



INTRODUCTION TO
ORIENTAL
CIVILIZATIONS

Wm. Theodore de Bary, EDITOR

Sources of
Chinese Tradition

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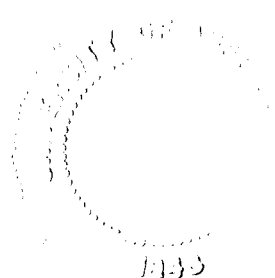
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Big rat, big rat,
Do not eat my sprouts!
Three years I have served you
But you give me no comfort.
I am going to leave you
And go to those happy fields;
Happy fields, happy fields;
Who there shall long moan?

The North Wind

This is probably a love song, but it has traditionally been interpreted as the song of the peasants of Pei who, oppressed by a cruel and corrupt government (the cold wind of the song), urge each other to flee to another state.

[From *Shih ching*, Pei-feng, Pei-feng]

1

Cold is the north wind;
The snow falls thick.
If you are kind and love me
Take my hand and we will go together.
You are modest, you are slow,
But oh, we must hurry!

2

Fierce is the north wind;
The snow falls fast.
If you are kind and love me
Take my hand and we will home together.
You are modest, you are slow,
But oh, we must hurry!

3

Nothing so red as the fox,
Nothing black as the crow [omens of evil];
If you are kind and love me,
Take my hand and we will go in the same carriage.
You are modest, you are slow,
But oh, we must hurry.



孔子
之道

CHAPTER II

CONFUCIUS

If we were to characterize in one word the Chinese way of life for the last two thousand years, the word would be "Confucian." No other individual in Chinese history has so deeply influenced the life and thought of his people, as a transmitter, teacher, and creative interpreter of the ancient culture and literature, and as a molder of the Chinese mind and character. The other ancient philosophies, the religious systems of Taoism and Buddhism, all have known their days of glory and neglect; but the doctrines of Confucianism, since their general recognition in the first century before Christ, have never ceased to exert a vital influence on the nation down to our own century. Many Chinese have professed themselves to be Taoists, Buddhists, even Christians, but seldom have they ceased at the same time to be Confucianists. For Confucianism since the time of its general acceptance has been more than a creed to be professed or rejected; it has become an inseparable part of the society and thought of the nation as a whole, of what it means to be a Chinese, as the Confucian Classics are not the canon of a particular sect but the literary heritage of a whole people.

Considering his tremendous influence and importance, the life of Confucius is peculiarly human and undramatic. He was born in 551 B.C. in the small feudal state of Lu in modern Shantung province. His family name was K'ung, his personal name Ch'iu. "Confucius" is the Latinized form of "K'ung Fu-tzu" or "Master K'ung," the title commonly used in referring to him in Chinese. It is probable that his ancestors were members of the lesser aristocracy who had, however, sunk to a position of poverty and insignificance by the time of his birth. His father died when he was very young, leaving him to struggle alone with the problem of securing an education and making his way in the world.

The world he faced was not a bright one. China was divided into a number of small feudal states which were constantly bickering or making war upon each other or upon the barbarian tribes that pressed the Chinese people on all sides. The kings of the central court of the Chou dynasty, who had once given peace and stability to the nation, were weak and ineffective before the might of the more powerful feudal lords. Kings were ordered about by their vassals, rulers deposed or assassinated by their ministers, fathers slain by their sons. All was violence and disorder among the ruling class and there seemed to be no higher power, temporal or spiritual, to which men might appeal.

With energy and utter selflessness, Confucius set about to bring order and peace to his age. He believed that his place was in the world of politics and with almost pathetic persistence he sought through the states of China for a ruler who would be willing to employ him and his ideas in the government. He managed to find employment for a while in his native state of Lu and, according to tradition, rose to a fairly high position. But his success was short-lived; on the whole his political career was a failure, and more and more he turned his attention to the teaching of young men who, he hoped, might succeed in public life where he had failed. Judging from all accounts he was a teacher of rare enthusiasm and art; he was said to have had some three thousand students, of whom seventy-two were close personal disciples or known for their virtue. In his old age he retired to devote himself, so tradition says, to the editing of the texts of the Confucian Classics. He died in 479 B.C.

What was the solution which Confucius offered for the ills and evil of his day? It was the same solution which the philosophers and prophets of so many ages and cultures have offered: a return to virtue. Unless men individually embraced the ideal of *jen*—humanity, benevolence, or perfect virtue—there was no hope that society could be spared the evil, cruelty, and violence that was destroying it.

If there is nothing unique or arresting about this solution urged by Confucius, the reasons he used to persuade men of its aptness deserve close attention. First of all, he held out no utilitarian persuasions to attract men to the practice of perfect virtue. He knew too well from his own experience that virtue is often despised and persecuted, and he cautioned his disciples that they must be prepared to face frequent poverty and distress. The pursuit of material profit did not coincide, but more often

directly conflicted with the dictates of virtue; it was the concern only of the small and unenlightened mind. The gentleman, mindless of comfort and safety, must fix his attention upon higher things.

Again, he was very sparing in the invocation of divine or supernatural sanction for his teachings. Confucius seems to have been a man of deep personal piety and reverence. But he lived in an age that was still dominated by a primitive fear of the supernatural and marred by gross and cruel superstitions. The rulers of his time firmly believed in the prophetic nature of dreams, the efficacy of the arts of divination, the baleful power of the spirits of the dead, and all manner of weird and unnatural portents and prodigies. Men still cowered before the eclipse and the age when human sacrifices were carried out on the death of a ruler was less than a century past. In such an atmosphere, Confucius chose to direct attention away from the supernatural and toward the vital problems of human society and the ordering of the state. Viewing so much of the history of this period through the pages of the literature of the Confucian school itself, it is difficult to realize how very rare this humanism and rationalism of Confucius and his disciples must have been in their own time.

Confucius had a strong belief in a natural order that was also a moral order. Heaven for him was a guiding Providence, and one's fulfillment as a man came from acting in accordance with the will of Heaven. This will, however, could be best understood through the study of history. In the traditions, customs, and literature of the past, in the collective experience of mankind, there was objective confirmation of the moral law written in the heart of man. From the ancient legends Confucius selected the figures of the sage-kings Yao and Shun, King T'ang, the wise founder of the Shang dynasty, and above all the great ancestors of the ruling house of the Chou, Kings Wen and Wu and the Duke of Chou, to be his ideals. These men had embodied the humanity and perfect virtue that he advocated, and their deeds and their reigns represented all that was wise and good in Chinese history and society. In particular Confucius looked back to an age of peace and order at the beginning of the Chou when its founding fathers, in the depth of their wisdom and virtue, had set up the institutions and organized the complex feudal hierarchy of the new dynasty, and created solemn rites and music for its leaders and people. These rites and music-dance compositions of the old feudal society, the *li* and *yüeh* which figure so prominently in Confucian literature, were regarded

by Confucius with the utmost gravity. For they were the outward embodiment of the wisdom and virtue of their creators, the expression of reverence and perfect hierarchical order in society. And by the careful observance of these rites, the thoughtful contemplation of this music and its meaning, one could recreate in oneself the wisdom and virtue of the ancients and discipline oneself to the perfect order which they had intended. All the ills of his day Confucius attributed to the fact that the leaders of society had neglected the old rites, were performing them incorrectly, or usurping rites and ceremonies to which they were not entitled. For as a correct observance of the rites was a sign of perfect social order and the source of all spiritual enlightenment, so their neglect and abuse must be no more than the reflection of a deeper moral chaos and the beginning of spiritual darkness. To abuse the forms of the rites was to abuse the reality, the moral order which they represented. It was this abuse of the rites and titles of the social order, and the inner spiritual disorder which it represented, that Confucius deplored. Hence his call for a "rectification of names," that men might be in reality what they claimed to be in title, and his insistence upon a careful and reverent attention to the spirit and letter of the rites.

This emphasis upon ritual—an insistence upon it sometimes even when its original meaning was lost—must strike us as excessively conservative and formalistic, as indeed Confucianism in its later days often became. Yet implicit in this view was an idealization of the past that set a high standard for the present, and provided more of an impetus to reform, than to maintain, the status quo. Confucius' own life is sufficient evidence of his reformist spirit. He sought to conserve or restore what was good, while changing what was bad. Thus more fundamental to him than either conservatism or reformism in itself was a clear sense of moral values, expressed in his warm humanity, optimism, humility, and good sense. Confucius lived in a feudal society and conceived of society in terms of the feudal hierarchy. The common people were to be led, cared for, cherished, even taught, by the rulers; but their position at the base of the social hierarchy should not be modified, indeed, could not be without upsetting the whole vertical order.

Confucius' teachings were for the *chün-tzu*, the gentleman, the potential or actual ruler of society who alone possessed the vision to see beyond personal profit and material interest to the broader interests of the

state and mankind. Yet he insisted that it was not mere birth or social position, but precisely this power of vision, this keener and more profound moral sense, which distinguished the gentleman, the true ruler. Like Plato he would have the kings be sages, for only a truly wise and virtuous ruler could fittingly head the hierarchy of society and lead all men, by the example and suasion of his own goodness, to perfect order and a practice of similar virtue. Because of this belief in the importance of character over birth, he gave himself to the teaching of promising young men regardless of their origins. He and his school are responsible for the pedagogic tradition which characterizes all of later Chinese history, for the optimistic belief in the perfectibility of man through learning, and for the reverence for the scholar and the man of letters so pronounced in Chinese society. And it is to a large extent the teachings and example of Confucius and his school which have convinced so many of the great men of later Chinese history that the highest career in life is that of the statesman, that the highest concern of the gentleman-scholar is politics and the proper ordering of the state.

Confucius and his teachings were little respected and less practiced by the men of his day, and for centuries the Confucian school remained only one among many rival schools of philosophy with its greatest strength in the area of Confucius' native state of Lu. But gradually Confucius' humanism began to triumph over the superstition and mysticism of other doctrines, his idealistic emphasis on virtue, kindness, and learning to attract more men than the harsh and cynical philosophies of other states. At last, in the second century B.C., Confucianism was declared the official creed of the nation and the Classics became the principal, if not the sole, study of all scholars and statesmen. Through the centuries the teachings of Confucius continued not only to be revered in China, but also to exert a tremendous influence in Korea, Japan and Annam. Confucius was given the title "Supreme Sage and Foremost Teacher" and his tomb and temple in Ch'ü-fu in Shantung became a kind of Mecca for all educated Chinese, while a Confucian temple on less elaborate scale was established in every county seat throughout the land. Under the Nationalist regime his birthday was (and still is on Taiwan) observed as Teachers' Day, a national holiday.

There is a large body of literature in Chinese, of varying degrees of reliability, on the life and teachings of Confucius. Among this the most

important work is the record of the Master's activities and conversations compiled probably by his disciples' disciples, the *Analects*. This work is in twenty chapters and 497 verses, some consisting of the briefest aphorisms. From the time when Confucianism became widely accepted, the laconic and provocative sentences of this work, difficult though they often are to interpret, have exercised a profound influence upon the thought and language of the peoples of East Asia, while for the last eight hundred years it has been a basic text in Chinese education known to every school-boy. We have selected and translated the more important passages and arranged them under a few significant topics.

Selections from the Analects

CONFUCIUS THE MAN

Personality and Character

1. In his leisure hours, Confucius was easy in his manner and cheerful in his expression. [VII:4]
2. Confucius was gentle yet firm, dignified but not harsh, respectful yet well at ease. [VII:37]
3. Confucius fished but not with a net; he shot but not at a roosting bird. [He did not take unfair advantage of inferior creatures.] [VII:26]
4. When the stables were burned down, on returning from court, Confucius asked: "Was anyone hurt?" He did not ask about the horses. [X:12]
5. When Confucius was pleased with the singing of someone he was with, he would always ask to have the song repeated and would join in himself. [VII:31]
6. The Duke of She asked Tzu Lu about Confucius, and Tzu Lu gave him no answer. Confucius said: "Why didn't you tell him that I am a person who forgets to eat when he is enthusiastic about something, forgets all his worries in his enjoyment of it, and is not aware that old age is coming on?" [VII:18]
7. Confucius said: "Having only coarse food to eat, plain water to drink, and a bent arm for a pillow, one can still find happiness therein. Riches and honor acquired by unrighteous means are to me as drifting clouds." [VII:15]
8. Once when Tzu Lu, Tseng Hsi, Jan Yu, and Kung-hsi Hua were

seated in attendance upon him, Confucius said: "You no doubt consider me a day or so your senior, but let us not mind that. When out of office you say among yourselves that your merits are not recognized. Now suppose some prince were to recognize your merits, what would be your wishes?" Tzu Lu without hesitation replied: "Take a kingdom of a thousand chariots, hemmed in by great powers, oppressed by invading troops, and suffering from famine in addition—I should like to take charge of it. In three years' time I could make it brave and make it understand the right course to pursue." Confucius smiled at him. "And how about you, Ch'iu [Jan Yu]?" "Take a district of sixty or seventy *li*¹ square," answered Jan Yu, "or say, one of fifty or sixty *li* square. I should like to take charge of it. In three years' time I could make its people live in abundance; but as for the promotion of rites (*li*) and music, I should have to leave that to a real gentleman." "And how about you, Ch'ih [Kung-hsi Hua]?" "Not that I say I could do it," he answered, "but I should like to be trained for it. At the ceremonies in the Ancestral Temple [of the Imperial House] or at the conferences of the princes, I should like to wear the ceremonial cap and gown, and be a minor official assisting in the ceremony." "And how about you, Tien [Tseng Hsi]?" Tseng Hsi paused in his playing of the zither. Putting it aside he rose and replied: "I am afraid my wishes are entirely different from those cherished by these three gentlemen." "What harm is there in that?" said Confucius. "We are just trying to let each express his desire." Then he said: "In the latter days of spring, when the light spring garments are made, I would like to take along five or six grown-ups and six or seven youths to bathe in the River Yi, and after the bath go to enjoy the breeze in the woods among the altars of Wu-yi, and then return home, loitering and singing on our way." Confucius heaved a deep sigh and said: "You are the man after my own heart." [XI:25]

His Sense of Mission

9. Confucius said: "Were any prince to employ me, even in a single year a good deal could be done, and in three years everything could be accomplished." [XIII:10]
10. Confucius said: "Ah! There is no one who knows me!" Tzu Kung asked: "Why do you say, sir, that no one knows you?" Confucius said: "I

¹ A *li* is equal to about one-third of an English mile.

make no complaint against Heaven, nor do I lay the blame on men. Though my studies are lowly, they penetrate the sublime on high. Perhaps after all I am known—by Heaven.” [XIV:37]

11. When Confucius was in jeopardy in K’uang, he said: “Since the death of King Wen [founder of the Chou dynasty], does not the mission of culture rest here with us? If Heaven were going to destroy this culture, a mortal like me would not have been given such a place in it. And if Heaven is not going to destroy this culture, what can the men of K’uang do to me?” [IX:5]

12. When [Confucius’ most worthy disciple] Yen Hui died, Confucius exclaimed: “Alas, Heaven has destroyed me! Heaven has destroyed me!” [XI:8]

13. Ch’ang-chü and Chieh-ni were cultivating their fields together. Confucius was passing that way and told Tzu Lu to go and ask them where the river could be forded. Ch’ang-chü said: “Who is that holding the reins in the carriage?” Tzu Lu said: “It is K’ung Ch’iu [Confucius].” He said: “You mean K’ung Ch’iu of the state of Lu?” “Yes,” Tzu Lu replied. Ch’ang-chü said: “If it is he, then he already knows where the ford is.” Tzu Lu then turned to Chieh-ni. Chieh-ni asked: “Who are you, sir?” Tzu Lu said: “Chung-yu is my name.” Chieh-ni said: “You are a follower of K’ung Ch’iu of Lu, are you not?” He said: “That is so.” Chieh-ni said: “The whole world is swept as by a torrential flood, and who can change it? As for you, instead of following one who flees from this man and that, you would do better to follow one who flees the whole world.” And with that he went on covering the seed without stopping. Tzu Lu went and told Confucius, who said ruefully: “One cannot herd together with birds and beasts. If I am not to be a man among other men, then what am I to be? If the Way (*Tao*) prevailed in the world, I should not be trying to alter things.” [XVIII:6]

His Love of Learning

16. Confucius said: “At fifteen, I set my heart on learning. At thirty, I was firmly established. At forty, I had no more doubts. At fifty, I knew the will of Heaven. At sixty, I was ready to listen to it. At seventy, I could follow my heart’s desire without transgressing what was right.” [II:4]

18. When Confucius was in Ch’i, he heard the Shao music² and for three months he forgot the taste of meat, saying: “I never thought music could be so beautiful.” [VII:13]

14. Confucius said: “When walking in a party of three, I always have teachers. I can select the good qualities of the one for imitation, and the bad ones of the other and correct them in myself.” [VII:21]

17. Confucius said: “I am a transmitter and not a creator. I believe in and have a passion for the ancients. I venture to compare myself with our old P’eng [China’s Methuselah].” [VII:1]

15. Confucius said: “Sometimes I have gone a whole day without food and a whole night without sleep, giving myself to thought. It was no use. It is better to learn.” [XV:30]

19. There were four things that Confucius was determined to eradicate: a biased mind, arbitrary judgments, obstinacy, and egotism. [IX:4]

20. Confucius said: “Those who know the truth are not up to those who love it; those who love the truth are not up to those who delight in it.” [VI:18]

21. Confucius said: “Having heard the Way (*Tao*) in the morning, one may die content in the evening.” [IV:8]

Confucius as a Teacher

23. Confucius said: “By nature men are pretty much alike; it is learning and practice that set them apart.”³ [XVII:2]

22. Confucius said: “In education there are no class distinctions.”⁴ [XV:38]

24. Confucius said: “The young are to be respected. How do we know that the next generation will not measure up to the present one? But if a man has reached forty or fifty and nothing has been heard of him, then I grant that he is not worthy of respect.” [IX:22]

25. Confucius said: “When it comes to acquiring perfect virtue (*jen*), a man should not defer even to his own teacher.” [XV:35]

² Classical music of the time of the ancient sage-king Shun (2255–2208 B.C.?).

³ This simple observation by Confucius was agreed upon as the essential truth with regard to human nature and racial difference by a group of international experts in the UNESCO “Statement on Race” published in July, 1950.

⁴ These four Chinese characters are often found written over the gates or on the auditorium walls of Chinese school buildings.

26. Confucius said: "Those who are born wise are the highest type of people; those who become wise through learning come next; those who learn by overcoming dullness come after that. Those who are dull but still won't learn are the lowest type of people." [XVI:9]

27. Confucius said: "I won't teach a man who is not anxious to learn, and will not explain to one who is not trying to make things clear to himself. If I hold up one corner of a square and a man cannot come back to me with the other three, I won't bother to go over the point again." [VII:8]

28. Confucius said: "Learning without thinking is labor lost; thinking without learning is perilous." [II:15]

29. Confucius said: "Yu, shall I teach you what knowledge is? When you know a thing, say that you know it; when you do not know a thing, admit that you do not know it. That is knowledge." [II:17]

30. Confucius said: "Worthy indeed was Hui! A single bamboo bowl of millet to eat, a gourdful of water to drink, living in a back alley—others would have found it unendurably depressing, but Hui's cheerfulness was not affected at all. Worthy indeed was Hui!" [VI:9]

31. When Yen Hui died Confucius bewailed him with exceeding grief. His followers thereupon said to him: "Sir! You are carrying your grief to excess." Confucius said: "Have I gone to excess? But if I may not grieve exceedingly over this man, for whom shall I grieve?" [XI:9]

32. Confucius said: "A young man's duty is to be filial to his parents at home and respectful to his elders abroad, to be circumspect and truthful, and, while overflowing with love for all men, to associate himself with humanity (*jen*). If, when all that is done, he has any energy to spare, then let him study the polite arts." [I:6]

33. These were the subjects on which Confucius often discoursed: poetry, history, and the performance of ceremonies—all these were what he often discoursed on. [VII:17]

34. Confucius said: "Personal cultivation begins with poetry, is made firm by rules of decorum (*li*), and is perfected by music." [VIII:8]

35. Confucius took four subjects for his teaching—literature, conduct, loyalty, and truthfulness. [VII:24]

36. Yen Hui heaved a sigh and said: "You look up to it and it seems so high. You try to drill through it and it seems so hard. You seem to see it

in front of you, and all of a sudden it appears behind you. The Master is very good at gently leading a man along and teaching him. He has broadened me with culture, restrained me with ritual (*li*). I just could not stop myself. But after I have exhausted every resource, there still remains something standing distinct and apart from me. Do what I can to reach his position, I cannot find the way." [IX:10]

37. Shu-sun Wu-shu said to the officials at court: "Tzu Kung is a better man than Confucius." Tzu-fu Ching-po told this to Tzu Kung, and Tzu Kung said: "It is like the matter of house walls. My house wall comes up only to the shoulder, and the people outside are therefore able to see my handsome dwelling, whereas the wall of Confucius rises fathoms high, and unless one is let in by the gate, one does not see the palatial beauty of the ancestral temple and the grandeur of the hundred ministrants inside. But few are they who have found the gate. What Shu-sun says is therefore perfectly easy to understand." [XIX:23]

THE TEACHINGS OF CONFUCIUS

The Unitary Principle: Reciprocity or Humanity

38. Confucius said: "Tz'u, do you suppose that I merely learned a great deal and tried to remember it all?" The disciple replied: "Yes, is it not so?" Confucius said: "No, I have one principle that runs through it all." [XV:2]

39. Confucius said: "Shen! My teaching contains one principle that runs through it all." "Yes," replied Tseng Tzu. When Confucius had left the room the disciples asked: "What did he mean?" Tseng Tzu replied: "Our Master's teaching is simply this: loyalty and reciprocity." [IV:15]

40. Tzu Kung asked: "Is there any one word that can serve as a principle for the conduct of life?" Confucius said: "Perhaps the word 'reciprocity': Do not do to others what you would not want others to do to you." [XV:23]

41. Confucius said: "Perfect indeed is the virtue which is according to the Mean. For long people have seldom had the capacity for it." [VI:27]

42. Confucius said: "It is man that can make the Way great, not the Way that can make man great." [XV:28]

43. Chung-kung asked about humanity. Confucius said: "Behave when away from home as though you were in the presence of an important

guest. Deal with the common people as though you were officiating at an important sacrifice. Do not do to others what you would not want others to do to you. Then there will be no dissatisfaction either in the state or at home." [XII:2]

44. Confucius said: . . . "The humane man, desiring to be established himself, seeks to establish others; desiring himself to succeed, he helps others to succeed. To judge others by what one knows of oneself is the method of achieving humanity." [VI:28]

Humanity (jen)

As the reader will already have judged from its frequent occurrence, *jen* is a key term in Confucius' thought. Sometimes rendered "goodness," "benevolence," or "love," it is the supreme excellence in man or perfect virtue. In later Confucian thought the concept was expanded greatly to suggest a cosmic power. To retain its basically and unmistakably humanistic sense, we have used "humanity" for *jen*, or, when some alternative rendering was clearly called for by the context, have added the romanized original in parentheses (*jen*). By observing the various uses of the same term in different texts, the reader should acquire a sense of both its centrality in Chinese thought and its breadth of meaning.

45. Fan Ch'ih asked about humanity. Confucius said: "Love men." [XII:22]

46. Tzu Chang asked Confucius about humanity. Confucius said: "To be able to practice five virtues everywhere in the world constitutes humanity." Tzu Chang begged to know what these were. Confucius said: "Courtesy, magnanimity, good faith, diligence, and kindness. He who is courteous is not humiliated, he who is magnanimous wins the multitude, he who is of good faith is trusted by the people, he who is diligent attains his objective, and he who is kind can get service from the people." [XVII:6]

47. Confucius said: "Without humanity a man cannot long endure adversity, nor can he long enjoy prosperity. The humane rest in humanity; the wise find it beneficial." [IV:2]

48. Confucius said: "Only the humane man can love men and can hate men." [IV:3]

49. Someone inquired: "What do you think of 'requiting injury with kindness'?" Confucius said: "How will you then requite kindness? Re-

quite injury with justice, and kindness with kindness." [XIV:36]

50. Confucius said: "Is humanity something remote? If I want to be humane, behold, humanity has arrived." [VII:29]

51. Confucius said: . . . "Is there anyone who exerts himself even for a single day to achieve humanity? I have not seen any who had not the strength to achieve it." [IV:6]

52. Confucius said: "As to Hui, for three months his mind did not deviate from humanity. The others can do so, some for a day, some even for a month, but that is all." [VI:5]

53. Confucius said: "Riches and honor are what every man desires, but if they can be obtained only by transgressing the right way, they must not be held. Poverty and lowliness are what every man detests, but if they can be avoided only by transgressing the right way, they must not be evaded. If a gentleman departs from humanity, how can he bear the name? Not even for the lapse of a single meal does a gentleman ignore humanity. In moments of haste he cleaves to it: in seasons of peril he cleaves to it." [IV:5]

54. Confucius said: "The resolute scholar and the humane person will under no circumstance seek life at the expense of humanity. On occasion they will sacrifice their lives to preserve their humanity." [XV:8]

55. Ssu-ma Niu, worrying, said: "All people have brothers, but I alone have none." Tzu Hsia said: "I have heard it said [by Confucius] that death and life rest with Heaven's mandate and that wealth and honor depend on Heaven. Let the gentleman be reverent and make no mistake in conduct, and let him be respectful to others and observant of propriety. Then all within the four seas are brothers." [XII:5]

Filial Piety

56. Tzu Yu asked about filial piety. Confucius said: "Nowadays a filial son is just a man who keeps his parents in food. But even dogs or horses are given food. If there is no feeling of reverence, wherein lies the difference?" [II:7]

57. Tzu Hsia asked about filial piety. Confucius said: "The manner is the really difficult thing. When anything has to be done the young people undertake it; when there is wine and food the elders are served—is this all there is to filial piety?" [II:8]

58. Confucius said: "In serving his parents, a son may gently remon-

strate with them. If he sees that they are not inclined to follow his suggestion, he should resume his reverential attitude but not abandon his purpose. If he is belabored, he will not complain." [IV:18]

59. The Duke of She observed to Confucius: "Among us there was an upright man called Kung who was so upright that when his father appropriated a sheep, he bore witness against him." Confucius said: "The upright men among us are not like that. A father will screen his son and a son his father—yet uprightness is to be found in that." [XIII:18]

60. Tsai Wo questioned the three years' mourning and thought one year was long enough: "If the gentlemen for three years abstain from the practice of ritual, ritual will decay; if for three years they make no music, music will go to ruin. In one year the old crops are exhausted and the new crops have come up, the friction-sticks have made the several seasonal fires—one year should be enough." Confucius said: "Would you then feel at ease in eating polished rice and wearing fineries?" "Quite at ease," was the reply. Confucius continued: "If you would really feel at ease, then do so. When a gentleman is in mourning, he does not relish good food if he eats it, does not enjoy music if he hears it, and does not feel at ease in a comfortable dwelling. Hence he abstains from these things. But now since you would feel at ease, then you can have them." When Tsai Wo had gone out, Confucius said: "What lack of humanity in Yü [Tsai Wo]! Only when a child is three years old does it leave its parents' arms. The three years' mourning is the universal observance in the world. And Yü—did he not enjoy the loving care of his parents for three years?" [XVII:21]

Rites and Music

For Confucius the term *li*, which basically means "rites," embraced all those traditional forms which provided an objective standard of conduct. Thus, while *li* may in given instances refer to "rites," "ceremonial," or "rules of conduct," it has the general meaning of "good form" or "decorum." Confucius insisted, however, that the observance of *li* should be neither perfunctory nor rigid and inflexible, but should be in keeping with circumstances and also with that spirit of reverence and respect for others which the ceremonies or rules of conduct were meant to embody. By showing their intrinsic significance, he attempted to reassert the value of these traditional forms at a time when they were increasingly neglected or performed as mere pretense. Where

the external form is indicated by *li* we shall render it "rites"; where the inward spirit, "decorum."

61. Tzu Kung proposed to do away with the sacrificial lamb offering at the announcement of each new moon. Confucius said: "Tz'u! You love the lamb, but I love the rite." [III:17]

62. Confucius said: "Courtesy without decorum becomes tiresome. Cautiousness without decorum becomes timidity, daring becomes insubordination, frankness becomes effrontery." [VIII:2]

63. Confucius said: "Rites, rites! Does it mean no more than jades and silks? Music, music! Does it mean no more than bells and drums?" [XVII:11]

64. Confucius said: "A man who is not humane, what has he to do with rites? A man who is not humane, what has he to do with music?" [III:3]

65. Lin Fang asked about the fundamental principle of rites. Confucius replied: "You are asking an important question! In rites at large, it is always better to be too simple rather than too lavish. In funeral rites, it is more important to have the real sentiment of sorrow than minute attention to observances." [III:4]

66. Confucius said: "If a ruler can administer his state with decorum (*li*) and courtesy—then what difficulty will he have? If he cannot administer it with decorum and courtesy, what has he to do with rites (*li*)?" [IV:13]

Religious Sentiment

67. Tzu Lu asked about the worship of ghosts and spirits. Confucius said: "We don't know yet how to serve men, how can we know about serving the spirits?" "What about death," was the next question. Confucius said: "We don't know yet about life, how can we know about death?" [XI:11]

68. Fan Ch'ih asked about wisdom. Confucius said: "Devote yourself to the proper demands of the people, respect the ghosts and spirits but keep them at a distance—this may be called wisdom." [VI:20]

69. Po-niu was ill and Confucius went to inquire about him. Having grasped his hand through the window, Confucius said: "It is killing him."

It is the will of Heaven, alas! That such a man should have such a malady! That such a man should have such a malady!" [VI:8]

70. Though his food might be coarse rice and vegetable broth, Confucius invariably offered a little in sacrifice, and always with solemnity. [X:8]

71. When Confucius observed sacrificial fasting, his clothing was spotlessly clean, his food was different from the ordinary, and in his dwelling his seat was changed to another place. [X:7]

72. Confucius said: "He who sins against Heaven has none to whom he can pray." [III:13]

73. When Confucius was very ill, Tzu Lu asked that prayers be offered. Confucius asked: "Is there such a thing?" Tzu Lu replied: "Yes, there is. In one of the Eulogies it is said: 'A prayer has been offered for you to the spirits of Heaven and earth.'" Confucius said: "Ah, my praying has been for a long time." [VII:34]

74. Tzu Kung said: "The Master's views on culture and refinement we can comprehend. But his discourses about man's nature and the ways of Heaven none of us can comprehend." [V:12]

75. Confucius said: "I wish I did not have to speak at all." Tzu Kung said: "But if you did not speak, Sir, what should we disciples pass on to others?" Confucius said: "Look at Heaven there. Does it speak? The four seasons run their course and all things are produced. Does Heaven speak?" [XVII:19]

76. Confucius sacrificed [to the dead] as if they were present. He sacrificed to the spirits as if they were present. He said: "I consider my not being present at the sacrifice as if I did not sacrifice." [III:12]

77. The Master did not talk about weird things, physical exploits, disorders, and spirits. [VII:20]

The Gentleman

78. Confucius said: "When nature exceeds art you have the rustic. When art exceeds nature you have the clerk. It is only when art and nature are harmoniously blended that you have the gentleman." [VI:16]

79. Confucius said: . . . "If a gentleman departs from humanity, how can he bear the name? Not even for the lapse of a single meal does a gentleman ignore humanity. In moments of haste he cleaves to it; in seasons of peril he cleaves to it." [IV:5]

80. Confucius said: "The gentleman occupies himself with the Way and not with his livelihood. One may attend to farming, and yet may sometimes go hungry. One may attend to learning and yet may be rewarded with emolument. What the gentleman is anxious about is the Way and not poverty." [XV:31]

81. Ssu-ma Niu asked about the gentleman. Confucius said: "The gentleman has neither anxiety nor fear." Ssu-ma Niu rejoined: "Neither anxiety nor fear—is that what is meant by being a gentleman?" Confucius said: "When he looks into himself and finds no cause for self-reproach, what has he to be anxious about; what has he to fear?" [XII:4]

82. Confucius said: "The way of the gentleman is threefold. I myself have not been able to attain any of them. Being humane, he has no anxieties; being wise, he has no perplexities; being brave, he has no fear." Tzu Kung said: "But, Master, that is your own way." [XIV:30]

83. Confucius said: "You may be able to carry off from a whole army its commander-in-chief, but you cannot deprive the humblest individual of his will." [IX:25]

84. Tzu Kung asked about the gentleman. Confucius said: "The gentleman first practices what he preaches and then preaches what he practices." [II:13]

85. Confucius said: "The gentleman reaches upward; the inferior man reaches downward." [XIV:23]

86. Confucius said: "The gentleman is always calm and at ease; the inferior man is always worried and full of distress." [VII:36]

87. Confucius said: "The gentleman understands what is right; the inferior man understands what is profitable." [IV:16]

88. Confucius said: "The gentleman cherishes virtue; the inferior man cherishes possessions. The gentleman thinks of sanctions; the inferior man thinks of personal favors." [IV:11]

89. Confucius said: "The gentleman makes demands on himself; the inferior man makes demands on others." [XV:20]

90. Confucius said: "The gentleman seeks to enable people to succeed in what is good but does not help them in what is evil. The inferior man does the contrary." [XII:16]

91. Confucius said: "The gentleman is broad-minded and not partisan; the inferior man is partisan and not broad-minded." [II:14]

92. Confucius said: "There are three things that a gentleman fears:

he fears the will of Heaven, he fears great men, he fears the words of the sages. The inferior man does not know the will of Heaven and does not fear it, he treats great men with contempt, and he scoffs at the words of the sages." [XVI:8]

93. Once when Confucius was in Ch'en, the supply of food was exhausted, and some of his followers became so weak that they could not stand up. Tzu Lu came to the Master in disgust, saying: "Then even a gentleman can be reduced to such straits?" Confucius said: "A gentleman may indeed be so reduced. But when an inferior man is in straits he is apt to do anything." [XV:1]

Government by Personal Virtue

94. Chi K'ang Tzu asked Confucius about government. Confucius said: "To govern (*cheng*) is to set things right (*cheng*).⁵ If you begin by setting yourself right, who will dare to deviate from the right?" [XII:17]

95. Confucius said: "If a ruler himself is upright, all will go well without orders. But if he himself is not upright, even though he gives orders they will not be obeyed." [XIII:6]

96. Tzu Lu asked about the character of a gentleman [man of the ruling class]. Confucius said: "He cultivates himself in reverential attention." Tzu Lu asked: "Is that all there is to it?" Confucius said: "He cultivates himself so as to be able to bring comfort to other people." Tzu Lu asked again: "Is that all?" Confucius said: "He cultivates himself so as to be able to bring comfort to the whole populace. He cultivates himself so as to be able to bring comfort to the whole populace—even [sage-kings] Yao and Shun were dissatisfied with themselves about this." [XIV:45]

97. Confucius said: "Lead the people by laws and regulate them by penalties, and the people will try to keep out of jail, but will have no sense of shame. Lead the people by virtue and restrain them by the rules of decorum, and the people will have a sense of shame, and moreover will become good." [II:3]

98. Chi K'ang Tzu asked Confucius about government, saying: "Suppose I were to kill the lawless for the good of the law-abiding, how

⁵ This is more than just a pun. Confucius was trying to get at the root of the matter by getting at the root of the word.

would that do?" Confucius answered: "Sir, why should it be necessary to employ capital punishment in your government? Just so you genuinely desire the good, the people will be good. The virtue of the gentleman may be compared to the wind and that of the commoner to the weeds. The weeds under the force of the wind cannot but bend." [XII:19]

99. The Duke of She asked about good government. Confucius said: "[A government is good when] those near are happy and those far off are attracted." [XIII:16]

100. When Confucius was traveling to Wei, Jan Yu drove him. Confucius observed: "What a dense population!" Jan Yu said: "The people having grown so numerous, what next should be done for them?" "Enrich them," was the reply. "And when one has enriched them, what next should be done?" Confucius said: "Educate them." [XIII:9]

101. Tzu Kung asked about government. Confucius said: "The essentials are sufficient food, sufficient troops, and the confidence of the people." Tzu Kung said: "Suppose you were forced to give up one of these three, which would you let go first?" Confucius said: "The troops." Tzu Kung asked again: "If you are forced to give up one of the two remaining, which would you let go?" Confucius said: "Food. For from of old, death has been the lot of all men, but a people without faith cannot survive." [XII:7]

102. Duke Ching of Ch'i asked Confucius about government. Confucius replied: "Let the prince be prince, the minister be minister, the father father and the son son." "Excellent!" said the duke. "Indeed if the prince is not prince, the minister not minister, the father not father, and the son not son, then with all the grain in my possession shall I ever get to eat any?"⁶ [XII:11]

103. Confucius said: "To have done nothing (*wu-wei*) and yet have the state well-governed—[sage-king] Shun was the one! What did he do? He merely made himself reverent and correctly occupied his royal seat." [XV:4]

⁶ For then the country will be ruined.