1932, pp. 82., 83. CHU Hsi 1952, p. 38. WALEY 1964, p. 120.

Creel also says: "It seems clear, that Confucius thought of Heaven as an impersonal ethical force, a cosmic counterpart of the ethical sense in man, a guarantee that somehow there is sympathy with man's sense of right in the very nature of the universe." CREEL 1951, p. 126. Creel does not regard Confucius as an agnostic. CREEL 1932, pp. 97-99.

According to Dubs, Confucius's own belief was not accepted by later Confucians. Under the influence of Lao Tzu, Hsün tzu gave up the ancient belief in a personal supreme God. The word T'ien, instead of denoting God, was used by him to mean "nature". Thereafter this meaning of T'ien became standard in Confucian teaching. This attitude was common in Han times. Occidental interpretation of Confucius, which has largely depended upon the Han commentators, has accordingly been misled. DUBS 1958, pp. 247-249.

Some interpreters think that in his agnostic opinions, Confucius was following the general trend during the Ch'un Ch'iu period.

"In the general intellectual trend toward secularization during the Ch'un Ch'iu and Warring States periods, there was an increasing tendency to identify Heaven as an impersonal, natural and self–operating force. This is reflected in the statements by Confucius, Mencius, Hsün–tzu, and their contemporaries. But such a naturalistic notion of Heaven was limited to small groups of the advanced thinkers."[37]

According to the second main interpretation of the concept T'ien, Confucius was not agnostic, he believed in a monotheistic all-knowing God. He trusted in God's providence, praised him and was dependent on him and had a personal faith in Heaven. Creel points out that the evidence underlying the assumption of Confucian agnosticism is inadequate: He says:

"It has often been said that Confucius was merely a moral and political philosopher, uninterested in religion. This was no more true of the Chinese sage than it was true of the ethically and theoretically minded Hebrews of the Old Testament. It is, in fact, impossible to understand Confucius unless we recognize that for him, as surely as for the priests and prophets of Israel, ethics, politics, and the whole of life were inseparable from their cosmic and religious background."[38]

Between these two main interpretations there is what might be called a mediating view. This claims that Confucius believed in Heavenly God 天 帝. It is not possible to sense this Heavenly God, who is silent, and who cannot be bribed by sacrifice. "Confucius was not primarily a religious teacher, ... he was a deeply religious man."[39]

Fingarette says: "Although Confucius speaks of Heaven, its role is not too clear and is unelaborated in the *Analects*. He was not impressed with the possibilities of metaphysical speculation and 'theology' as we know. But he was deeply concerned with man's life on earth." FINGARETTE 1972, pp. 62, 63.

Chan says: "Heaven ceased to be an anthropomorphic god and became the spiritual and moral Supreme Being who reigns but does not rule, leaving the Moral Law to operate by itself allowing man to assume responsibility for human affairs." CHAN Wing–tsit 1973, pp. 113, 114.

T'ANG I–chiai claims that the Confucian Heaven means "natural" 自然性 T'ANG I–chiai 1962, p. 62. See also CHIU, Hansheng 1986, pp. 116-129. ROETZ 1984, pp. 203, 204. According to Lü Confucius was an atheist. LÜ Shao-kang 1987, p. 205.

[37] YANG 1959, p. 273.

According to Dawson, Confucius "shared the common belief in an impersonal Heaven or Providence, which dealt out life and death, wealth and rank." DAWSON 1981, pp. 44, 45.

To doubt the spirits was common during Ch'un Ch'iu. KUAN Feng, Lin yü–shih 1962, p. 239. See also FU Shu-fang 1989, p. 64.

[38] CREEL 1932, pp. 96, 99. See also CREEL 1929, p. 75.

Karlgren, too, emphasizes the religiosity of Confucius: "Han har ju sagt: 'Att vara vördsam mot själarna och andarna men hålla sig på avstånd från dem, det kan man kalla visdom.' Men i verkligheten menade Konfucius med denna sats ingalunda att vara avvisande eller skeptisk, utan blott detta att icke vara familjär, påträngande mot Andarna". Karlgren says that Confucius had the same older world view as earlier generations during Chou had. Souls, Kuei and Spirits, Shen, were important realities. Heaven governed Spirits, Souls, men, demons all to the same extent, and there was no reason to doubt the existence of any of them." Konfucius var ju framme vid en verklig monoteism, i det han tydligen uppfattade Himmelen som ett gudomligt väsen med allsmäktighet och allgodhet, den absolut severäna andemakten." KARLGREN 1964a, pp. 87, 88, 145. See also DUBS 1959, p. 171. EGEROD 1987, p. 72. "Confucius believed in Heaven as a personal God." SHIH 1970, p. 497.

Confucius had a direct personal relationship with Heaven. LI, Tu 1961, p. 43. Confucius's ethics rested on deep religious insight and personal faith in T'ien. SMITH 1968, p. 35. Heaven for Confucius meant "a purposeful Supreme Being or 'ruling Heaven'". FUNG Yu–lan 1967, p. 57 and 1962, p. 84. See also CHENG, Chung–ying 1979, p. 3. T'ANG I-chieh 1987, p. 79.

Some mainland Chinese interpreters mention "Idealism", "Religious idealism" or "Theism" in connection with Confucius. JEN Chi-yü 1962, p. 157. HSIA Chi–Sung 1962, p. 211. CHAO Chi–pin 1962, p. 88.

[39] CHANG Yin–lin 1973, p. 1942. SMITH 1973, p. 61. Apparently Confucius "did not concern

Some interpreters try to show that there is a tension in Confucius's thinking. It seems that Confucius is sceptical about the existence of the spirits. However, because he emphasizes sacrifice to the spirits he cannot deny their existence.[40] Confucius "respected spiritual beings but also wanted people to be 'aloof' from them. He called this wisdom, yet not wanting to stay aloof was not wise."[41]

In the light of these different interpretations, it seems to be difficult to prove conclusively what Confucius's attitude towards Heaven was.

2. Confucius and Heaven

There are 16 references to Heaven in the Analects, two of "Son of Heaven" 天子 one of "Way of Heaven" 天命天道 four of "The Mandate of Heaven" 天命 altogether 23 cases. The 16 references to Heaven fall into several categories of which the largest describes the mutual relationships between Confucius and Heaven. These relationships include the positive and negative attitudes of Heaven towards Confucius and secondly his communication with Heaven.

Besides these, in the Analects there is a mention of the past functions of Heaven. These retrospective characteristics of Heaven are here dealt with first. Yao is esteemed very highly: "It is Heaven that is great and it was Yao who modelled himself upon it".[42] It was only Yao who could have Heaven as a standard[43] and could follow the way of Heaven.[44] After Yao, the second mythical king was Shun[45] : "Yao said, Oh Shun. The succession, ordained by Heaven, has fallen on thy person:[46] Confucius

himself with the existence of spiritual beings. Even if they exist, that fact itself would be irrelevant." Ref. to AN. LIU Shu–hsien 1971, p. 159. Ming of Confucius was naturalistic " 自然主義 "This naturalism was new, although Confucius believed in Heaven. T'UNG Shu–yeh 1962, p. 7.

Woo Kang says that the Confucian Heaven or Way of Heaven may be interpreted in the following ways: 1) Heaven as a personal being, like God in religion; 2) as a substance, a Supreme Being, like God in natural philosophy or morality; 3) as the highest Regulative Principle, thus the Destiny of Heaven; 4) as the totality of all natural processes, accounting for the whole evolution of nature. WOO, Kang 1964, p. 90. See also CHIU, Koon–hoi 1928, pp. 237-250, 431-449. CHEN, Richard Min-jui 1974, pp. 7,107-113.

[40] KUAN Feng, LIN Yü–shih 1962, p. 240.

[41] FUNG, Yu–lan 1978, p. 96.

[42] AN. 8:19, LAU 1979, pp. 99, 95. Henderson comments on the later influence of this statement as follows: "Thus the detailed correspondences which Han cosmologists drew between the cosmos and man may find a philosophical sanction, if not necessarily their genetic origin, in statements by thinkers of the classical era." HENDERSON 1984, pp. 4,5.

[43] In AN. 8:19 唯堯則之， 則 means "a standard". 則猶準也。 CHU Hsi 1952, p. 54.

[44] CH'ENG Shu-te 1974, p. 476.

[45] VANDERMEERSCH 1977, p. 11.

[46] AN. 20:1, LAU 1979, p. 158. Waley says about book 20: It "consists of stray sentences from works of the *Shu Ching* type." WALEY 1964, p. 21. The book is not a reliable source of Confucius's thoughts.

In AN. 8:18-21 there are sayings about the mythical kings. The other parts of the chapter deal with the Tseng tradition (1-7) and ethical rules, principles and ideals (8-17). The rulers mentioned are esteemed very highly.

Needham says: "He [Confucius] probably did not believe that the faults of his age could be cured by any system other than feudalism, but rather that there should be a return to what he conceived it to have

adheres here to the doctrine that Heaven has ordained who is to be be the king. Thus the legitimation of the king in the past was transcendental, originated by Heaven.

Confucius recognizes the importance of the old legendary kings. However, he does not use them to support his ideas, despite the fact that he called himself a transmitter and not an originator. The retrospective characteristics of T'ien do not play an important role in Confucius's thought on Heaven. Here Confucius is more "the present time" - minded than Shu Ching.

All the positive actions of Heaven spoken about in the Analects also concern Confucius himself. Confucius's self- reflexive statements are here dealt first. In books 7 and 9, which mostly concern his personal characteristics, Confucius says that "Heaven is the author of the virtue 德 that is in me. What can Huan T'ui do to me." This shows that the origin of Te 德 is Heaven. The foundation of Te-virtue is not in Confucius himself, but is in Heaven. This leads to the effect of Te as a protective force against the minister of war in Sung, who according to tradition wanted to kill Confucius.[47] The heavenly or transcendental foundation of Te resulted in powerful Te. One may say that this refers to the "supra empirical"[48] characteristics of Te.

The culture of Wen Wang, inherited by Confucius, also has a protective function for the people of K'uang. Confucius understood that Heaven does not intend to destroy this culture. By destroying him, the culture would have been destroyed as well, so Confucius had nothing to fear. Through this personalization of culture in himself he had confidence in the power of Heaven to preserve him. Tu explains this:

"Confucius' insistence that he loved the ancients and that he was a transmitter rather than a maker symbolizes his conscious attempt to provide a transcendental anchorage for human civilization. To Confucius, what had already been created, notably the 'ritual and music' of the human community, was not merely of humans, it was also sanctioned and sponsored by the Mandate of Heaven. Confucius' strong conviction that Heaven will not allow 'this culture' (Ssu-wen) to perish must therefore be taken to mean that his sense of mission, far from being a conservative desire to return to the past, was inspired by his critical self-awareness that 'Heaven knows me!' The idea of 'this culture' is thus laden with cosmological significance."[49]

So both Te and culture according to Confucius have a transcendental foundation, and work as a protective shield against any invaders.

Confucius did not regard it as of the utmost importance to be well-known, understood, or employed. This defect of not being recognized on earth is compensated by being

been in its purest form, the ancient 'way of the Sage kings'. Of course it was natural in his time to clothe ethical insights with legendary historical authority. Confucius called himself a transmitter, not an originator." NEEDHAM II 1956, p. 5.

What is said above about T'ien does not mean a rejection Needham's comment on Confucius generally. The retrospective attitude of Confucius is less related to the term T'ien than the retrospective characteristic in Shu and Chou governmental propaganda.

[47] AN. 7:23, LAU 1979, p. 89. AN. 7:22, WALEY 1964, p. 127. See also CHAN, Wing–tsit 1973, p. 114. SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 125.

[48] "Supra empirical" 驗超驗地性格 HSÜ Fu–kuan 1975, p. 86.

[49] AN. 9:5, LAU 1979, p. 96, WALEY 1964, p. 139. According to Yang Pe Chün, Confucius's idea was: "After Chou Wen Wang had died wasn't all the culture inherited in myself? If Heaven wants to destroy the culture then I shall not have chance to learn this culture. If Heaven does not want to destroy this culture, what can the people of K'uang do to me?" YANG Pe-chün 1965, p. 94. See also CH'ENG Shu–te 1974, p. 501 and KORHONEN 1921, p. 41. IVANHOE 1988, pp. 161, 165.
AN 14:37, p. 189. TU Wei-ming 1989, pp. 2,3.

known by Heaven.[50] According to this, the ultimate self-identity of Confucius is based on Heaven. His identity does not collapse as long as he is known by Heaven. At the same time this is Confucius's confession that he regards it as more important to be successful before Heaven than in the human society.

It can be seen that Confucius believes he is known by Heaven when he writes: 下學而上達 "In my studies I start from below and get through to what is up above." This is understood to be a corrective which causes heavenly positive action to compensate for the defect of not being known.[51] Confucius's studies are thus a tool used to strengthen his transcendentally based identity.

A number of other people have also commented on heavenly favorable actions concerning Confucius. When asked about whether Confucius, despite his many practical accomplishments, is a Divine Sage 聖者 his disciple Tzu-kung replied: "Heaven certainly intended him to become a Sage; it is also sure that he has many accomplishments."[52] The border official of Yi said to the disciples of Confucius about their master: "What worry have you, gentlemen, about the loss of office? The Empire has long been without the Way. Heaven is about to use your Master as the wooden tongue for a bell."[53] These passages show that people who knew him recognized that Confucius had a calling from Heaven for his task and that also his ethical qualities, of his being a Sage, were originally from Heaven.

In the Analects T'ien ming 天命 appears in three passages. Confucius said about himself: "At fifteen I set my heart on learning; at thirty I took my stand; at forty I came to be free from doubts; at fifty I understood the Decree of Heaven 五十而知天命; at sixty my ear was atuned; at seventy I followed my heart's desire without overstepping the line." Liu explains the passage in a Neo-Confucian manner wanting to polish the Confucian identity from the transcendental dimensions: "Confucius' originality

[50] 知 "to know" in the sense "to be employed": "No ruler recognizes my merits and employs me." AN. 14:37, p. 189. "To understand". AN. 14:35, LAU 1979, p. 129.

[51] AN. 14:35, LAU 1979, p. 129. Waley translates this as: "But the studies of jen here below are felt on high," What is referred to here is "The self-training consisting in the study of antiquity." WALEY 1964, p. 189. Other explanations are: 下學 refers to 人道上達 refers to 天道. YANG I-feng, 1969, p. 29. 下學 refers to learning the affairs of men and 上 refers to knowing the Heavenly mandate. Holy man (= Confucius), Heaven and earth, these three things form his Te. CH'ENG Shu-te 1974, p. 887.

Formally, the passage follows the general constructive principle of Book 14: the principle of defect or lack from different points of view. The present passage introduces a defect and a corrective to it and also a gradation of values: the highest grade is a heavenly one characterized by 上達 and 知我者其天乎.

[52] AN. 9:6, p. 139. LEGGE I 1969, p. 218. The practical accomplishments for a sage were regarded rather as a harm than a merit.

[53] AN. 3:24, LAU 1979, p. 71. Lau's translation seems best to reflect the meaning of this passage. Chu Hsi explains that now there is turmoil - soon there will be peace. Heaven will surely soon ask Confucius to be an officer to teach the people. Secondly, the intention may be that Heaven does not let Confucius become an officer, but asks him to go round and teach. CHU Hsi 1952, p. 19. Liu Pao-nan agrees with the first explanation, see CH'ENG Shu-te 1974, p. 191. Legge explains the bell according to LIU Pao-nan: "The 木鐸 was a metal bell with a wooden tongue, shaken in making announcements, or to call people together." and adds to Liu Pao Nan's explanation the following: "Heaven would employ Confucius to proclaim the truth and right". Liu Pao-nan 1973, p. 72. LEGGE I 1969, p. 164.

lies in his belief that there is no need to depart from human ways in order to know the Mandate of Heaven. Confucius put the emphasis entirely on man himself." Ching explains: "This is the description of a man who consciously cultivated an interior life, who trained his mind to apprehend the truth and his heart to grasp the will of Heaven, until his instincts were also transformed, and who learned to appreciate the things of the spirit. Still, the mention of Heaven is discreet. Confucius' words do not vibrate with a passionate longing for union with Heaven, or God, as do the words of many Western mystics." Schwartz offers the explanation that Confucius may mean that he has a clear understanding of what it is that is not in his control as well as of what is his true sphere of autonomous action.[54] This personal self-appraisal by Confucius shows clearly that his identity has obvious transcendental dimensions, but also that he has developed himself as a moral agent towards greater autonomy and freedom. As an autonomous free ethical agent he was able to follow naturally his hearts' desire without failure in his moral behavior. In this way he separated morals, in principle at least to some extent, from the readymade list of moral rules or from the given moral codes, and introduced intellectuality into morality. It remains to be seen in connection with other key terms to what extent Confucius was free to choose his ethical behavior in certain situations and to what extent he was bound by strict external rules.

The theme of knowing the Degree of Heaven is continued in the Analects in the following way: A gentleman 君子 is in awe of the Degree of Heaven and "The small man 小人, being ignorant of the Degree of Heaven, does not stand in awe of it." Knowing the T'ien Ming and standing in awe of it are closely related with each other.[55] Here the knowledge leads to an awe-inspiring attitude towards T'ien Ming. This has a vestige of the conception about God which is "tremendum et fascinosum", fascinating, to be known and tremendous to be standing in awe at.

To know fate refers to an "attempt to learn the predetermined course of events in advance so as to enable man to gain success and avoid failure." This is "a necessary

[54] AN. 2:4, LAU 1979, P. 63, LEGGE I 1969, p. 146. Waley translates: "At fifty, I knew what were the biddings of Heaven." WALEY 1964, p. 88.

According to Chu Hsi 命 is the prevalence of heavenly Tao 天道, it is the natural reason of all things and affairs. CHU Hsi 1952, p. 7. This explanation is followed by other interpreters too: see SHIGEZAWA 1962, p. 97.

Chen supposes that Confucius studied the Book of Changes at fifty. He refers to AN. 7:17, where Confucius says, according to the Ku version; "If some years were added to my life, and I could study the Book of Changes after fifty, then I might come to be without great faults.' Chen adds that Confucius 'could well see that the Book of Changes would give him the knowledge of Heaven and destiny.' Chen says of the Book of Changes: 'The usefulness of the volume is extensive, for all persons who work in sciences that deal with these changes - medicine and the military, for instance - will find it helpful, perhaps essential. Later generations have disparaged this book, regarding it as merely a study of fortune–telling, but they have failed to see that its essence and great utility lie in the fact that it does indeed present the 'knowledge of Heaven's decree and exhaustion of human effort.'" CHEN Li–fu 1986, p. 67. Liu refers also to AN. 15:28, 11:11, pp. 199, 155. LIU, Shu-hsien 1986, p. 445. The view of the present author, that the often quoted passage AN.11:11 is of a doubtful origin, because it does not follow the general theme of the book, which is Confucian appraisals of different people or groups of people, does not support the Neo-Confucian views. See also AN. 20:3, p. 233, WANG Ming-sun 1986, p. 203. CHEN, Richard Min-jui 1974, pp. 91-93.

CHING, Julia 1986, p.66. SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 126.

[55] AN. 16:8, LAU 1979, p. 140. CH'ENG Shu-te 1974, p. 65.

quality of a superior man".[56] The predetermined course of events is expressed by the sentence: "Life and death are a matter of Destiny; wealth and honour depend on Heaven", and in the idea that the four seasons run their course and the hundred creatures, each after its kind are born thereby. Here it is understood that things run by command of Heaven.[57] This has also been interpreted to show some determinism, although it is not made clear here whether it is question of blind natural forces or of a personal God.[58] Fung says:

"Confucius thought a person's birth and death, whether he was rich or poor, eminent or humble, a success or a failure all were decided by heaven. But one could still do one's best to do the things one thought had to be done, no matter whether the result would be success or failure. Confucius thought that even with something in which you knew you did not have a chance of success, as long as you thought it needed to be done, you should still work at it with your best (effort). People of that time said that Confucius was 'one who knows the impracticable nature of the times and yet is willing to act in them.'"[59]

This explanation by Fung reveals that Confucius was by no means a fatalist relaxing

[56] YANG 1969, p. 274.

[57] AN. 12:5, LAU 1979, p. 113; 14:38, pp. 189, 190; 17;19, p. 214, 20:3, p. 233.

[58] Creel quotes AN. 12:5 "Death and life are as decreed, wealth and rank depend upon Heaven; the gentleman is serious and does not fail in his duties, he behaves courteously to others and accords with li." Creel interprets this to mean: "Life and death are matters about which one can do relatively little; he does his best, but when death comes after all one must simply resign himself and say: 'It is fate'". CREEL 1951, p. 132.

Shih interprets this passage: "Here ming is a synonym of T'ien in the sense: ming or T'ien determine death and life, as well as riches and honours; they are not dependent upon man. Again we note in Confucius a certain determinism. But whether it is the result of blind natural forces or the decision of a personal God remains unclear."

Based on AN. 14:37, p. 189. Shih concludes that this passage shows that Confucius implicitly recognized a relationship between the ordinances of Heaven (ming) and the personal God (T'ien) whom he acknowledged to be the one Supreme God. It is said in the passage mentioned. AN. 14:47: "...perhaps after all I am known; not here, but in Heaven." SHIH 1970, p. 499-502. See also WANG, Gung–hsing 1946, pp. 27, 28.

[59] AN. 12:5, LAU 1979, p. 113. FUNG, Yu-lan 1978, p. 88. AN. 14:41, p. 190, LEGGE I 1969, p. 290.

According to T'ang the "ming" of Confucius means "Heavenly ordinance". Confucius traveled throughout the world and confronted the fact that his Tao was not to be realized in the world. He also understood that, whether or not the Tao was realized, he had to accept whatever happened willingly.

From this fact developed his accumulation of learning and his virtuous conduct, which resulted in his understanding of ming.

One's duty is to realize Tao in the world. This duty is the same as Ming. If Tao cannot be realized, then there is a conflict between the duty and the Heavenly Ming.

According to Confucius in this situation one has simply to accept the situation; "understand" it and "stand in awe of it". One's duty or Ming in this case it to realize that one is not doing one's duty, or Ming.

When one tries to realize one's Tao in the world, one must be prepared to accept two consequences; that one's Tao will be realized or that it will not. When a man is called to office and his Tao is realized, this is his duty; and it is equally his duty if he cannot get office and his Tao cannot be realized. Acceptance of the unrealizability of the Tao is a duty and Ming.

T'ang's explanation about identifying Ming with duty is based on Mencius, too. T'ANG, Chün–I 1962, pp. 212-217.

Joseph Shih is of a similar opinion to T'ang: "Confucius sees the doctrine of the Mandate of Heaven, not as a device for establishing the legitimacy of power already in possession, but as a means to resolve a personal problem: He has always followed the path of virtue. Yet he does not see his efforts rewarded by tangible success. Thus he is led to the discovery of the spiritual order and to an awareness of his personal relationship to God." SHIH 1970, p. 486.

all efforts and believing that one cannot do anything, since Heaven anyway will determine everything. On the contrary, Confucius was active, and Heaven had given him the heavenly mission, which is the way T'ien Ming has been understood in connection with Confucius too. Hattori suggests that for Confucius virtue depends on the grace of Heaven. From remotest time there have been saints, who received the grace of Heaven. They all represented Heaven and ruled people on account of Heaven. The people were also educated by them. The way had not been practiced for a long time and therefore during many hundreds of years the people did not enjoy a quiet life. Heaven finds and charges a suitable man to make the way clear and to install peace for the sake of human life. According to Hattori, Confucius was a man who received such a mission from Heaven. Confucius himself believed that he was provided with the virtue enabling him to be charged with this mission. Thus, the phrase "to know the decree of Heaven" is nothing other than the profound belief of Confucius that a mission to clear the Doctrine and to practice the Way was bestowed by Heaven. To carry out this mission Confucius needed a rank, and so he became a provincial officer. After the situation in Lu became such that he could not continue any longer, he sought for a new post to carry out his mission. In this he failed. However, he thought that he ought to make the way known after his death. At fifty Confucius became confident of his mission from Heaven. This confidence in his mission was the origin of his power and of his zeal.[60]

Above it was suggested that Confucius's contribution was to introduce intellectuality to morals, to know T'ien ming in order to make the right moral choice. Knowing the predetermined course of events, man was able to adapt himself to the situation. Because Heaven determined certain things, man could not bear full responsibility for the things determined by Heaven [life, death, wealth, honor], but man had a responsibility to know T'ien Ming and to be able to adapt himself to the situation. This Confucius himself showed by retiring from office when the predetermined course of events led to the failure of the ruler. After losing his office, Confucius still had a task to accomplish. Loss of office was not a moral necessity for him, but it was a moral necessity to work as a 'wooden tongue'.[61]

It is not mentioned that Ming, the mandate, had been given Confucius by Heaven, as it was given to the Chou rulers according to Shu Ching.

To possess or to get the mandate traditionally would have meant to be a king or at least a helper or a minister of a king, but Confucius really did not say that he had received the mandate. Just to know it fits well with his cultural mission.

His mission was to help the king and authorities to obtain the ethical qualification which was necessary for them to keep the mandate of a ruler. In this way he knew the mandate, but not in a sense that he had it himself, like the rulers. In this way he "participated" in the mandate of the rulers. This means that Confucius had a special

[60] Explaining AN. 9:5 Hattori says, that "Cause of truth" is wen 文 and means the same as Tao 道. King Wen died and the Way lodged in Confucius. He received the Way because Heaven did not like to let this way perish. HATTORI 1936, pp. 105-108.

[61] AN. 3:24, LAU 1979, p. 88.

mutual relationship with Heaven.[62]

Although Confucius had not got the mandate from Heaven, like kings, his emphasis on his personal relation to it may reflect his opinion about himself as a member of the shih-class. The importance of shih, scholars, was rising, and Confucius in accordance with this historical development tried to find justification for his position in his doctrine about ming. Between this, and his favorite doctrine about "rectification of names" there may be some tension.[63] However, this looks quite natural, since if a new class is rising, it necessarily implies new "names". If the rising class has any power, something must be taken out from the old classes in power, and consequently at least some kind of modification to the old "names", or old definitions of rights and duties of those in power, is necessary.

In addition to appearing in the combination T'ien ming, ming appears 21 times in the Analects in several contexts. In five cases it has been interpreted to mean decree or will of Heaven, although it does not appear in these cases in the combination of 天命. All of these are in the latter part of the Analects.[64] In the chapters from one to ten ming means the will of Heaven in connection with death or illness, perhaps "fate".[65]

Confucius feels the unfavorable attitude of Heaven personally. He submits to his fate not to be known or to be employed. He neither complains against Heaven nor blames man. He turns his fate to a positive notion of being known by Heaven. Given the background of Chou thought, it must have been a real disappointment for Confucius not to be employed as a virtuous person, with virtue given by Heaven.[66] However, here Confucius does not show submission to the inexplicable Heaven, but tries to find a positive solution to the problem and he tries to see some hope in immersing himself in studies. In showing this attitude he is behaving differently from the sad deploring attitude commonly expressed in Shih. Here Confucius follows neither Shih nor Shu. The solution for the problem is his own: to pursue his studies, which have a heavenly

[62] Chiu suggests that the saying "At fifty, I knew the Mandate of Heaven" indicates Confucius's "belief in that the Mandate of Heaven was given to him." Later he says that Confucius claimed that he had personally received that mandate as well. Chiu continues: "But Confucius himself did not regard himself a king as such; instead, he understood his own mission as that of transmission and preservation of ancient culture and tradition." Referring to AN. 9:5, he says: "At this point we acquire a new awareness of T'ien, that of being the "guardian" of culture, with the mandate of T'ien as being the transmission of culture; and Confucius, as an educator, took that as his personal mission." CHIU 1984, p. 110.

[63] According to this doctrine the prince is prince, the father is father etc., that is, each man in his relations is what the name of his relation would require. AN. 13:3, pp. 171, 172, AN. 12:11, p. 166 "Let the prince be prince, the minister a minister, the father a father and the son a son."

[64] AN. 12:5, p. 163; 14:38, pp. 189, 190; 20:3, p. 233.

[65] AN. 6:2, p. 115, (AN. 11:6, p. 154) AN. 6:8, p. 117.

AN. 9:1, p. 138. This is translated by Legge Appointments LEGGE I 1969, p. 276. 必復命日 'He invariably reported' AN. 10:3, LAU 1979, p. 101. LEGGE I 1969, p. 228.

In AN. 10:13, p. 150 Ming is 'to command'. Other meanings in the latter part according to Waley are: AN. 11:18, p. 157 "official permission" or according to Legge "appointment of Heaven" LEGGE I 1969, p. 243. AN. 13:20, p. 176. 'Prince's commission' AN. 14:9. p. 181, 'ducal mandate' AN. 14:13, p. 183. 'Prince is in danger' AN.1. 14, 47 p. 192. AN. 17:20, p. 214. 'Message' AN. 16:2 p. 204 'policy' combination 國命. AN. 19:1. p. 224 'life' AN. 20:1, p. 231 'charge'.

[66] AN. 14:37, 89; AN. 14:35, LAU 1979, p. 129. AN 7:22, p. 127; AN. 7:23, LAU 1979, p. 96. See footnote 47, this chapter.

character aiming at being known by Heaven.

When Tzu-lu disliked Confucius visiting the wicked concubine of Duke Ling of Wei, he replied: "If I have done anything improper, may Heaven reject me, may Heaven reject me."[67] Here Confucius recognizes that wrong action would evoke the anger of Heaven and he submits himself to this fact.

Confucius experienced the disfavor of Heaven when he lost his favorite young disciple Yen Yüan. He said: "Alas, Heaven has bereft me. Heaven has bereft me."[68] Obviously it would have been more in conformity with justice if such a person could have lived longer, especially as he was fond of learning. Similarly Confucius had to admit that a good person could become ill.[69] Confucius here does not ponder the reasons for this type of heavenly act; his attitude here resembles that of the people in Shih Ching when they met with heavenly unfavour. If he had followed the general attitude in Shu Ching, he would probably have speculated as to why Heaven committed this action. Here he follows the traditional attitude of submission to the will of Heaven.

One's guilt against Heaven will prohibit one's prayers: "When you have offended against Heaven, there is nowhere you can turn to in your prayers." Confucius does not explain what it means to offend against Heaven, 罪於天. Presumably this has an

[67] AN. 6:26, LEGGE I 1969, p. 193; AN. 6:28, LAU 1979, p. 85. AN. 6:26 is: "子見南子，子路不說，夫子失之，曰，子所否者，天厭之，天厭之。" 之 here could be an empty word or a pronoun denoting the improper things, or I = Confucius.

Waley translates 之 as "it". WALEY 1964, pp. 121, 241. His translation: "Whatsoever I have done amiss, may Heaven avert it, may Heaven avert it." implies, that Confucius probably did something wrong. Chu Hsi interprets 厭 as "dislike, detest, reject". CHU Hsi 1952, p. 40. There is also an interpretation to explain 厭 as a phonetic loan meaning "to press, to oppress". CH'ENG Shu–te 1974, p. 365. LIU Pao–nan 1973, p. 132. The meanings 'to be disliked by Heaven' or 'being suppressed to death by Heaven' are not very far from each other. The translation "Whatever I have done amiss, may Heaven dislike or suppress it" does not have the proper sense. 厭 requires here a person as an object. The most probable translation is "If I have done anything improper, may Heaven reject me, may Heaven reject me." This implies that Confucius did nothing wrong.

The passage has some further explanations: Confucius tried to say that he visited that lady, and if the reason for seeing her was not to get peace to the world, may Heaven dislike him. According to this explanation Confucius had a good motive in visiting the wicked lady. Because of his motive he did right.

Another explanation says that Confucius's idea was to say that if Heaven does not dislike her, must he dislike her? What he does not do, is the same as what Heaven does not do.

A third explanation says that because many people did not like the fact that Confucius saw Nan–tzu, this means that Heaven did not like Confucius seeing her. However, Nan–tzu represents the society of that time. Confucius asks whether Heaven wished to reject the society.

Another explanation says that the wicked lady employed good men, like Confucius. The view that the disciples of Confucius put forward was that they did not want to help wicked people. CH'ENG Shu–te 1974, pp. 365-369. See Also CHIU Koon–hoi 1928, 46.

Confucius himself acted according to this last idea, see NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 74,75. Apparently Nan–tzu did not employ Confucius, the visit might not have lasted long, and it is not known what was discussed during the visit, so there may be no tension between Confucius's actions and this passage.

Clearly there is no question here of Confucius having deeply violated his moral principles and tradition, nor of his having caused great harm, and so he is not condemning himself now. See KEKES 1989 p. 21.

[68] AN. 11:8, p. 154. See also AN. 11:6-12, LEGGE I 1969, p. 239-241, where Hui's death is discussed and HO Yu-shen 1979, p. 783.

[69] AN. 6:2, p. 115, (AN. 11:6, p. 154) AN. 6:8, p. 117.

ethical connotation resembling the virtuous prayer mentioned in Shu,[70] and means that any wrong action causes Heaven not to receive prayers. The passage implies logically that if one has not offended against Heaven one can pray. Confucius does not reject prayer with this sentence.

Expiation has been mentioned in connection with Confucius's illness, but it was directed towards the sky spirits above and the earth spirits below. Heaven is not mentioned in this context. Confucius said: "My expiation 禱 began long ago." An another occasion, when he was ill and thought he would soon die, Confucius said: "In pretending to have retainers when I have none, whom do I deceive? Do I deceive Heaven?" Waley suggests that this shows that Confucius was confident that his disciples could give him a decent burial even if he was buried without public honors.[71] These passages show that Confucius most probably prayed, even if this is by no means a proper two-way communication with Heaven, but this "prayer" does reflect Confucius's relation to Heaven and the fact that Confucius takes Heaven seriously.

And when considering the possibility of communication from Heaven to man, Confucius says that Heaven does not speak, yet the four seasons run their course thereby, (by command of Heaven), the hundred creatures, each after its kind, are born thereby.[72]

Confucius's attitude towards prayer links up to monotheism on the one hand and to polytheism on the other. It is a monotheistic idea that there is no one other than Heaven to pray to. But it is a polytheistic idea that there are several kinds of spirits towards which the expiation rites can be directed. Confucius displayed a certain ignorance concerning these, but admitted that his expiation began long ago.[73] One can try to invent an artificial harmonization for this contradiction between monotheism and polytheism, for example, that Heaven was a supreme monotheistic god, whereas there were many kinds of spirits under this Heaven and that the spirits could be affected and that they had a certain power over Confucius's life.

[70] AN. 3:13, LAU 1979, p. 69. Chu Hsi explains Heaven as 理, reason or principle. CHU Hsi 1952, p. 16. CH'ENG has an explanation that offending against Heaven would mean to act against reason. 理 cannot be Heaven, but it can be from Heaven. CH'ENG Shu–te 1974, p. 158. Compare this with other opinions in footnote 36, this chapter. NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 101, 102, 110, 111. SMITH 1973, p. 51.

[71] AN. 7:34, pp. 130, 131. Dubs explains this: "When our Master was ill, (Jung yu) Dz–lu asked permission to have prayers said (for him to the spirits and ordinary gods). Our Master replied, 'Is there such a thing (in the ancient authorities?)' (Jung Yu) Dz–lu answered, 'There is. In the *Dirges* it says: 'We pray to the ordinary gods above and to the earthly deities beneath'. Our Master replied, 'To me (K'ung) Ch'iu prayer is not an occasional matter."

Dubs offers this interpretation: "Here Confucius implies that if his ordinary life had not secured for him protection against death from whatever spiritual powers there are (here of course referring to Heaven), any ceremonies performed in the haste of an emergency would give no aid. So, in a highly superstitious age, Confucius gave no offence to those who believed in ordinary gods and spirits, yet maintained his inward faith in one God." Dubs connects this with Confucius not answering questions about the gods. In Lau's interpretation Confucius was more positive to the idea of prayer, as he translates the sentence as: 'In that case, I have long been offering my prayers.' LAU 1979, p. 91. DUBS 1958, pp. 249-251.

AN. 9:11, p. 141, WALEY 1964, p.141.

[72] AN. 17:19, p. 214.

[73] AN. 7:34, pp. 130, 131.

These passages show that Confucius stresses the communication with Heaven very little. However, this communication is not entirely absent from the Analects. To a large extent Confucius ignores the traditional thoughts about sacrifice and prayer directed to Heaven, (Shih Ching), and does not emphasize the two way communication with Heaven clearly expressed in Shu Ching. One explanation for this is apparently that the communication was performed by the royal persons; Confucius spoke about his personal attitude towards Heaven, but could not say too much about prayer and sacrifice, because he was not a king.

The Analects have a combination T'ien Tao 天道, the Way of Heaven. "Tzu-kung said, 'One can get to hear about the Master's accomplishments, but one cannot get to hear his views on human nature and the Way of Heaven.'"[74] This indicates that Confucius was very little concerned with Heaven in his teaching. The Analects place the question, or absence of the question about human nature in this same context. Graham is of the opinion that this "looks like a later comment on the conspicuous absence from the sayings of Confucius of the philosophical problem which were interesting his school during the next century"[75]

In the Analects there are very few statements which could define or characterize Heaven in any way. Confucius said, "It is Heaven that is great 大 and it was Yao who modelled himself upon it."[76]

The Son of Heaven has been mentioned twice in connection with ceremonies. The importance of the Son of Heaven during good government as a giver of order concerning ritual, music and punitive expeditions is pointed out.[77]

3. Early Confucian Heaven and Heaven in Shu Ching

We will now move on to a comparison of the early Confucian concept of T'ien as compared with the traditional view of this concept. The discussion will be based on what was discovered about the traditional concept of T'ien in part one of the present project, and on the above survey of the early Confucian concept of the term.

Shu Ching and Shih Ching, according to which the contents of the inherited thought

[74] AN. 5:12, p. 110, LAU 1979, p. 78. T'ien Tao refers to the natural rule 自然法則. CHU Hsi 1952, p. 28. YANG I–feng 1969, pp. 36, 37.

Kramers says: "Der zentrale Begriff, wie er ausgedrückt wird in dem *Lun yü*, den *Gesprächen von Konfuzius*, is *jen*, 'Menschlichkeit', aber als tieferen Hintergrund dieser Lehre des *jen* gibt es die Lehre des menschlichen Wesens, *hsing*, und von dem Weg des Himmels, *t'ien - tao*. Die letzteren Begriffe werden in dem *Lun yü* nur angedeutet; sie sind aber die Grundlage der neukonfuzianischen Metaphysik während der Sung– und Ming–Dynastien geworden." KRAMERS 1966, pp. 18, 19.

[75] GRAHAM 1986, p. 18. Another passage in the Analects, where hsing, 性, human nature, appears, is AN. 17:2, p. 209: "The Master said, By nature, near together; by practice far apart."

[76] AN. 8:19, LAU 1979, p. 94. In AN. 19:25 it is said: "The Master cannot be equalled just as the sky cannot be scaled." LAU 1979, p. 157. Here Tzu–kung compares his master to the sky in some sense, as Confucius did in AN. 8:19 in another sense concerning Yao. It may be that the disciples of Confucius emphasized his 'heavenly' character, like that of an ancient king.

[77] "The three families used the Yung Song during the removal of the sacrificial vessels. The Master said, By rulers and lords attended, The Son of Heaven, mysterious - What possible application can such words have in the hall of the Three Families." AN. 3:2, p. 94, 16:2, p. 204.

in this study has been formulated, were formed as literature mainly before the time when the Confucian Analects were collected. Some parts of Shu Ching were formulated and some additions to Shu Ching were made during the Ch'un Ch'iu period, 770-481 B.C. and some even during the Warring States period, after the time of Confucius.[78]

In this chapter we will trace how the early Confucian thought about Heaven in the Analects relates to the traditions of Shu Ching and Shih Ching, in other words, what the relation between Shu Ching and Shih Ching on the one side and the Confucian Analects on the other is. This comparison will be done first by finding the major common points and differences between Shu Ching and the Analects, and secondly, by doing the same for Shih Ching and the Analects. We will also investigate whether the Analects follow certain strata of Shu Ching or Shih Ching and which features of the Analects would be such. After this, the area of unique early Confucian thought developed in the Analects, and thus not found in Shu Ching and Shih Ching, can be defined.

a. Common Characteristics with Differences

In this section we will be examining some common features of and differences between Shu Ching and the Analects in their attitude to Heaven.

The most important common characteristic is that in both T'ien appears as an important key term and has a remarkable number of occurrences. In both it appears as a godhead, as an autonomous functioning subject, which as godhead is second to none. Confucius shared this seemingly common view.

The two main categories of Heaven in Shu Ching are the punitive and rewarding activity of Heaven and the question of the Heavenly mandate.[79] Both these categories of Heaven can be found in the Analects as well. In Shu Ching the Heavenly mandate is clearly related to the punitive and rewarding activity of Heaven. In contrast to this, in the Analects the Heavenly mandate is expressed as belonging to the favorable Heaven only; Confucius is not afraid of losing the mandate, as the king is in Shu Ching.

In the Analects the beneficent Heaven is clearly expressed, as is the case in Shu Ching, too. The punishing Heaven and the Heavenly mandate are discussed comparatively much less in the Analects than in Shu Ching. The main sentiment in this respect in the Analects is more optimistic than in Shu Ching. This general trend shows that his conception of the Heavenly mandate has some of its roots in Shu Ching, but that the idea has been changed towards a certain direction.

Confucius did not regard Heaven as being the kind of unreliable entity which would remove the mandate if there is fault in the virtue of that person who has the mandate. If Confucius had followed the Chou thought in Shu Ching and had adopted it for his purposes, he ought to have been afraid that his ethical behavior is not sufficiently virtuous and that Heaven any time may take the mandate or task and mission from him. Even when Confucius lost his office, he did not think that Heaven has taken the mandate from him.

[78] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 12-24, 222.

[79] NIKKILÄ 1982, p. 114.

In Shu Ching the mandate is that of the ruler, but in Confucius's case the mandate is a task which is a of mission to spread his doctrines with an intellectual and moral element. Confucian confidence in the faithfulness of Heaven to preserve this intellectual mandate in him becomes understandable on the basis of these differences in the concept of the Heavenly mandate. The mandate of the king in Shu Ching or Chou ideology was something secondary: the virtuous king could receive it from Heaven. It was a secondary thing given after the virtue was proved. If the virtue was lost, then Heaven removed the mandate. In Confucius's case the mandate was primary; there was no virtue or any other qualification between Heaven and the mandate. The mandate itself was this qualification. Both the virtue and the mandate were given by Heaven. In terms of origin both had similar quality. If Confucius had ceased to be virtuous, and started to spread unvirtuous doctrines, this would have proved the mandate had already been lost; but virtue was permanent in him, because it was given by Heaven. Because of this Confucius could be confident that Heaven will not remove his mission from him.

b. The Heavenly Mandate of the Minister

In Shu Ching the explicit conception of Te, which also would fit very well with Confucian thought, is the Te of the assistants of the king, which causes Heaven to react favorably. With this background of Shu Ching one can see here one of the main motives of Confucius's heavenly virtue and mandate, to work as an assistant of the ruler in order to get Heaven to react favorably. Confucius does not refer to this, but here one can see that it is traditional if someone else than a king has the virtue of Te.

In Shu Ching, and not just in the Analects, in principle even someone else than the king could have a mandate. The ministers of Yin were also granted the Ming from Heaven. In the Yin- hierarchy, the king controlled the mandate of a minister. The king had the right to retain the ministers or to dismiss them. Also the officials of the king were expected to consolidate their Heavenly mandate.[80] Confucius developed this idea so that despite not being able to hold office, he could keep the mandate, not the mandate of an official, but the mandate of a moral teacher, which Heaven has sent to spread the right principles widely. If Confucius was accepted as an official, he himself intended to leave the post if the ruler was not virtuous. Confucius did not regard that keeping the office or losing it is related to his mandate. If we look back to Shu Ching, Confucius's conviction of his calling means that the purpose of his teaching would be, if taken seriously, to consolidate Heaven's mandate to the king.

When seeing the mandate from the point of view of the Chou ideology in Shu Ching, one can see that the king was more directly in contact with Heaven than the ministers. The king had a direct responsibility to be virtuous and to behave in such a way that harmony in the universe would be preserved. Confucius's position and his thoughts were those of good helpers or ministers of the ruler. For this class the principles of handling political matters in society were important. The mandate of Confucius was mainly for these purposes. If it had been that of a king, then Confucius's

[80] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 80,81,85,86,110.

principles would have handled more things relating to Heaven and the king. Confucius wanted to stick to his class in the hierarchy and not to consider matters which belonged to a higher stage of the hierarchy. This seems to be one of the reasons why Confucius did not concentrate on the transcendental entities and phenomena, although he took their existence and influence for granted.

c. Heavenly Favor and Learning

In Shu Ching the heavenly favor is mainly heavenly grace and blessing, giving and keeping the mandate upon the virtuous king and taking care of the well-being of the people.[81] The Analects share a similar view concerning the transcendental legitimation of the good kings in the past. However, the Analects describe the heavenly favors more specifically in connection with Confucius personally. This is seen especially in the understanding that Te, the Virtue of Confucius is originated by Heaven. It is because of this that Confucius could enjoy safety ever when in danger.

In the Analects the heavenly favor is also attached to the knowledge of the heavenly mandate, which enables the gentleman to gain success, and so wealth and honor ultimately depend on Heaven.

Shu Ching and the Analects regard Heaven as a preserving power which maintains the natural world, and in the case of the Analects, even the culture.

The general difference in the attitude towards heavenly favors between Shu Ching and the Analects seems to be the attitude towards ethics and learning. In Shu Ching the ethical basis of Te is man, as man's own qualification to earn the heavenly favors of getting the mandate to rule. In the Analects the intellect takes the place of ethics in Shu Ching. The Analects stress the knowledge and learning as proper qualifications in regard of or in front of Heaven. In Confucius's thought studies are an accumulative, continuous process to "get to what is up above", an ongoing and developing process through which Confucius strengthens his transcendentally based identity. In contrast to this, in Shu Ching the virtue of Te is something which either is or is not, and which is not capable of being developed by man, and still its origin is in man.

In the same way, in the Analects Te, viewed from its heavenly origin, is something which is or is not. In Confucius's mind, humanly based matter, in this case studying and learning, is something to be developed and consequently incomplete. From this point of view the virtue of Te, if complete, cannot be based mainly on man, as is the case in Shu Ching.

In terms of intellect, if examining at the matter from Heaven's point of view, the situation according to Shu Ching is the following: Heaven looks to see who among the people has Te in order to be given the mandate to rule. Heaven only seeks a person who has this qualification. This qualification cannot be learned. Confucius's criticism to this set up would be that such a qualification must be given by Heaven. According to the Analects the situation is that man himself has the ability to learn and to study and to gain knowledge and understanding; a man has the ability to gain intellectual growth.

[81] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 80-82,84,85,94.

Heaven gives its favors to people who want to learn. The virtue of Te is not something to be acquired by man's own effort only, it is given by Heaven. In Confucius's teaching this does not need to apply to all the virtues, since only Te is said to originate from Heaven.

d. Heavenly Disfavor

Shu Ching also provides a background to the difficulties which Confucius met personally when sick and when his favorite disciple Yen Yüan died. Traditionally, a long life was one of the heavenly favors. The death of his disciple and even Confucius's sickness could be seen as Heavenly punishments. In addition to this, Confucius understands that improper action will cause rejection by Heaven. For Confucius it was important that Heaven knows him; Confucius built his self identity on Heaven. That Heaven "has bereft him", in Confucius's mind apparently is a very severe heavenly punishment.

If seen against the background of Shu Ching, these should have been educative heavenly punishments to Confucius.[82] Confucius does not follow here the ideology of Shu Ching. If he had followed it he ought to have confessed that he himself has a fault, his virtue, Te, is faulty, or his teaching is erroneous. He understands that Heaven has caused him serious setbacks, but he does not base his ethics on these matters.

One explanation for this could be that Confucius was probably not capable of this kind of self criticism, but rather wanted to think that he was always right. The educative punishments of Heaven, and generally the idea that he who experiences heavenly terror, has some kind of fault is so strongly documented in Shu Ching, that Confucius really ought to have followed this pattern of thought, it he had been a follower of the Chou ideology.

Historically it is clear that at the beginning of Chou this ideology was best defined, but it weakened towards the end of the dynasty. The reason for Confucian silence about this way of thinking would then rather be in the general development of ideas: during Confucius's time the Chou ideology was advocated even less, and the educative heavenly punishments simply did not come into Confucius's mind in his personal context. Apparently he was aware of the idea, but it was for him a historical idea, a nonsense with no relevance during his time and his set of life. This provides a reply to one of the questions in the present work, part one:

"The decay of Chou thought concerning Heaven, king and virtue with the advent of Shih raised the question of to what extent Confucius, even later, emphasized this ideology. The question becomes even more important, since T'ien and Te are rather central both to Chou ideology and to the Analects. Were these terms an inheritance of the Chou tradition in Confucius's system, or were they merely parts of an entirely different world of ideas, which only happened to coincide with the concepts of Chou ideology, but with an entirely new content?"[83]

According to Confucius the basis of the interpretation of heavenly actions differed from the Chou ideology. In a way it had moved in a more secular direction. In Chou thought, mishaps had to explained as heavenly actions and the reason for such actions

[82] NIKKILÄ 1982, p. 97.

[83] NIKKILÄ 1982, p. 236.

should be found. Confucius also understood such events as having been caused by Heaven, but did not seek the motives of Heaven for such actions.

e. Continuing and Discontinuing Ideas

The beginnings of a move towards secular thought can even be seen in Shu Ching; for example in the passage where the Duke of Chou reasons that the present king could serve better on earth than in Heaven.[84] Confucius continues this line of thought. Apparently his ethical motives were not to please Heaven, since the conception of ethical failures causing heavenly punishments formed no part of his thought. He served men, not Heaven to that extent.

When comparing Confucius's thought with the occurrence of the ideas in different strata in Shu Ching, it seems clear, as stated above, that he does not pay attention to the mature Chou ideology of Heavenly educative punishments which are so obvious in the early strata of Shu Ching, and mostly absent from the later ones.[85] The king's personal relation to Heaven appears in both the early and later strata. A parallel to a certain degree is Confucius's personal concern towards Heaven.

Another theme, where quite a clear continuity from Shu Ching to the Analects can be seen, is the theme of officials used by the king and Heaven. Confucius continues this theme in his doctrine of the Heavenly mandate and his personal mission. He uses these ideas to build an ideological basis for the rising shih-class.

When examining the doctrines appearing in the different strata of Shu Ching, a remarkable difference can be seen in the doctrines concerning Heaven and the people, including the ideas pointing towards democracy. Confucius did not develop the doctrines this direction at all. He overlooked the significance of people in connection with Heaven. This may be related to his rejection of other important doctrines of Chou ideology, which were mentioned above.[86]

f. Ideology and Reason

If ideology is defined as "an overall view of or attitude toward life, a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual, group or culture",[87] a system of thought which provides given answers to the basic questions of life without leaving open and unanswered questions, then Chou thought can be called an ideology. The materials above show that Confucius to a great degree rejected the main doctrines of the Chou ideology. He did not follow the doctrines about Heavenly educative and guiding

[84] NIKKILÄ 1982, p. 111.

[85] The Chou ideology "is fully developed in the early Chou documents and less sophisticated in later ones." NIKKILÄ 1982, p. 228.

[86] T'ANG Chün-i 1974, p. 22. CHEN, Richard Min-jui 1974, p. 21.

[87] WEBSTER'S Third New International Dictionary of the English Language 1976, p. 1123, WEBSTER'S Electronic Thesaurus, Nisus, the Amazing Word Processor, Solana Beach 1990.

punishments, the doctrines about the role of the people, Heaven and the king. However, he followed certain doctrines which were important in this ideological thought of Chou. The ancient kings were referred to by Confucius, Heaven was important for him personally and he spoke about heavenly favors and disfavors. He also developed the ideological content further by underlining the importance of Heaven and the task and calling given to him by Heaven, thus linking his self identity quite strongly with Heaven. He used this system of thought to build up a body of doctrine which was suitable for officials to use as their ideological legitimation as officials, as the class of Shih.

In his thoughts about Heaven the impact of reason and intellect can be seen. Confucius regarded progressive studies as important for competence to be known or recognized by Heaven. Confucius saw the intellectualism as one of the cores of his mission. His main intention was not political influence and power; otherwise he would have tried to keep his position as an official at all costs. His main intention was to exercise a kind of infocratia, to gain influence and power through correctly carrying out his mission of spreading his doctrines widely, and to guarantee the continuity of his doctrines. Otherwise the death of his favorite disciple would not have been such a great loss for him.

Confucius did not regard Heaven as an all-determining entity which leaves no space for human intellectual effort to solve the basic questions of the way of life and ethics. In Shu Ching the ethical behavior of the king and officials is always reflected to Heaven, to transcendence. Confucius freed ethics from the bondage of Heavenly educative punishments. In connection with Heaven he left a space free for an independent autonomous ethical agent, in that practical case, for himself as such an agent. How he developed his ethical doctrine cannot be seen from his discussion of Heaven, but rather from his use of proper ethical concepts which will be discussed later in this study.

4. Early Confucian Heaven and Heaven in Shih Ching

a. The Heavenly Mandate.

Both Shih Ching and the Analects place emphasis on the old ideal kings and their mandate. In this respect Confucius follows the traditional view.[88]

Shih Ching speaks about the mandate and also reflects the Chou ideology to a small extent. However, the main attitude is that although the mandate is changed, the new dynasty is not seen as being a solution and heavenly punishment for the problems which arose during the old receding dynasty.[89] In the this respect Confucius's thinking resembles the main Shih Ching- tradition.

The doctrine about the heavenly mandate in Shih Ching is not developed to the extent it is in Shu Ching. Confucius's concept of his personal mandate has a slight resemblance to the idea of Heaven giving good officials or assistants to the king.[90]

[88] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 164,167.

[89] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 163,165,166.

[90] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 156,168.

Seen from the Confucian point of view, this would mean that Heaven has intended Confucius to be such an assistant, or if not an assistant, at least a teacher and propagator of the right principles.

The position of the officials according to Shih Ching is to some extent ambiguous. There are good officials, but also bad ones. But one has to obey even the bad ones because they are appointed by Heaven, who nevertheless observes the activities of the officials. In addition to all this, Shih Ching often criticizes the bad officials and calls them "nocuous insects".[91] A similar polarity between bad and good officials can be seen in Confucius's principles as well, who speaks about the gentleman and the small man, an ideal official and the opposite. The ethical comparisons between Shih Ching and Confucian criticism will be dealt with below in connection with the ethical terms.

b. Favorable Heaven

Confucius does not mention Heaven as the creator, as Shih Ching understands this concept, but Confucius's opinion is consistent with Shih Ching in that Heaven maintains the natural world in both.[92]

According to Shih Ching the virtue, Te is also originally form Heaven: Heaven shows the bright path of virtue to the king; the "bright virtue" was transferred by God from Yin to Chou.[93] The conception of the heavenly origin of Te is quite clear in Shih Ching, as well as in the Confucian Analects. The Confucian "supra empirical" characteristic of Te or transcendental foundation of Te- ethics is by no means a Confucian invention, or Confucius's personal search for the ultimate basis of ethics. It is simply Confucius's attendance to the traditional thinking exposed in Shih Ching. Because for Confucius ethical considerations were important, it cannot be a pure random occurrence that Confucius attaches Te to Heaven, but only a natural traditional conception. It is, however, noteworthy that in this important conception Confucius follows Shih Ching and not Shu Ching, which does not stress the transcendental origin of Te.

Shih Ching regards Te as providing a reason for positive actions of Heaven together with numinous reasons, such like sacrifice to the God and ancestors[94]

In Shih Ching the favor of Heaven is especially something the king has.[95] The corresponding attitude in the Analects is that heavenly favor is given to Confucius personally.

In Confucius's thinking the intellectual side is strongly in the foreground even in connection with Heaven. In Shih Ching there is a small seed of this attitude, when it is mentioned that the king learns from those who are bright in their enlightenment and that

[91] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 158,159,208.

[92] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 151-155. "Never in China did the idea of creation *ex nihilo* develop in ways comparable to its theistic use in Europe." NEVILLE 1989, p. 59.

[93] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 156,169,177.

[94] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 154,155.

[95] NIKKILÄ 1982, PP. 155,156.

Heaven shows the bright path of virtue, Te, to the king.[96] Although Te is regarded as coming from Heaven, still there is an element of the king's personal learning. However, this is such a small step in the intellectual direction that the Confucian ideas about knowing and learning cannot be regarded as repetitions of this idea, but principally his genuine innovations.

c. Heavenly Disfavor

In Shih Ching unfavorable action on the part of Heaven is directed at the people collectively; even the innocent have to suffer. And of course even an individual has to experience heavenly severity. Shih Ching inquires into the reason for such action, but this reason is not found. The severe Heaven is, to a great extent simply inexplicable. This reveals an inclination towards determinism. The Chou mechanism of changing the dynasty as a heavenly punishment is stressed very little. It is also noteworthy that in the oldest section, the Sung section, there is no mention of heavenly severity.[97] Quantitatively, heavenly severity is described much more in Shih Ching than in the Analects, which concentrates solely on the relationships between Confucius and Heaven in this context, leaving out heavenly unfavorable actions directed at collectives. The Confucian determinism has to some extent a resemblance with the inexplicable Heaven of Shih Ching.

When we examine Confucius's personal attitudes towards heavenly disfavor, we can see certain ideological relationships between Shih Ching and Confucius. Confucius felt that he is dependent upon Heaven, like the individual in Shih Ching. Confucius appreciated being known by Heaven. Loss of his favorite disciple, loss of office, not being recognized, distressed Confucius. Similar events distressed an individual in Shih Ching: not having a proper home, not being understood by anyone when in difficulties, loss of a beloved one. Some places in Shih Ching inquire into the reasons for such events, but no solution is offered. Confucius, too, recognizes certain kinds of reason for heavenly severity, at least in principle; that a wrong action causes heavenly severity. In Shih Ching, as well as in the Analects, there is also the idea of an inexplicable severe Heaven, when no reason for such action is found, nor even posited. Confucius shares these themes of despair and skepticism, which Roberts regards as "proto atheism".[98] This idea of proto atheism must not be exaggerated, since Shih Ching speaks about prayer, although things do not change despite the prayer and sacrifice, the communication with Heaven being only one way. This is the position of the Analects too in relation to prayer. In addition, although prayer is not very emphatic and regarded as not very effective, it shows that neither Confucius nor the sentiments in Shih Ching follow determinism. If this had been the case, prayer would have been rejected. The fact that prayer takes place implies that there is, or at least might be, some possibility of influencing the transcendental power through that medium.

[96] NIKKILÄ 1982, p. 169.

[97] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 156-166.

[98] ROBERTS 1966, pp. 104,105.

The above mentioned similarities show that the alleged Confucian "agnosticism" has its roots in Shih Ching. Confucius talks less about Heaven than Shih Ching does, but Confucius's personal attitude towards Heaven is quite close to that of the individual persons described in Shih Ching in connection with Heaven. For both, Heaven is important, and for Confucius's personal self awareness or identity Heaven was by no means less important than for the mentioned individuals in Shih Ching.

d. Pattern of Thought

In Shih Ching the pattern of thought begins with the general epithets of Heaven, and then moves to more specific characteristics, progressing from general to specific.[99] This is a similar pattern of thought to the one which can be discerned in the structure of the Analects, as seen in the introduction. Philosophically this implies that understanding the general principles precedes the specific ones: one has to understand the general principles first in order to understand the practical phenomena. This genuine Confucian principle is reflected in Shih Ching. Whether there are any historical relationships between these patterns of thought is a different question. If those odes in which this pattern of thought appears are comparatively reliable sources, as is most probably the case, then there might have been a general way of presenting things first by stating the general principles and then the practical implications of these principles. The compilers of the Analects followed this generally used pattern of presentation. In terms of Confucianism this is not just a way of presentation, but a philosophic stance which involves understanding the general principles, the great lines, first. Ethically this would mean not to list cases of what is right or wrong, but to state principles which are to be applied to certain situations by the ethical agent. To what extent this freedom has been realized in Confucian ethics can be seen in what follows.

e. Themes in Shih Ching which were Overlooked by Confucius

In the above, several points which the Analects and Shih Ching have in common were seen. However, certain themes are absent from the Analects: the role of women is totally absent; the esteem of married life in connection with Heaven does not exist; the cosmological frame of reference can hardly be seen in the Analects; in connection with Heaven, T'ien as creator does not appear; the uncertainty of keeping the mandate is not in the Analects; the collective heavenly punishments cannot be found; the king as a connecting agent between transcendence and immanence is not described.

When we consider what Confucius said about these, we probably do not err much if we conclude that in these issues, too, Confucius basically followed Shih Ching. An exception to this is that in his personal history we know that he did not greatly value the married life and the family. He valued his disciples much more. They were important for his mission.

[99] NIKKILÄ 1982, pp. 157,163.

f. Confucius's Own Standpoint and Heaven

In the above it was seen that most of the Confucian ideas in connection with Heaven follow more or less the traditional lines. The beginnings of some of Confucius's ideas are to be seen in the traditions, and some ideas are even better developed in the tradition than in the Analects. The fact that Confucius followed concepts in Shih Ching indicates that Confucius probably also followed those ideas which he only rarely mentioned. There was a certain intellectual climate, which Confucius did not negate. In this climate Heaven was important, as it was for Confucius.

Despite this great similarity, Confucius quite clearly had a new emphasis and even new themes. One such clear emphasis was his personal identity anchored in Heaven and binding the virtue, culture and himself together. Te and culture had a transcendental foundation and worked as his personal protective shield against dangers.

A new theme in the Analects in the context of Heaven is intellectualism. The ethical agent is autonomous, free to use his intellectual ability in morals and to adapt himself to the situations. This attitude prepared an area for moral principles rather than lists of practical dos and don'ts. However, it is worth noting that the idea of general principles before practical more detailed application or description exists already in Shih Ching. In his new theme of intellectualism, Confucius found a transcendental motive. Studies are progressive, aiming to Heaven in order to be known or recognized by Heaven. Because of this motive of intellectualism, in connection with Heaven, when we search for the philosopher in Confucius, we do not find a philosopher, but a theologian who is a heavenly motivated intellectual. Confucius's attitude towards Heaven grows from the tradition which regards Heaven as important. Thus it is only natural that he is a heavenly intellectual, a theologian, at least in connection with Heaven.

This theological motive of intellectualism, or heavenly intellectualism, from our present western point of view is only one possibility among many. Confucius could have ignored the importance of Heaven. The materials do not show that he reluctantly admitted the importance of Heaven, under pressure or force. Confucius brought Heaven naturally into his thinking. Confucius did not speak much about Heaven; however he spoke enough that one is convinced that Heaven was important to him and that his personal identity was anchored in Heaven. In this sense he personally was a religious man, and in the intellectual motive he was a theologian. From this standpoint he developed further a value theory, which is reflected in the ethical terms. It remains to be seen whether Confucius has a system separated from his personal heavenly standpoint, another more "profane" philosophy of values, or whether he sees the value theory theologically legitimated. En examination of what Confucius says about Heaven shows that the only ethical term he attached to the Heavenly climate is Te. A wider research of Te shows what he really meant by it, and through this meaning, what the Heavenly implications for his ethics were, since Te was of heavenly origin in the genuine fashion of the Shih Ching tradition.

5. A comparison with Lao Tzu's Concept of Heaven

T'ien appears 92 times in Lao Tzu. Many of these occurrences are in the combination "under heaven" 天下 which means "world" or "empire". Often T'ien appears in the combination "heaven and earth" meaning the visible cosmos or universe.[100]

According to the Taoist cosmology in the beginning there was Tao as an undifferentiated entity. Tao operates forever and produces heaven and earth and all things. The beginning of heaven and earth was nameless 無名. Chan explains the namelessness: "To Lao Tzu, Tao is nameless and is the simplicity without names; when names arise, that is, when the simple oneness of Tao is split into individual things with names, it is time to stop". As to the beginning of heaven and earth, Lao Tzu says: "The spirit of the valley never dies. This is called the mysterious female. The gateway of the mysterious female is called the root of heaven and earth. Dimly visible, it seems as if it were there. Yet use will never drain it." There is also a saying: "When the gates of heaven 天門 open and shut, are you capable of keeping to the role of the female?" Lau follows Chuang Tzu when explaining this. The gates of heaven "is the invisible gateway through which the myriad creatures come into being and return to nothing."[101] What is said above lets one understand the relationship between the mysterious female, Tao, heaven and earth. Tao is the origin of heaven and earth, but the mysterious female or the spirit of valley functions here in a similar way. Functionally Tao and the mysterious female are assimilated. This functional assimilation does not necessarily mean that they are assimilated as beings or entities. However, for our purpose what is more important is the fact that Tao and the mysterious female or the spirit of valley are above heaven in the Taoist ontological hierarchy. In Lao Tzu heaven is by no means an "independent supremely functioning entity, initiator of things and principles." Heaven in Taoism is a part of creation or nature and not a creative power, like Tao or the mysterious female. Taoism does not speak about Heaven with a capital letter.

This "mysterious female" calls attention to one major theme in Taoism, the exaltation of the feminine. Schwartz says:

"Here the symbol of the valley whose nature is wholly determined by its empty space and its passive receptivity to all that flows into it seems to be related to the sexual and generative role of the female. The female role in sex is ostensibly passive. Yet the female conquers the male by stillness, in stillness

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[100] See Lao Tzu, chapters 13, 28, 29, 31, 32, 40, 43, 52, pp. 69, 79, 85, 87, 89, 101, 104, 113. The references are made to D.C. Lau's translation, Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching, London 1974.
THIEL 1971, p. 58. Beky says that Lao Tzu uses this expression in the traditional sense of "universe". BEKY 1972, p. 159.

[101] LAO TZU 25, p. 82. KARLGREN 1975, p. 5. SMULLYAN 1985, pp. 24-27. About the comment, see CHAN, Wing-tsit 1963, p. 144. About the cosmology, see HENDERSON 1984, p. 35.

LAO TZU 1:2, p. 57, CHAN Wing-tsit 1963, p. 97. See the original text for example WANG PI 1975, p. 5. or LAU 1982, p. 2.

LAO TZU 6:17, p. 62. This has been explained as having a sexual reference. Chang rejects this idea. CHAN Wing-tsit 1963, p. 111. Yen explains that the middle of the valley is empty. The Spirit 神 cannot be understood, so it is said that it never dies. The female is Yin and the mysterious is Yang. Yin and Yang are mixed together, so it says "mysterious female" YEN Lin-feng 1971, p.27. Conrady regards this passage as an ancient myth of creation, (Schöpfungsmythus). The probability that this passage has something to do with philosophic speculations is very small. CONRADY 1932, p. 154.

LAO TZU 10:24, p. 66. LAU D.C. 1974, p. 66.

she occupies the lower position."[102]

In Confucius's thinking Heaven is a being upon which Confucius is dependent. In this Confucius differs from the Taoist tradition and is much closer to the tradition of Shu Ching and also Shih Ching. This tradition, which prevails in Shih Ching, Shu Ching and Confucius's thinking, concerning Heaven may be called the tradition of Heaven as the independent originator. The Taoist tradition concerning Heaven may be called a tradition of heaven as a part of nature only. In Taoism Tao stands in the place of the independent originator. As such, Taoism is the tradition of Tao as the independent originator. It is noteworthy, however, that both traditions recognize an independent originator, but call it by different names. This does not imply that Heaven in Chou ideology and in Confucius on the one hand and Tao in Taoism on the other have the same ideological content even though they fulfill a similar main function.

The primacy of feminine over heaven and earth, which is next to Tao, is an important characteristic of Taoism. Needham says:

"The Confucian and Legalist social ethical thought-complex was masculine, managing, hard, dominating, aggressive, rational and donative. - The Taoist broke with this radically and completely by emphasizing all that was feminine tolerating, yielding, permissive, withdrawing, mystical and receptive. Their exaltation of the 'Valley Spirit' was an affront to the Confucians; for is it not said in the Lun Yü: 'The superior man hates to dwell in a low-lying situation, where all the evil in the world will flow down upon him."[103]

"Heaven and earth are enduring", because "they do not give themselves life". This cosmological notion has a practical ethical implication: "Therefore the sage puts his person last and it comes first." Chan translates this as: "Therefore the sage places himself in the background but finds himself in the foreground."[104] This withdrawing attitude of the sage is based on the primacy of similar characteristic in the cosmological foundation, the attitude which proceeds from the feminine root of heaven to heaven itself, and from heaven to the sage. This structure shows that in Taoism too, ethics is based on the function of the universe and is originally from there.

Lao Tzu has a kind of hierarchy of universe when it is said: "Man models himself on earth, earth on heaven, heaven on the way, and the way on that which is naturally so." All these entities are described as great 大 with the exception that in the place of man there is the king, representing men. These all form a unity. Chan explains the Taoist unity:

One "is equivalent to Tao but has different connotations. Tao denotes the Way, the principle, especially that of Wu-wei (non action) taking no unnatural action. The One, on the other hand, denotes unity and simplicity, the uncarved block before it is split up into individual things, and the number that is not relative to other numbers. It is things 'merge into one'. It also denotes the beginning and the origin of things."[105]

Heaven and earth are neutral. This is seen in the following passage: "Heaven and

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[102] SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 200, LAO TZU 61, p. 122.

[103] NEEDHAM 1956, p. 59. Needham quotes Legge. See LEGGE II 1969, AN. 19:20, pp. 345,346.

[104] LAO TZU 7:18,19, p. 63. Chan comments: "This Taoist doctrine of self-denial expresses the same spirit as do the Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice and the Buddhist doctrine of non-ego." CHAN Wing-tsit 1963, p. 112.

[105] LAO TZU 25:58, p. 82. The text is: 人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然. WANG PI 1975 p. 58.

LAO TZU 25:57, p. 82, 16:38, p 72, 39:85-89, pp 100, 101. CHAN Wing-tsit 1963, pp. 145, 171.

earth are ruthless 不仁, and treat the myriad creatures as straw dogs; the sage is ruthless, and treats the people as straw dogs." The ancient people in China used straw dogs in sacrifices. After the sacrifice the straw dogs were thrown away. As heaven and earth are ruthless they are naturally "Wu-wei", 無為, non active. Wang Pi explains that the kind people 仁人 must establish and teach and have a kind of action, Wei 為.[106] Here we see the Taoist criticism against Confucianism. From the Taoist stand-point the Confucian Jen has no ontological foundation whatsoever.

The bare Heaven- terms appear in connection with the virtue of non-contention 不爭之德 which emphasizes the natural action or refraining from unnatural action, like "A skilful leader of troops is not oppressive with his military strength." This non contention has its basis in Heaven, and is called a principle of old. However this is only a trace of the idea of antiquity, so common in the tradition of Shu Ching and even Confucius.[107]

The combination 'way of heaven' 天道 has been mentioned when giving examples of how the way of heaven functions without acting contrary to nature, Wu-wei: "The way of heaven excels in overcoming though it does not speak, in attracting though it does not summon, in laying plans though it appears slack. The net of heaven is cast wide. Though the mesh is not fine, yet nothing ever slips through."[108]

The idea of retiring is close to the notion of Wu-wei: "To retire when the task is accomplished is the way of heaven". This notion can also be found in Confucianism. In Taoism this is apparently one of the actions which is not contrary to nature and is according to Wu-wei.[109]

Another characteristic of heavenly action is reflected by the sentence: "Heaven hates what it hates, who knows why?"[110] This is slightly akin to the punishing Heaven in the Shu Ching tradition. This notion, however, is not prominent in Lao Tzu, and the question shows that it is more problematic than clear.

Another characteristic of the natural action of the Tao of heaven is to balance between choices or to smooth out the extremities. "The high it presses down, the low it lifts up; The excessive it takes from, the deficient it gives to." The non-favoritism and neutrality of T'ien Tao are close to this feature. With these features T'ien Tao is a fine example

[106] LAO TZU 5:14-16, p. 61. KARLGREN 1975, p. 2. Wu Wei should be translated "refraining from activity contrary to Nature" rather than "non-action" or "inactivity" NEEDHAM II 1956, p. 68. WANG PI 1975, p. 13. About straw dogs, see YEN Ling-fen 1965, pp. 24, 25. "Great goodness is not good, ruthless." CHU CH'IEN 1984, p. 23.

[107] LAO TZU 68:166, p. 130. CHAN Wing-tsit 1963, p. 221. Chan follows Wang Pi. See WANG PI 1975, p. 140. WANG PI 1979, p. 189. D.C. Lau omits 古. LAU D.C. 1974, p. 191. In doing this he also omits the idea that heaven and ethics in Lao Tzu have at least some kind of reference to the idea of antiquity, which is a well established idea in the tradition in Shih Ching and Shu Ching as well as in the Confucian Analects. 古 included follows Wang Pi's text, see YEN Ling-feng 1965, p. 280, who also follows Wang Pi.

[108] LAO TZU 73:179, p. 135. "Without looking out of the window one can see the way of heaven 天道 ". LAO TZU 47:106, p. 108.

[109] LAO TZU 9:23, p. 65. Chan says: "Note that one should withdraw only after his work is done. The Taoist way of life is not that of a hermit, although hermits have taken its name." CHAN Wing-tsit 1963, p. 115.

[110] LAO TZU 73:178, p. 135. In this context 惡 means "hates, to harm" YEN Ling-fen 1971, p. 293.

for the ideal ethical behavior and for the ruling as well.[111]

The Analects still follow the questions about Heaven being positive or negative in its actions towards Confucius; Heaven providing a mandate; a person having a personal relationship towards Heaven; and Heaven being a supreme functioning subject. The structure of the doctrines of Lao Tzu do not follow this pattern of questions. In the cosmological hierarchy heaven is not supreme; it is subordinated under Tao. Heaven's attitude towards men is not discussed much, and the relationships between heaven and man in past and present is not regarded as an important question. In the place of these there is the T'ien Tao as a basis of moral and political actions. This notion is not discussed much in the Analects. Historical perpetuity in connection with heaven is not discussed in Lao Tzu; also the heavenly Ming as a predetermined course of action is not discussed, T'ien is not as much a key term in Lao Tzu as it is in the Confucian Analects.

Communication with heaven both in the Analects and in Lao Tzu is little developed. In this both have broken the traditional attitude expressed in Shu Ching.

Generally speaking the statements about T'ien in Lao Tzu are vaguer and fewer than in the Analects, and the meaning of the term is less definite in Lao Tzu than in the Analects. However, the comparison above shows that Confucius has distinct ideas which are different from the ideas in Lao Tzu, and even some mutual criticism between these two schools can be seen.

To illuminate the specific philosophical position of Confucius more clearly, it is useful now to compare his thoughts with the thoughts of Mo Tzu.

6. A Comparison with Mo Tzu's Concept of Heaven

The comparison with Mo Tzu's thinking is based mainly on chapters 8 to 39, the synoptic books of Mohism.

In many instances Mo Tzu mentions Heaven and spirits together. The functions of Heaven and those of the spirits are partly the same, although Heaven and the spirits are not assimilated totally. However, they have a greater resemblance to each other than according to the thinking of Confucius. Mo Tzu says that Heaven is above, the spirits are in the middle sphere and the people are below.[112] In this way Mo Tzu is close to monotheism, but also believes in the spirits.

Mo Tzu tries to prove the theory of the existence of spirits and ghosts by using his three laws or reasoning: 1) The historical argument, which means to find the foundation of theory in a study of the experiences of the wise men of the past. 2) The testimonial argument, which means to examine the compatibility of the theory with the facts of the actual experience of the people. 3) The pragmatic argument, which means to see whether or not the theory is conducive to the welfare of the state and of the people. These three laws are independent and do not have logical interrelations.[113] This method is used by

[111] LAO TZU 77:184, 185, p. 139, 79:192, p. 141, 81:196, p. 143.

[112] MO TZU pp. 140,185,199,224,233. HSIAO 1979, p. 246. SJÖHOLM 1982, p. 100.

[113] HU, Shih 1968, p. 72. MEI, Yi-pao 1973, pp. 61,68,69. HSÜ Fu-kuan 1975, pp. 312,313.

Mo Tzu to prove the doctrines. It is like a given pattern which can be used for Mohist doctrinal apologetics. In opposition to this, Confucius has no such readymade method of proof. Confucius emphasized the importance of learning and studying instead. Consequently Confucius's doctrines were not as definitely stated as Mo Tzu's.

In the chapter "On Ghosts" Mo Tzu mentions several historical testimonies on ghosts referring to many old records. He also notes that many have heard and seen something of ghosts and spirits, and that this is reliable. Mo Tzu gains historical support for his argument by referring to the ancient kings. The ghosts have a pragmatic use: they can reward virtue and punish vice, The ghosts and spirits see the wrongdoers, robbers and so on. The officials will not dare to be corrupt in office, and the people dare not do bad things. "And the world will have order". The argumentation of Mo Tzu here shows some empirical thinking. According to Hsü Mo Tzu was an empiricist, but took only the empirical facts without developing an empirical theory. Birdswhistell says:

"By using evidence from historical records and not from the actual experiences of the people, Mo Tzu accomplished two things. First, although what he did was totally invalid, he responded to the question of the reliability of the testimony by using accounts of respected men of the past. The assumption was that since these records and these men were regarded as reliable, therefore what they said must be reliable. ...secondly, by referring to actual people from the past, Mo Tzu was attempting to provide an existential grounding for his hypothesis that spirits exist. Since universal propositions function as hypotheses and do not imply existence, they are not statements of fact asserting the existence of instances of the proposition."[114]

According to Mo Tzu the honorable and wise Heaven may give blessings and rewards to the people. Ancient good kings got the blessings because they were obedient to Heaven. Those who take righteousness, Yi, 義 as their standard get blessings. Obedience means taking Yi as one's standard. This Yi is given by Heaven to the emperor who mediates it to his subordinates. Then these pass it to their subordinates.[115] Schwartz says the sages:

"Understood that Heaven wishes them to bring into being a system in which those who act well will be rewarded and those who act wickedly will be punished, Above all they understood that Heaven provides the ultimate model for men... The sage-kings were the active collaborators of Heaven in 'constructing' an ideal pattern of human society. I use the Western word 'constructing' here in relation to the metaphor of order because, in this case, it eminently seems to apply."

Graham has realized that the Mohist references to the antiquity are absent from the most Mohist parts of the text. Only the spokesmen of the "deviant, not to say degenerate, Mohism of the South, who elevates the ancient books to scriptural authority."[116] This historical retrospective point of view is much more important for Mo Tzu than for Confucius.

In Mo Tzu's thinking many virtues are related to Heaven or at least have some connection to it. Mo Tzu says for example: "If the rulers, ministers and gentlemen of the world truly desire to honour the way, Tao, 道 benefit the people, and search out the basis of benevolence, Jen, 仁, and righteousness, Yi, 義, then they must not fail to obey the will of Heaven, for obedience to the will of Heaven is the standard of

[114] MO TZU pp. 161,162,165,169,170. BIRDWHISTELL 1984, p. 180. See also HANSEN 1983, p. 85.

[115] MO TZU pp. 14,142,147,155,138,44,139,141,137.

[116] SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 145. GRAHAM 1985, p. 28.

righteousness."[117]

Mo Tzu also explains what is heavenly virtue, T'ien Te, 天德. It is to do righteousness, Yi, 義, and to obey the will of Heaven. Righteousness is the standard and the basis of government. This means for example that the great does not attack the small and the strong will not plunger the weak. The states will not ruin each others with "water, fire, poison and weapons". Such a government will be beneficial to "Heaven above, to the spirits in the middle sphere, to the people below. Being beneficial to these three it is beneficial to all. This is called the virtue of Heaven, T'ien Te, 天德; whoever practises this is a sage, magnanimous, Jen, 仁, gracious, and righteous, Yi, 義, loyal, affectionate, and filial, and all such good names in the world will be gathered and attributed to him. Why so? Because such conduct is in accordance with the will of Heaven."[118]

According to Mo Tzu, Heaven in itself also serves as a standard. His view is as follows: In the world, there are many parents, teachers and rulers, but only few of them are Jen, and most of them are not Jen. Imitating the not Jen, cannot be taken as the right standard. Because of this, the only proper standard in government is Heaven "Nothing better than following Heaven. Heaven is all-inclusive and impartial in its activities, abundant and unceasing in its blessings, and lasting and untiring in its guidance."[119]

Heaven loves all people. This can be known, because Heaven sends a calamity upon anyone who murders the innocent. There are those who hate people and oppress them and oppose the will of Heaven. Those who love the people and obey the will of Heaven are the old sage kings. According to Mo Tzu they engaged themselves in universality and not partiality in love.

"Loving universally, they did not attack the small states with their large states, they did not molest the small houses with their large houses... such a regime was agreeable to Heaven above, to the spirits in the middle sphere and to the people below. Being helpful to these three, it was helpful to all. And this was Heavenly virtue, T'ien Te."

In addition, we know that Heaven loves everyone, because it accepts sacrifices from everyone and Heaven rewards the virtuous and punishes the evil. Mo Tzu proves this by the fact that the ancient sage kings "loved what it loved and benefited what it would benefit" and Heaven rewarded them. Heaven punished the wicked kings.[120]

Heaven may use the king to execute the punishment: The ancient king Chieh of Hsia was "an emperor in honour and possessed the whole empire in wealth. He cursed Heaven and blasphemed against the spirits above and destroyed the multitudes below. Thereupon Heaven commissioned T'ang to carry out the judicious punishment." A similar story is told concerning the king Chow of Yin, who was punished by Heaven using king Wu to carry out the punishment. Sometimes spirits are mentioned together with Heaven as subject, and both of them, Heaven and the spirits, may bless or punish.[121]

Mo Tzu regards Heaven as a creator which maintains or keeps up everything that

[117] WATSON 1963, p. 93. MO TZU pp. 142,155,159.

[118] MO TZU p. 55.

[119] MO TZU p. 14, HSIAO S.A., p. 243.

[120] MO TZU pp. 146,148,153-155. SJÖHOLM 1982, pp. 131-137.

[121] MO TZU pp. 171,172,185,199.

exists. Heaven has created everything for the good of man, including the natural world and the phenomena of it as well as the society. Mo Tzu says: "The work or Heaven extends to even the smallest things that are enjoyed by man. Such benefits may indeed be said to be substantial, yet there is no service in return."[122] These ideas of Mo Tzu place the human being as a centre and object which Heaven serves through the creation and maintenance of nature and society.

In Mo Tzu's thinking Heaven is supreme. He says:

"Heaven is more honourable and wise than the emperor for a reason: When the emperor practises virtue Heaven rewards, when the emperor does evil Heaven punishes. When there are disease and calamities the emperor will purify and bathe himself and prepare clean cakes and wine to do sacrifice and libation to Heaven and the spirits. Heaven then removes them. But I have not yet heard of Heaven invoking the emperor for blessing. So I know Heaven is more honourable and wise than the emperor... But is there yet any one more honourable and wise than Heaven? Heaven is really the most honourable and wise. Therefore, righteousness, Yi, 義 surely comes from Heaven. And hence Mo Tzu said: If the gentlemen of the world really desire to follow the way and benefit the people, they must not disobey the will of Heaven, the origin of magnanimity, Jen, 仁 and righteousness, Yi 義". [123]

In holding this opinion Mo Tzu sympathizes with Confucius and especially the old traditions in Shu Ching and Shih Ching. However, he elaborates the origins of the virtues more profoundly than Confucius who indicated expressis verbis the heavenly origin only about Te. In addition, Confucius does not evaluate Heaven like Mo Tzu. For Confucius Heaven cannot be characterized so clearly, although learning has a heavenly motive. Confucius wanted to learn and wanted others to learn, but Mo Tzu did not need to stress learning, because he knew everything already. In this respect Mo Tzu is closer to the given system of thought, which replies to the basic questions and resembles ideology, whereas Confucius's attitude is a more dynamic process of gaining knowledge. From this point of view Confucius appears more scientifically minded.

Communication between man and Heaven is not emphasized at all. Mo Tzu says: "The wise man should reverence Heaven and worship the spirits, love the people and economize in expenditures."[124] This points to the direction that the spirits are closer to man, and can be approached easier than Heaven, which should be reverenced. Heaven in this attitude appears as "tremendum" whereas the spirits are more suitable for a man to approach. Confucius had a stronger feeling of a direct relationship with Heaven without any mediators.

Mo Tzu refutes fatalism. He interprets the Confucian doctrine on T'ien Ming, 天命, as fatalism. According to Mo Tzu, the Confucians holds that "Old age or early death, poverty or wealth, safety or danger, order or chaos are destined by the fate of Heaven, T'ien Ming, and cannot be modified. Failure or success, reward or punishment, luck or adversity, are all settled; the wisdom and power or man can do nothing." Officers who believe this, according to Mo Tzu, will neglect their duties. Also the common people, if they believe this, will neglect their work. [125]

Shih concludes that Confucius had a certain determinism, but whether it is the result of blind natural forces or the decision of a personal God remains unclear. This opinion

[122] MO TZU pp. 145,146. See also WILHELM 1929, p. 34. SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 145.

[123] MO TZU pp. 141,142.

[124] MO TZU p. 233. Cf. SJÖHOLM 1982, pp. 101,102.

[125] MO TZU pp. 192,193,196,197,202. ROETZ 1984, pp. 218, 219. SJÖHOLM 1982, p. 97.

is mainly based in the following statement: "Death and life are the decree of Heaven; wealth and rank depend upon the will of Heaven."[126]

Heaven is strongly related to the ethical terms, as seen above. The upkeeping force of Heaven is righteousness, since it is originated from Heaven and without it the world dies.[127] Compared with Confucius, Mo Tzu "deified" the values, whereas Confucius relates only the virtue of Te to Heaven.

The positive attitude of Heaven is emphasized by Mo Tzu. However, this attitude is more general than by Confucius, who felt the attitude towards himself personally. In Mo Tzu this positive heavenly attitude is bound to obedience and righteousness, while the negative attitude is a result of disobedience. Mei says: "Mo Tzu's religion might be summed up as theistic in nature and social and moral in function." According to Mei the attitude of Confucius was humanistic agnosticism. He refers here to the well known passages in the Analects: "The subjects on which the Master did not talk were extraordinary things, feats of strength, disorder and spiritual beings", and "Chi Lu asked about serving the spirits and the dead, the Master said, 'While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve their spirits?' Chi Lu added, 'I venture as about death?' He was answered: 'While you do not know life, how can you know about death?'"[128] To interpret these translations by Legge as showing agnosticism is defendable, but to characterize the whole of Confucius's thinking as that of agnosticism basing one's argument on these translations seems to be over-simplification in the light of the materials on Heaven in the Confucian Analects. However, it is probable that Confucius was closer to fatalism than Mo Tzu, because he did not relate the ethical concepts to Heaven too closely.

Mo Tzu's methods differ from those of Confucius, who does not refer to such methods. Mo Tzu legitimates ethics through Heaven, and also the heavenly actions are human-centered, for the sake of the people. The motivation of ethics in Confucius is education centered, whereas Mo Tzu regards the virtues as coming from the transcendence.

In the attitude towards transcendence, Confucius regards Heaven as an independent unity, directly communicating with human being. Mo Tzu has added to the transcendence the spirits, who are in between man and heaven. The human being honors heaven, just in Confucius, but does not have such a personal relationship towards Heaven. The human being according to Mo Tzu can communicate with the spirits instead.

Mo Tzu says much more about transcendence than Confucius, but he speaks about them as if they were everyday matters. Confucius seems to have adopted a more personal and meaningful relation to Heaven. He does not speak much about it, but feels that his personal identity depends heavily on Heaven.

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[126] SHIH 1970, pp. 499,500. AN. 12:5, p. 163.

[127] MO TZU p. 136. CHAN, Wing-tsit 1970, p. 211.

[128] MEI 1973, pp. 158,159. AN. 7:15, 11:11, LEGGE I 1969, pp. 204,240. See footnotes 35 and 36 of the present work. Needham says: "Feats of strength' presumably refers to the superhuman force of Nature as shown in natural convulsions such as earthquakes, tidal waves, avalanches etc. Confucius did not discuss about these, because they seemed to have no bearing on the problems of human society." NEEDHAM 1956, p. 15. See footnotes 35 and 36 of the present work.