

VI. YI, RIGHTEOUSNESS

1. Yi and the Gentleman

Yi occurs only 24 times in the Analects. Nevertheless, it has been generally regarded as an important and even a crucial Confucian term.³⁸²

In more than one third of the occurrences of Yi it is stated that Yi is an attribute of a gentleman. It is important for the gentleman to have Yi. "A gentleman gives the first place to Right." 君子義以為士。 If the gentleman has courage 勇 but no righteousness his behavior will have disadvantageous consequences. This has even been interpreted to mean that "a personal contribution of Yi is a necessary condition for moral action."³⁸³

Confucius said about courage: "to see what is right 義 and not to do it is cowardice 無勇 or want of courage".³⁸⁴ The above passages show that the gentleman is responsible for being Yi, righteous, otherwise there will be disorder. However, Confucius made it clear that he had failed to go to where righteousness is.³⁸⁵

The Gentleman is emotionally neutral, he "has neither enmities nor affections; but wherever he sees Right he ranges himself beside it."³⁸⁶ This neutrality clearly means that the gentleman must neither favor nor disfavor anyone, he must be impartial.

The general environment he lives in is important for the Yi of the gentleman. "Piling up moral force" means taking loyalty and good faith as one's guiding principles, and migrating to places where right prevails.³⁸⁷ This apparently means his general mental

³⁸² BOODBERG 1964, pp. 330, 331. ROBERTS 1968, pp. 765-771. CH'EN Ta-ch'i 1967, p. 71. A CONCORDANCE to the Analects 1972, pp. 133, 134.

³⁸³ "Tzu-lu said, is courage 勇 to be prized by a gentleman? The Master said, a gentleman gives the first place to Right. If a gentleman has courage but neglects Right, he becomes turbulent. 亂. If a small man has courage but neglects Right, he becomes a thief." AN. 17:23, p. 216. The inner motive in Confucius's reply is, that Tzu-lu was brave 勇 and Confucius hoped that he should not do wrong. CH'ENG Shu-te 1965, p. 1076. See also LIU Pao-nan, 1973, p. 384. Lau translates the latter part of the sentence as: "Possessed of courage but devoid of morality, a gentleman will make trouble while a small man will be a brigand." LAU 1979, p. 148. This translation embodies the idea that 亂 has a meaning wider than just concerning the gentleman. If the gentleman does not have Yi 無義, this is detrimental for the entire state. If the small man lacks Yi, this has rather a personal harmful effect upon himself.

³⁸⁴ AN 2:24, p. 93. See also LEGGE I 1969, p. 154. HALL & AMES 1984, p. 8.

³⁸⁵ AN. 7:3, p. 123. "Confucian idealism advocates the way of the gentleman as praiseworthy, whereas Confucian realism defends, or at least tolerates, the way of the small man as normal." YANG, Lien-sheng 1973, p. 305. Lau translates AN. 7:3 as: "It is these things that cause me concern: failure to cultivate virtue, failure to go more deeply into what I have learned, inability, when I am told what is right, to move to where it is, and inability to reform myself when I have defects." LAU 1979, p. 86. 講 is 習 HSIEH Ping-ying 1976, p. 108.

³⁸⁶ AN. 4:10, p. 104. MAO Tzu-shui 1975, pp. 49,50.

³⁸⁷ AN 12:10, p. 165. Cf. ROBERTS 1966, pp. 21, 22, where he combines AN. 4:10, 7:3 and 12:10 and explains that Hsi 徙 means a halting and difficult movement, a shifting and irregular movement. Roberts refers to a comment on AN 12.10, from where he derives the idea in AN 12:10 that the position of the good man is not fixed; wherever the right is he stays. After discussing AN 4:10 he refers to MENCIUS 1969, p. 323. He concludes: "The point about Yi, to express it in a general way,

and ethical environment. Confucius himself fulfilled this in his life history by refusing to serve any lord who acted against the good of the state. The Analects contain the following anecdote: "The people of Ch'i sent to Lu a present of female musicians, and Chi Huan-tzu accepted them. For three days no Court was held, whereupon Master K'ung left Lu." This was a contradictory situation, for on the one hand Confucius's duty was to serve his lord, but on the other he could not apply good values in this situation. This meant a dilemma between deontology and axiology. In this situation the axiology over ruled the deontology; in Confucius's mind the that "what ought to be because its being so would be good" is far more important than that what ought to be because it is required by one's station and its duties, by the web of obligations and commitments the past has spun." Confucius solved this dilemma simply by resigning from the prestigious position he held and becoming morally isolated.³⁸⁸ If he had continued in the office, there would probably have been a continuing tension between Confucius's moral values and the modes of life in among the Lu administrators.

The case above brings up the question of flexibility of Yi in new circumstances. If the axiology, moral axioms or Yi, had been more flexible, then Confucius would not have needed to leave his position and could have kept the duty. This would not necessarily have meant a deviation from Yi, but that he was applying Yi in this new situation of tension. The following sayings of Confucius refer to the more flexible attitude and show certain tension with the axiology above: "As for me, I am different from any of these. I have no 'thou shalt' or 'thou shalt not'", and "The Master said, A gentleman in his dealings with the world has neither enmities nor affections; but wherever he sees Right, Yi, he ranges himself beside it." If one wants to harmonize these, the latter quotation in Waley's translation somewhat eases the tension: the gentleman, despite being without enmities nor affections, ranges himself beside Yi. The enmities and affection apparently refer to sentimental attitudes towards other men, but migrating to places where Yi prevails does not imply any feelings against or for anyone. In the light of the above passages, flexibility according to situations cannot be developed very far if the starting point is Confucian Yi. This concept of flexibility according to the situations seems rather to be that one has to change the situation or environment rather is, I feel, that it is a variable conditioned by time and circumstance and not an unconditioned value." This conclusion can be drawn from Mencius (in the above): "The great man does not demand (dogmatic) consistency of his statements, nor (inflexible) resolution of his actions; his statements and actions are where the right is." This non-normative situation ethics can clearly be seen in this passage by Mencius, and it shows one direction of development of Confucian thought. However, the term *Yi* itself in the chapters mentioned in the Analects does not point very clearly to this situation ethics, however important a trend it might later have been. The gentleman has to move where *Yi* is in order to be able to fulfill it.

³⁸⁸ AN. 18:4, pp. 218, 219. See also LAU 1979, pp. 169, 170. The word deontology comes from the Greek word *δεον*, that which is binding, needful, proper, and the etymology of axiology axiology is *αξιολογία*, worth, as in "is worth more than". These are both theories of ethics: the former takes the view that some acts are obligatory in the sense that they are binding, needful or proper regardless of their consequences; the latter is a theory of values in which some acts are intrinsically worth more than others. van FRAASSEN 1987, p. 139. See also AN 15:6, p. 194. Choosing one possibility and neglecting the other does not necessarily solve the contradiction. MARCUS 1987, p. 188. TU 1979, pp. 12, 22. See also AN. 4:14, pp. 104,105. MIYAZAKI 1965, pp. 86,87.

than let Yi be modified.³⁸⁹

In the contradictory situation he found himself in Lu, Confucius could have tried to follow deontology and his duties and even to try to force the authority to change its policy. The situation had been such that by attending the court even Confucius had been forced to share in the policy he wanted to reject. In this situation he could have tried to prevent the policy by using force, or methods which possibly were not entirely according to his noble principles. But in doing this he would have harmed the authority. It seems that this policy of "dirty hands" was too difficult. He rather selected the easy way, in which he could not influence the authority to get rid of the policy. However, it is hard to know the accurate practical situation. By resigning from his post, Confucius provided a kind of demonstration or an expression of his personal opinion, but most probably this did nothing to promote his righteous principles in practice.³⁹⁰ By no means did Confucius overvalue his practice of resigning in adverse situations. A person who continuously fled from place to place to seek a good regime was not on these grounds regarded as Jen by Confucius.³⁹¹ Confucius's disciple Tzu Lu held the opinion that a Gentleman should not refuse to serve his country: "A Gentleman's service to his country consists in doing such right as he can. That the Way does not prevail, he knows well enough beforehand."³⁹²

Yi of the gentleman and Li are related to each other, as was shown above.³⁹³ Yi is the virtue with which the gentleman treats people: "in exacting service from people, he was just 義"³⁹⁴ Yi is used in a similar way in the passage where the wise man is said to devote himself to securing for his subjects what it is right 義 they should have.³⁹⁵ If the people in authority love Yi 義 the people dare not disobey. Yi here is an attribute of the authority of the gentleman. Li, too, in this context has a similar function, causing the people to respect 敬 the gentleman.³⁹⁶

An element of Yi is being trustworthy in word 信. Here, too, Li appears as a medium of respectfulness. "Yu Tzu said, "To be trustworthy in word is close to being moral 義 in that it enables one's words to be repeated. To be respectful is close to being observant of the rites 禮 in that it enables one to stay clear of disgrace and insult." Here Li and Yi have a cooperative task.³⁹⁷

³⁸⁹ AN. 18:8, 4:4, pp. 222, 104. Cf. HALL & AMES 1984, Pp. 8,9, who further develop the idea of flexibility in Yi.

³⁹⁰ About "dirty hands", see STOCKER 1990, pp. 9-84 and the list of works on p. 9.

³⁹¹ AN. 5:18, p. 112.

³⁹² AN. 18:7, p. 220, 221.

³⁹³ This work, footnote 370.

³⁹⁴ AN. 5:15, p. 111. See also HSIEH Ping-ying 1976, p. 92. MAO Tzu-shui 1975, p. 66.

³⁹⁵ AN. 6:20, p. 120.

³⁹⁶ AN. 13:4, p. 172.

³⁹⁷ AN. 1:13, p. 86. LAU, 1979, p. 61. See also LAU 1973, pp. 424-433.

2. Yi and Profit

The issue of personal gain, of profit, is brought up very emphatically in the Analects in connection with Yi. "The gentleman understands what is right. The small man understands what is profitable."³⁹⁸ The Analects also say that a knight, confronted with the chance of gain, thinks first of right, Yi. A perfect man 成人 among other attributes, remembers what is right, Yi, at the sight of profit. The Analects also express the idea that the gentleman thinks carefully whether the pursuit of gain is consonant with the right.³⁹⁹

About himself Confucius says: "Any thought of accepting wealth and rank by means that I know to be wrong 不義 is as remote from me as the clouds that flow above."⁴⁰⁰ Kung-shu Wen-tzu from Wei, who presumably was dead in 497 B.C., when Confucius visited Wei, was described by Kung-ming Chia as an ideal person in this respect of accepting rewards: "He never took (rewards) unless it was right, Yi, to do so, so that people never felt he had done too much taking."⁴⁰¹

According to the passages above, one must not accept rewards or wealth generally against righteousness. However, it is allowed to accept rewards if this is in keeping with righteousness. It apparently depends on the situation whether the rewards are acceptable or not. Here we have a normative Yi combined with Yi referring to variable conditioned situation ethics. The normative Yi suggests rather that the rewards should be refused and the variable conditioned Yi suggests that one can accept the rewards under certain conditions. These conditions, however, are not elucidated more specifically in these passages. This Confucian attitude has a certain resemblance to ethical neutralism.

According to Broad this theory is:

"That no one has any special duty to himself, as such; and that no one has any special duty to others, as such. The fundamental duty of each of us is simply to maximize the balance of good over bad experiences in the universe as a whole, so far as he can. If I can increase this balance more by giving another man a good experience, at the cost of foregoing a good experience or suffering a bad experience myself, than I can by any other means, it is my duty to do so. If I can increase this balance more by enjoying a good experience myself, at the cost of depriving another man of a good experience or giving him a bad experience, than I can by any other means, it is my duty to do so."

Broad sees this neutralism in the environment of ethical altruism and ethical egoism

³⁹⁸ AN. 4:16, p. 105. LAU 1979, p. 74. LESLIE 1964, p. 204. 君子喻於義，小人喻於利。喻 means to understand. See Chu CHU Hsi 1952, p. 23. This may also be translated as: "One can make the gentleman understand with right, etc.", or, "one can use only right to make the gentleman understand, etc." CH'ENG Shu-te 1974, pp. 233, 234. This shows that the source material is "vague", not precisely interpreted.

The small man extends his help and seeks reward. He who receives help but offers no reward falls even below the normal man. Such a person is a *hsiao-jen* in the sense of a wicked, rather than merely a small man. The normal small man would regret his generosity if he had benefited an ungrateful or wicked man. YANG, Lieng-Sheng 1959, p. 305.

Cua says *Yi* is contrasted with profit. "This contrast brings out the Confucian distinction between morality and egoism. The notion of *i* (*i*=*Yi*), not elucidated in the *Analects*, is a difficult notion... Insofar as *i* is opposed to profit, *i* may be taken as characterizing the Confucian Moral Point of View." CUA 1972, p. 44. See also TSENG Chao-hsü 1982, p. 157.

³⁹⁹ AN. 19:1, p. 225, 14:13, p. 183. See LAU 1979 AN. 14:12, p. 125. AN. 16:10, pp. 206,207, 14:14, pp. 183,184.

⁴⁰⁰ AN. 7:15, p. 126.

⁴⁰¹ AN. 7:15, p. 126.

and continues:

"Ethical egoism is the doctrine that each man has a predominant obligation towards himself, as such. Ethical altruism is the doctrine that each man has a predominant obligation towards others, as such. The extreme form of ethical egoism would hold that each man has an obligation only towards himself. The extreme form of ethical altruism would hold that each man has an obligation only towards others."⁴⁰²

If seen in the light of Kroy's ethical theories, Confucius's Yi follows the content theory, which states what should be done, what it is good or bad to do. Kroy divides these theories into two: a) Theories of social norms which express what one should do in that society; and b) Theories of universal ethics, which attempt to formulate culture-independent answers for the question "What should a man do?" Kroy divides type b) ethical theories into two: "rationality theories which attempt to answer the question 'What is good for me to do?', and moral theories which attempt to answer the question: 'What ought I to do?'" Utility attempts to find answers to the first question.⁴⁰³

In his theory of Yi, Confucius wants to draw a kind of "golden mean" between these two theories. Primarily Confucius wants to provide a reply to the question "What ought I to do?" In addition he pays attention also to the utilitarian considerations, trying to reply also to the question "What is good for me to do?" However, the question "What ought I to do?" overrules the question "What is good for me to do?" It is possible to take account of certain egoistic utilitarian considerations, so long as this does not change the reply to the question, "What ought I to do?" In other words the Confucian attitude is not a calculating one, but rather an attitude of a balanced neutralism with an egoistic overtone. This may be understood in connection with Yi, that one can accept rewards or one's own profit, if this does not harm others. This condition is more important than the cold calculation of "maximizing the balance of good over bad experiences in the universe as a whole."

Historically, it is clear that Confucius accepted rewards, since he could afford a horse and a chariot. Because this accepting of rewards has been emphasized so strongly, it is clear that the authorities were criticized for taking too expensive rewards for their services. Confucius wanted to correct this misbehavior.

⁴⁰² BROAD 1985, p. 212.

According to egoistic moral philosophy it is difficult to solve moral dilemmas or contradictions. Goldman says about Hobbes, the representative of "Subjective Realism and Prudential Rationality": Moral rules according to Hobbes express necessary conditions for peaceful interpersonal relations. Such relations help to achieve the best that each agent can expect, given the interests of other individual, and can help each agent to do better than he would do in their absence. But this answer is not sufficient as it stands. Hobbes's laws of nature do not exhaust the content of right actions or policies, and he recognizes this fact. Specifically, they do not in themselves fully determine how conflicts among interest of different individuals are to be settled." GOLDMAN 1988, pp. 32,33.

Confucius values good personal relations and also recognizes that these relations contribute to morality, see AN. 1:1, p. 83, and 15:9, p. 195, which says: "Make friends with such of its knights as are Good, Jen." Cheng says: "Confucius was deliberately placing ethics and virtue above economic gain and profit as he encouraged people to pursue truth rather than wealth." CHENG, Benjamin Shujung 1979, p. 509. See also SCHWARTZ 1985, pp. 83,84.

⁴⁰³ KROY 1975, pp. 140,141.

3. Yi and Other Concepts

Confucius describes a person who is the opposite of a gentleman in his attitude to Yi: "When a number of people are together, for a whole day, without their conversation turning on righteousness, and when they are fond of carrying out *the suggestions of a small shrewdness*; - theirs is indeed a hard case."⁴⁰⁴ Here the "small shrewdness" 小慧 has been placed opposite to righteousness. If they had conversed about righteousness, then they would have put the "small shrewdness" aside.

Yi appears in the service of Tao: "It is by dwelling in seclusion that they seek the fulfillment of their aims; it is by deeds of righteousness that they extend the influence of their Way." 隱居以求其志，行義以達其道。 This is an ideal, and Confucius has heard of, but never seen such men. Here Yi appears to be instrumental for the purpose of extending the influence of the Way, Tao.⁴⁰⁵ A similar instrumental use of Yi occurs when Confucius says: "In order to be influential a man must be by nature straightforward and a lover of right, 好義。 He must examine men's words and observe their expressions, and bear in mind the necessity of deferring to others."⁴⁰⁶ In both cases Yi serves 達 influence, prominence, to be in office.⁴⁰⁷ Apparently this instrumental Yi serves the career of the gentleman, helping him to be influential in the service of the country.

Yi is not directly related to Jen, but through "courage" 勇 there is a link: "To see what is right and not do it is cowardice" 見義不為，無勇也。 "A good man will certainly also possess courage; but a brave man is not necessarily Good." 仁者必有勇，勇者不必有仁。⁴⁰⁸ To have courage means that one should do righteousness when one sees it. This courage is a necessary, but not a

⁴⁰⁴ AN 15:16, pp. 196, 197. The passage quoted follows LEGGE I 1969, p. 299. Waley uses the Lu reading of 惠 hui, favour, benefit, kind, for 慧 hui, clever, intellectual, wise, quick-witted, and petty cleverness; skill shrewdness. Selfish and clever, CHU Hsi 1952, p. 109. WALEY 1964, pp. 197, 260. Book 15 follows a dual pattern, where two concepts are usually placed opposite each other, such as gentleman - the small man, loyal - disloyal, the Way prevailed - ceased to prevail, etc. According to this view, it is more recommendable to accept the text variant which follows best the general pattern of the whole book. In this chapter the "petty cleverness" or "skill shrewdness" follows the general pattern better as an antonym to Yi, righteousness.

⁴⁰⁵ AN. 16:11, p. 207. LEGGE I 1969, p. 315.

⁴⁰⁶ AN. 12:20, p. 168. LEGGE I 1969, p. 259. Legge translates this as: "Now the man of distinction is solid and straightforward, and loves righteousness. He examines people's words, and looks at their countenances." 夫達也者，質直而好義，察言而觀色。 Legge understands 夫達也者 to mean "the man of distinction" and Waley regards 者 as an "empty word." Both translations are correct, although they bear a slightly different meaning. See also HSIEH Ping-ying 1976, p. 166.

⁴⁰⁷ MATHEW'S 1969, p. 852. 賜也達，於從政乎何有。 "He can turn his merits to account. It goes without saying, that he is capable of holding office." AN. 6:6, p. 117 LEGGE I, 1969, p. 187. Waley says about 達: "Ta means 'to put through,' 'penetrate.' So (1) To 'put oneself through,' to turn one's *te* to account, to get on in the world, to progress; to get one's meaning or one's doctrines through, i.e. to 'put them across.' (2) To get through, penetrate, i.e. understand." WALEY 1964, p. 239.

⁴⁰⁸ AN. 2:24, p. 93. AN. 14:5, p. 180.

sufficient condition for Jen 仁.

It was seen above that Li is a method of carrying out Yi, which is the inner element of Li.⁴⁰⁹ Yi is related to Li, which is related to Jen in three passages of the Analects.⁴¹⁰

4. Early Confucian Yi and Yi in Shu Ching

This Yi in Shu Ching appears in the Chou religio-ideological context, whereas in the Analects the term is discussed in a more philosophical framework. In this framework the Analects raise the issues of ethical neutrality, the social environment, the flexibility of Yi in new circumstances. In Shu Ching Yi has more ethical agents than in the Analects. In this way the usage of Yi is wider in Shu Ching than in the Analects. In the Analects only the Gentleman appears as an agent of Yi. In this context, in Shu Ching people, officers, the prince, the king and his advisors all appear as agents of Yi.

In Shu Ching Yi appears with the change of the dynasty. In this situation the people were Yi, but the non-righteous were the king and his unqualified officials. The solution to this problem was that the Hsia-dynasty was changed to the Yin-dynasty by T'ang. The corresponding situation in the Analects is also connected with Yi. When the ruler did not act according to Confucius's principles, he wanted to resign his office and to "migrate to places where the right prevails." If he had followed the Chou ideology, he would have tried to start procedures which he had hoped would lead to forcing the unethical ruler to resign. He did not follow this Chou ideology. In this respect Confucius's attitude was more submissive.

The problem of personal profit, clearly expressed in the Analects in connection with Yi, does not appear in Shu Ching in the same context. Although Shu Ching has more ethical agents of Yi, the ideas to do with Yi which are developed in the Analects show more sophisticated thinking than in Shu Ching, which does not really consider almost any issues of moral value theory.

5. Early Confucian Yi and Yi in Shih Ching

The first of the three occurrences of Yi in Shih Ching refers to the good fame which works for the good of the country, since it is the actions of the ruler which are being considered. This quite vague frame of reference of Yi is consistent with that in the Analects. However, not much can be inferred from this similarity.

The second occurrence is in the context of having the righteous ones in office. Dishonesty and malice generally are regarded as opposite to Yi. This is consistent with the meaning in the Analects as well. Still, the meaning is so little defined that one can hardly find any philosophical roots here.

The third occurrence has a more specific frame of reference: that it is "Not right" that

⁴⁰⁹ See footnote 325.

⁴¹⁰ See footnote 372.

Yin Shang uses wine. When speaking about Yi, Confucius does not mention the drinking of wine.

The comparison shows that Confucius's conception of Yi resembles Shu Ching closer than Shih Ching, where it is very rare. In Shu Ching it is a governmental and ideological term and in the Analects it is a governmental and ethical term. It reflects Confucian ethical thinking as a part of his philosophy. In this respect the term is mostly an innovation compared with Shu Ching and Shih Ching.

Shih Ching only mentioned the term Yi, Shu Ching related it to the ideological framework, that Confucius used it as an important concept of his ethical and political thinking.

6. A Comparison with Lao Tzu's Concept of Yi

Tao Te Ching has only five occurrences of righteousness, Yi. Lao Tzu regards righteousness as inferior or as weak substitute for Tao: "When the great way, Tao, falls into disuse There are benevolence, Jen 仁, and rectitude, Yi 義." This is a clear criticism directed against Confucianism and its virtues. This criticism is continued in the following: "Exterminate the sage, discard the wise, And the people will benefit hundredfold; Exterminate benevolence, discard rectitude, Yi, And the people will again be filial." Commenting on the juxtaposition of Lao Tzu and Confucius in the passages quoted above, Creel says:

"It is evident that the techniques of Lao Tse and of Confucius were very different. The similarity of their basic metaphysics has been obscured as a result of the opposition of their practical teachings. The disciples of the two men were constantly at war, if only with words. Even in the Tao Te King and in the Analects we find barbed shafts which, though they did not name each other, Confucius and Lao Tse certainly intended to exchange. Lao Tse declares that virtue and righteousness, filial piety and paternal affection (all dear to the heart of Confucius), were never heard of until after the world had fallen into disorder; the way to regain that natural harmony which is the only hope of the world is to dispense with all of these artificial, and therefore vain, attempts to win felicity. Chan says about Lao Tzu's opinions concerning the Confucian virtues mentioned in the passages above: These things, which should be got rid of, were introduced with the mistaken purpose of civilizing the original infantile innocence. They are deviations, according to Lao-tzu, from the Great Tao, and they should be banished and discarded".⁴¹¹

The remainder of the occurrences of Yi appear in chapter 38 together with some other Confucian ethical terms: "A man of the highest benevolence, Jen, acts, but from no ulterior motive. A man of the highest rectitude, Yi, acts, but from ulterior motive." In the scale of evaluation of the Confucian ethical terms, Yi is before Li, which is last in the scale.⁴¹² This too shows that Lao Tzu did not value the Confucian Yi. Besides this negative attitude, this also means that the concept of Yi is totally outside the philosophy of Lao Tzu.

⁴¹¹ LAO TZU 18:42, p. 74. See GRAF 1970, p. 95. "När den stora Normen förkastas, då först finnas godhet och rättsinlighet (d.v.s. i konfuciansk mening; enligt motsatslagen finns gott blott som kontrast till ont o.s.v.)." KARLGREN 1964, p. 123.

LAO TZU 19:43, p. 75. CREEL 1929, p. 98. CHEN, Chung-hwan 1964, p. 157.

⁴¹² LAO TZU 38:82,83, p. 99.

7. A Comparison with Mo Tzu's Concept of Yi

Yi appears very often in the works of Mo Tzu in connection with his favorite doctrines. The term itself seems to have two primary meanings. The first meaning may be translated as righteousness. The term in this sense is more common than in the sense of notion, idea, view, purpose, standard.⁴¹³ Yi appears also in the combination of 同義 unity or to identify and 不同義 different.⁴¹⁴

According to the chapter "Exaltation of the Virtuous", Righteousness, 義, is the only criterion for gaining the favors of the ancient sage-kings. The kings did not promote people according to their wealth, rank or place of living. It is also said that the ancient kings exalted the virtuous, 德.⁴¹⁵ The exaltation of the virtuous, 尚賢, is a primary condition for Yi and Jen of the ruler. In other words, the ruler should exalt the virtuous in order to be able to be Jen and Yi.⁴¹⁶

Jen and Yi belong to the universal love, 兼愛. According to Mo Tzu, this can be seen through his historical argumentation.⁴¹⁷

According to the analysis in the chapter "Condemnation of Offensive War", it is generally agreed by the "Gentlemen", 君子, that it is unrighteous to injure others or to kill the people and to profit oneself. This is true only on a small scale. When it is a question of a war, the gentlemen call it righteous although the war causes extensive deaths. According to Mo Tzu, this shows that the gentlemen are confused and do not know the difference between righteousness and unrighteousness. However, Mo Tzu, when questioned, approved the wars conducted by the ancient kings. He explained these wars not as an "attack", 攻, but as a "punishment", 誅.⁴¹⁸

Again, the condemnation of offensive war is made by Mo Tzu a precondition for Yi and Jen of the Gentleman and a ruler. Mo Tzu says:

"Now, if the rulers and the gentlemen of the world sincerely desire to produce and avert calamities for the world - if they desire to do righteousness and be superior men, if they desire to strike the way of the sage - kings on the one hand and bless the people on the other - if so, the doctrine of Condemnation of Offensive War should not be left unheeded."

In addition to this, a further precondition is that the Gentlemen and ruler ensure that funerals are conducted simply. Mo Tzu describes this with almost the same words in the above passage, placing simplicity in funeral practice in the place of the condemnation of offensive war. This reflects the utilitarian motive of Mo Tzu. Schwartz summarizes his scrutiny of Mohist utilitarianism as follows: "In sum, I would argue that Mo-tzu's

⁴¹³ MO TZU, pp. 55-58, A Concordance to Mo Tzu, pp. 14-16. WATSON 1963, pp. 34-36, Yi as "standard", see MO TZU, p. 189. A CONCORDANCE TO MO TZU, p. 58, row 1.

⁴¹⁴ MO TZU, pp. 60,61. A CONCORDANCE TO MO TZU, p. 16, row 14, p. 18, row 54.

⁴¹⁵ MO TZU pp. 31,32.

⁴¹⁶ MO TZU pp. 53,54,32.

⁴¹⁷ MO TZU p. 92.

⁴¹⁸ MO TZU pp. 99,100,110. Of attack and punishment, see A CONCORDANCE TO MO TZU, p. 32, row 33.

utilitarian orientation favored neither innovation nor ancient practice as absolutes. Where innovation is necessary to benefit the world it should be pursued. Where ancient practice provided the basic principles of a happy society, it should be preserved."⁴¹⁹

In the chapter "Will of Heaven", Mo Tzu speaks about the attitude of Heaven towards Yi. Heaven desires righteousness and abominates unrighteousness, because with righteousness the world lives, is rich, is orderly but without it the opposite conditions prevail. Because of this, Yi is called a "standard" or a good government, 善政,⁴²⁰ Due to the above mentioned effects of Yi, according to Mo Tzu, Heaven or the will of Heaven is the source of Yi, because Heaven is honorable and wise. Heaven is also the source of Jen. The standard or law, 法 of Yi is obedience to the will of Heaven.⁴²¹ "The gentlemen of the world who desire to do righteousness, therefore, (Because Yi comes from Heaven) must obey the will of Heaven."⁴²²

Yi is the basis of government. This means that
"The great will not attack the small, the strong will not plunder the weak, the many will not oppress the few, the clever will not deceive the ignorant, the honored will not disdain the humble, the rich will not mock the poor, and the young will not rob the old. And the states in the empire will not ruin each other with water, fire, poison and weapons. Such a regime 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; whoever practises this is a sage, magnanimous, Jen, gracious, and righteous, Yi, 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."

Mo Tzu condemns the gentlemen as unrighteous, because they have attacked the small states and broken the above ideals.⁴²³

In the chapter "On Ghosts" Yi appears only once. As Yi of the world, it refers to the general order in the world characterized by the relationships between superiors and subordinates, father and son, between brothers and also characterized by some ethical attributes, such as by the absence of thieves and bandits, weapons etc. The world lost its righteousness when these relationships deteriorated and thieves with weapons etc. appeared.⁴²⁴

According to the chapter "Anti Fatalism", the fatalists' doctrine overthrows righteousness in the world. This means to establish a fate, 命, which is a temptation to the people and destroys them. When the righteous are in authority the world will be in order. Refuting fatalism is a necessary condition for Yi and Jen.⁴²⁵

In Mo Tzu Yi also has a reciprocal overtone. It is said that Jen means to love, Yi

⁴¹⁹ MO TZU pp. 116,134. SCHWARTZ 1985, p. 156.

⁴²⁰ MO TZU pp. 136,141. A CONCORDANCE TO MO TZU, p. 42, row 4. SJÖHOLM 1982, pp. 115,116.

⁴²¹ MO TZU pp. 139,141-144,150. 順天之意者義 法之也。順天之意者。義政也。"Obedience to the will of Heaven is the law or standard of righteousness" "To obey the will of Heaven is to accept Yi as the standard, or good government." MO TZU pp. 139,140. CONCORDANCE TO MO TZU p. 45, row 73 and p. 41, row 36.

⁴²² MO TZU pp. 153,159. SJÖHOLM 1982, p. 113.

⁴²³ MO TZU pp. 155-157,159. SJÖHOLM 1982, p. 191.

⁴²⁴ MO TZU p. 160.

⁴²⁵ MO TZU pp. 184,199, A CONCORDANCE TO MO TZU p. 57, row 19. SJÖHOLM 1982, p. 185.

means to profit, 仁, 仁愛也。義, 利也。Profit here means mutual profit, to profit oneself as one's neighbor. Yi is assimilated with this profit.⁴²⁶

Both Confucius and Mo Tzu regard Yi as an important characteristic of the gentleman. Both see Yi as a preservative of order in the society. Also both include the idea of impartiality in their concept of Yi. However, Mo Tzu criticizes the gentlemen of his time and is not satisfied just to present an ideal concept of Yi. Mo Tzu, naturally, does not relate Yi to Li, as Confucius does. Both also agree that accepting rewards, or material profit are not consistent with Yi. Yet still Confucius allows one to accept rewards according to Yi. This is because it seems that Confucius did have to face this problem more seriously than Mo Tzu, who does not mention it so much in this context.

Mo Tzu relates Yi to certain of his favorite doctrines. For him Yi is quite central, but it is placed in the service of his favorite doctrines. This instrumental usage of Yi can also be seen in Confucius's teaching, when he places the term in the service of Tao or in the service of gaining influence and prominence in order to be in office. Of these six Confucian key-terms which appear in Mo Tzu, Yi is especially closely connected to T'ien, Heaven and also to Jen. Confucius related Yi more closely Li, Rites and Tao, Way, and Jen, Goodness.

As is the case with the other concepts as well, Mo Tzu is here more "religious" minded, because Yi is strongly related to Heaven and also, to a certain extent, to spirits. These are overlooked by Confucius in this connection. Here, too, Confucius is more rational.

Confucius has psychological insight when he stresses the importance of the environment to the gentleman. Mo Tzu, however, does not consider the issue in this context.

⁴²⁶ A CONCORDANCE TO MO TZU p. 74, row 89. See also CHANG Shun-i 1971, p. 493.