

4-1965

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MENCIUS—POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

the University of Richmond

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Political Science

by

Chi-hsiung Shih

April 1965

TO

Mrs. Elizabeth Boshier Purcell
(Mrs. Thomas W. Purcell)

Her thought of humanitarianism is the center thesis of Mencius

PREFACE

Chinese civilization has strongly influenced Asia since its establishment roughly about four thousand years ago. The influences have penetrated the Asiatic countries through the ages and all the traces could be found in history. There is a saying that East is East and West is West. In the so-called East or oriental civilization, the Chinese part of contribution occupies its backbone.

Western civilization usually could be defined with the combination of three parts namely 'democracy', 'sciences' and 'Christianity'. The first two parts can be further traced to the pre-Platonic period in Greece; while the third part was, of course, the Hebrew's great contribution.

Political scientists in China today still argue the question do we or do we not have the so-called Western democracy in the teachings of our ancient great sages? Peoples in the West hemisphere still puzzle about why it makes so big a difference between the East and West? The value of this paper, if there is any, may serve the purpose to answer a part of the above-mentioned two questions.

The material for this paper is chiefly based upon the Seven Books of Mencius which was translated by Mr. James Legge in Shanghai, 1930. Other Chinese materials which were used in this paper have been translated by the writer; and those materials as the names of

the authors, titles of the books have been fully quoted in the text. Moreover, the English translation and their original Chinese terms have been alphabetically arranged in the appendix II. In the footnotes, the Writings of Mencius are referred to as Books.

The writer would like to express his countless gratitude to Dr. Spencer Albright, Jr., Professor of Political Science, for his kind, patient and constructive guidance to the writer while staying two years in the University and preparing this paper.

The writer is also deeply indebted to Dr. and Mrs. J. Rundley Wiley for their constant encouragement, and Dr. and Mrs. C. Hart Westbrook for their help in collecting the material. Their assistance made the completion of this paper possible. The writer would also like to acknowledge his gratitude to Mrs. Jane D. Anderson for her patient and tireless efforts in typing this paper.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the development of human civilization before the 15th and 16th centuries, China's achievement is second to none in the world. This achievement is very different from that of any country. Unlike the Hebrews or Indians, she has none of the religious fervour; different with the Greeks and Germans, she takes little interest in mystics or metaphysical thinking in which the objective science is developed. In what respect, then, may China claim a place and contribution of human civilization? The central thesis of her literature is the ethical conduct of mankind. Her great thinkers have concentrated their energies on problems in this one field which deals with political philosophy and the philosophy of life.

The origination of the civilization of mankind could be briefly defined into three fields. They are the relationship between Heaven and mankind, man and man, material and mankind. In general speaking, the Hebrews and Indians contributed the first part, the Chinese did the second and the Greeks achieved the third. This was the world civilization originated. A brief table shows as follows:

THE ORIGINATION OF THE
CIVILIZATION OF THE MANKIND

The relationship between Heaven and Mankind	The relationship between Man and Man	The relationship between Material and Mankind
Hebrews, Indians	Chinese	Greek

On the topic of the relationship between man and man, there were four principal schools towards this field in ancient China. They were all formed sooner or later during the "Chan Chiu and Chan Kuo period".¹ After the Chin and Han dynasties, however, these schools were either grouped as the "Writings of the Hundred", or classified as six schools and nine branches, according to the nature of their studies. But actually the distinct types of thinking were four, namely Confucian, Mohse, Taoist and Legalist schools. Others were simply variations of these four types. In the question of time, it is commonly accepted that Confucian school is the oldest. The Taoist is the second, then the Mohse and the Legalist school.

¹ Chan Chiu and Chan Kuo period (722-221 B. C.). All the great thinkers of China of this period lived during the three hundred years between 530 and 230 B. C. This three hundred years were the golden age of Chinese philosophy.

We are not going to discuss why and how the said period was the golden age of Chinese philosophy. However, in order to understand the background of the political philosophy of Mencius, the political, social and economic, and the intellectual aspects of the said period are the necessary knowledge.

The period of 722 to 481 B. C. is generally known as the Chun Chiu period, a term derived from the Chun Chiu¹ or "Spring and Autumn Annals", an historical chronicle of the state of Lu.² The feudal lords usurped more and more powers from the House of Chou within this period. The weakening Chou Dynasty gave a chance of complete independence to these feudal lords. Many feudal states were swallowed up by the few more powerful ones. The Chan Kuo period of 481-221 B. C. is termed as the Warring States period. All the social and economic movements that had begun during the preceding age acted throughout this period with increasing violence. Many former feudal aristocracies lost their power, while the peasants, who had been the virtual serfs of their landlords, gained independence. Fighting for supremacy, horrible and continuous wars were waged between the seven large states. Due to this special situation, the so called Chun Chiu and Chan Kuo period produced the golden age of Chinese

²Shaw Kung Chung, History of Chinese Political Thought (Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China: Chinese Press Publishing Company, 1954), p. 11, footnote 5.

philosophy which has perhaps been unparalleled elsewhere in the world, save in classical Greece.

From the political point of view, during the Chun Chiu period (722-481 B. C.), feudalism was in its last days. Tribal military conquests had merged the multitudinous kingdoms into twenty states. During the Chan Kuo period (481-221 B.C.), these twenty states were amalgamated into seven which towards the end were drawn into a form of united empire. With the passing of feudalism, the aristocracies failed with the same fate. Among the kingdoms, Chin had no aristocratic system, and therefore became strong.³ This example was followed by other remaining kingdoms. During the Chan Kuo period, all feudal distinctions entirely disappeared.⁴ Due to the improving of the communication, the amalgamation of the various tribes became possible.⁵ The tribes which resisted were driven out of the bounds of the civilized world. Moreover, accompanying the expansion of the states and the increasing of the population during this Chun Chiu and Chan Kuo period, traditional customs and usages were challenged. Existing laws and practices were adjusted to meet the demand of the conglomerate society. The disappearance of the aristocracy brought

³Liang Chi-Chao, History of Chinese Political Thought (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1930), p. 29.

⁴Ibid., p. 30.

⁵Ibid., p. 29.

concentration of powers in the rulers of the states. Totalitarianism and abuse of powers became possible. The last thing mentioned here is the armament competition among the states. During the Chan Kuo period, constant warfare, increasing in the number of soldiers, using of arms and development of military tactics increased the suffering of the people.⁶

As a social and economic point of view for the said period, large towns of the states, the centers of politics, trade and development of civilization sprang into existence. Migration of the people from the country to town brought social and economic changes of the old agriculture system. Trade increased through the development of the communication system. Wealth interfered with the politics. On the other hand, the social and economic change did not bring peace and prosperity to the commons. The development of capitalism increased the number of slaves who were treated more harsh than in previous period.

The intellectual aspect during this period was most important. First of all, the intellectual rank which belonged to the nobility only was no longer true during this period. The downfall of the nobility broke their monopoly of knowledge; the nobility lost their privileges and became the new members of the commons. Previously, education was an exclusive function of the officials. The downfall

⁶Ibid., p. 30.

of the nobility brought the "Education without discrimination". Thus the knowledge was greatly accelerated. Secondly, there was a great demand of qualified scholars to be needed by the rulers of the principalities. Rulers of the states paid respect to able scholars without judging their classes. The line between the autocratic rank and the common people was weakened. Thirdly, books were common. According to the records in the history, many books had been in circulation and private libraries were established. These facts were especially true in the capitals of the principalities where the scholars assembled in large numbers to study and to teach. Both the exchange of knowledge and the development of learning inspired material equipment and mental impetus for education.

Reviewing the political, social, economic and intellectual aspects, we can conclude this Chun Chiu and Chan Kuo period, the golden age of Chinese history has had its historical backgrounds. In the swift and deep changes in society, scholars were bewildered and astonished. Therefore, anxiously seeking for solutions for help and relief was natural. Moreover, Chou Dynasty (1122-222 B. C.) which had produced a well-grounded civilization laid a strong foundation for the golden age of Chinese history. The new social and political changes released intellectual energy. The interaction of these two produced the most splendid period in Chinese history.

Let us discuss briefly the political philosophy of the four principal schools, namely the Confucian, Metze, Taoist and Legalist

Schools. An understanding of these four schools will help to understand the political philosophy of Mencius who belonged to the School of Confucianism.

First of all, the Confucian School is constructed on ethical ideas into politics. It emphasizes both education and distribution of wealth. The fellow-feeling of mankind arising from immediate contacts can be extended to the remotest relationships as a foundation of the society and the country. Enlightened politics must be built upon the foundation of an enlightened people. To enlighten the people, constant care must be taken of their physical and spiritual well-being.

Secondly, the Mohze School is ecclesiasticism and can be called neo-theocracy. It denies absolute freedom, but favors absolute equality. Similar to the Confucian School, it emphasizes human sympathy, but denies human discrimination. The characteristic of this school is that it insists every man should abandon self and submit to a supreme ruler.

Thirdly, the Taoist School is anarchism. The political philosophy of this school is therefore founded on the ideal of absolute freedom, and rejects all forms of interference. The government is not necessary, but nature is all powerful and is perfection. This nature, in Taoist eyes, loses its original quality where in contact with human efforts.

Fourthly, the Legalist School is legalism or materialism.

It is keeping in view the actual conditions of life, and therefore is materialistic. It firmly believes in the power of the state, denying the sanctity of the individual. The strict interference to the individual life by the government is favored by the School. The people have their freedom and equality only within the law. In the modern language of politics, we may define these four schools as the Confucian School in the center, Mohze School is in the center right, the Taoist School is in the extreme left and Legalist School at the extreme right.⁷

Mencius holds the position in the Confucian School next only to that of Confucius. His actual name is Mang-tze which has been latinized as Mencius. Kung (simple form of Kung-tze, Confucius) and Mang (simple form of Mang-tze, Mencius) are two names which always go hand in hand. As the Confucian School strongly influences China ever since its establishment during the Chun Chiu period, the expressing of Kung Mang signifies to the Chinese scholars the whole of the orthodox teaching of his country. The highest respect is paid everywhere in China to two names.

Although Mencius was not a personal disciple of Confucius, he is always regarded as the chief expounder of his doctrines. He has been called the St. Paul of Confucianism. The two philosophers belong to the same school, but the writings of Mencius do breathe a democratic spirit, and in this respect, are somewhat different from the ideas of his predecessor, Confucius.

⁷Ibid., 34.

Unlike Plato or Aristotle, Mencius had not left to this world a systematic political treatise such as Aristotle's "Politics" and Plato's "Republic". A careful study of his works, however, will enable us to say his political opinions are as important as those of Plato and Aristotle.

CHAPTER II

LIFE OF MENCIUS

Mang-tze, known as Mencius to westerners, is composed of Mang, the surname, and tze, the common designation of males. His personal name was Ko, but when grown up he had styled Tze-Chu. Chau Chi, in the preface to his commentaries, perpetuates the tradition that Mencius was a descendant of Mang-sun family, one of the noble families in the principality of Lu during the Chau Dynasty. This not only claims for him a noble origin, but also makes him a descendant of kings; since the Mang-sun family sprang from a Duke of the Principality of Lu, who himself was descended from King Wen, father of the founder of the Chou Dynasty.

As Chau Chi recorded when the three powerful families of Lu dwindled into insignificance, their descendants were scattered among the neighboring states and the Mang-sun family found its abode in Tsau where Mencius was born. The question of whether this Tsau was the Principality of Tsau or the district Tsau in the Principality of Lu is a disputed one, with the learned scholars enlisted on both sides. However, the Principality of Tsau was adjacent to the Principality of Lu, and history recorded that Tsau was afterwards absorbed by Lu. To connect Kung and Mang by a common birthplace is an idea fondly cherished by many scholars who like to believe that Mencius was born in the same district as his master and prototype

Confucius. Tsau Tze-sen is one of the authoritative scholars who is upholding this view in his book in Chinese entitled "A Collection of Supplemental Observations on Four Books." Suffice it to say that the birthplace of Mencius is generally believed to be in the Principality of Tsau, not the district of Tsau in the Principality of Lu.

The birth date of Mencius is also a matter of dispute. Different chronologies of his life are given by different scholars, each having his arguments to advance, and each having some important authorities to quote. When all of them are carefully examined and compared, one is hard to know which to follow. "The Genealogical Register of Mang's family" seems to be commonly believed the authority upon which most of the current chronologies have been constructed.

According to this book, Mencius' life covers a period of eighty-four years. The year of his death is put as the twenty-sixth year of the sovereign Nan (288 B. C.), while the year of his birth is put as the thirty-seventh year of the sovereign Ting (569 B. C.). The later date is evidently a mistake, and is abandoned by all scholars. The Genealogical Register is, however, generally taken as authoritative in regard to the fact that Mencius lived to the age of eighty-four years. Thus reckoning back eighty-four years from the twenty-six years of the sovereign Nan, the chronologies fix the fourth year of

the sovereign Leih (372 B.C.) as the date for Mencius' birth. Two scholars, Huang Bun-Chi and Tsao Tze-sen who worked for the chronologies of Mencius are worth mentioning here. The former left his work entitled "Records of Observations in the Land of the Sage", and the latter left his work as we mentioned before "A Collection of Supplemental Observations on the Four Books." Mr. Tsao's work is closely followed by the distinguished translator of the Chinese Classics, Mr. James Legge, in the Prolegomena to his translation of the Works of Mencius.

As concerning Huang's chronology, there is a doubt to us that Mencius came to Liang, the capitol of Principality of Wei, in the 33rd year of the sovereign Shien (336 B.C.); and then had the conversation with King Hwuy, the Duke of Wei, which is recorded in the first chapter of the Works. Thirty-three years of the Sovereign Shien, Mencius was only thirty-six years of age, yet in the conversation above mentioned, he is addressed by the Duke as "Seou", Venerable Sir, which is a form of expression only used when addressing a man of advanced age. In others, as the chronology of Tsao Tze-sen, one point is not usually accepted as correct. It is regarded that Mencius first came to Wei in the first year of the sovereign Shen Tsing (320 B.C.). This disagrees with the "Comparative Chronological Tables of the Six Principalities" which was written by the great historian Shih-ma Chien in his "Historical Records,". Mencius came to the Principality of Wei in the 33rd year of the sovereign Shien,

according to Shih-ma Chien, not the first of the sovereign Shen Tsing. Based on the statements in his table upon the records of the different principalities, which we have every reason to trust not only because they were taken as authoritative by such a widely read and distinguished scholar and historian as Shih-ma Chien, but also because they were the only source of information in regard to the events of the period with the life of Mencius.

This paper is based chiefly upon the "Historical Records" of Shih-ma Chien. Besides Su's edition of the Works of Mencius and Cheng Sheou Ku's "A Supplemental Commentary and Literary Discussion on the Four Books" are also taken as a part of the materials.

The life of Mencius could be divided into three portions. From his birth (372 B.C.) to his appearance in the Principality of Wei in the 33rd year of the Sovereign Shien (336 B.C.), that was the contemplative period of Mencius who did nothing but teaching in his native place. From his appearance in the Principality of Wei to his retirement in the 3rd year of the Sovereign Han (312 B.C.), that was his period of public services. Mencius travelled from one principality to another trying to carry out his noble ideas in this period. From his retirement covered the rest of his life till his death in the 25th year of the sovereign Han (288 B.C.), he was busy with the editing of the ancient classics and the composition of his own work with his disciples during this period of twenty-four years.

We know too little about Mencius' early life. Tradition says

that Mencius lost his father when he was only three years old. This tradition was strongly supported by Chau Chi in the preface to his Commentaries on the Works of Mencius. It contradicts, however, with the famous historian, Lin Hsiang who wrote "A Collection of the Memoirs of Eminent Women". It recorded that when Mencius was a school boy, his mother educated him by thrice changing her residence and how she weaved to support Mencius and her husband when the former was in school. Moreover, a strong evidence that Mencius' father did not die till the son reached maturity is found in his own works that Mencius was charged with having interred his mother in a more elegant manner than he had interred his father.² Obviously, Mencius would not have been held responsible for his father's burial if he had died while the son was a mere child. Possible answer is that the father was a man of no extraordinary parts and the mother was a celebrated one. Furthermore, it is also possible that the father seeking his livelihood far from home, and the son was left to the care of the mother who was a lady of virtue and ability and whose way of educating her son has become a model of motherhood in China. All we need is further proof.

Another interesting question is whether Mencius was a pupil of Confucius' grandson Tze Suo? It is often believed that was true. Tradition tells us that Mencius gets the real spirit of the teaching of

² Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 16.

Tze Sue, and as this could not have been transmitted to him by any of Tze Sue's pupils, none of whom was a distinguished scholar, we must believe that Mencius learned directly from Tze Sue. Many famous historians and authors such as Chen Chi in his book called "The Commentaries on the Work of Mencius", Fan Kee in his "Book of the Former Han Dynasty", Kung Fu in his book entitled "Kung Tsung Tze" and Yin Shiao in his book "A Rational Explanation of Traditions and Legends", all supported the traditional view. Besides, a comparative study between the "Doctrine of Mean" and the Works of Mencius reveals also many points of similarity.

Opposing opinions, however, came from Chu Hsi, a great scholar in Sung Dynasty, who questioned this as one would wonder why there is no record of a single conversation between Tze Sue and Mencius, if they were master and pupil. A study of the Works of Mencius would rather make one believe that there were no personal relationships between Tze Sue and Mencius. Tze Sue had been mentioned several times in the Works of Mencius, but never in any case indicating that he has been his master.

It is believed that Confucius' death was in the forty-first year of the Sovereign Tsin (479 B. C.). At that time Tze Sue was at least four years old, for his father, the son of Confucius, died three years before Confucius did. Shih-ma Chien recorded that Tze Sue lived to the age of sixty-two. Then the year of his death was far before the birth of Mencius. Some authorities hold that Tze Sue at

the death of his grandfather was mature enough to manage the morning ceremony, being then at least seventeen years old. It does not help at all to put Tse Sue and Mencius together. Other scholars contend that he must have lived till at least the age of eighty-two, in order to make his services at the court of Duke Muh of Lu consistent with history. Even so Tse Sue's death was second year of the Sovereign Ngan (400 B.C.), which is still twenty-eight years before the birth of Mencius. Therefore, historian Shih-na Chien recorded as Mencius studied under a disciple of Tse Sue seems more correct.

As we have seen, the first period of the life of Mencius was a comparatively long one. Much the great part of this period was spent in Tsau as a teacher, attracting to himself multitudes of students from near and far. Keacai of Tsau came from a distant land to get his opinion on human nature,³ and Uh-loo would take one day's travel to see the master in order to answer a knotty question on practical ethics.⁴ As we pointed out in the introduction, Mencius lived in a period of confusing contending states. It did give a chance to those wandering scholars of his time who travelled from one court to another endeavoring to win the favour of the princes with their aggressive or defensive schemes. The scholars who were welcomed by the rulers of every principality were those, as Mencius described, who could:

³Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

⁴Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 1.

enlarge the limits of the cultivated ground for their respective sovereign, to fill their treasuries and to form alliances with other principalities so that their battles must be successful.⁵

These rulers of principalities and their ministers lived in luxuries.

Mencius thus recorded:

halls several times eight cubits high, with beams projecting several cubits. Food spread out over ten cubits square, and attendant girls to the amount of hundreds, pleasure and wine, and the deck of hunting, with thousands of chariots.⁶

All the expenses were collected from the people. Therefore, Mencius said:

The rulers of the principalities rob their people of their time, so that they cannot plough and weed their fields, in order to support their parents. Their parents suffer from cold and hunger. Brothers, wives and children are separated and scattered abroad.⁷

Furthermore, the people suffered the wars between the principalities.

When contentions about territory are the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men till the fields are filled with them. When some struggle for a city is the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men till the city is filled with them.⁸

As for the moral life of the people, the picture was equally dark and gloomy because of the downfall of the feudal system and the

⁵Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

⁶Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 34.

⁷Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 5.

⁸Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 14.

ethical form of government. Moreover, the constant war during the Chun Chiu Chan Kuo period made the people neglect the cultivation of virtue. Mencius said that people know how to nourish a plant, but were ignorant of the right way to cultivate themselves.⁹ Elsewhere, the philosopher said that honour and gain were everywhere sought, but it was forgotten that in men themselves was found that which was truly honourable and valuable.¹⁰

Mencius was the one who felt that the whole world was drowning. His way to save it was to convince both the rulers of the principalities and the people to build the benevolent and righteous governments. He took the responsibility entirely his own by saying:

But Heaven does not yet wish that the empire should enjoy tranquility and good order. If it wished this, who is there besides me to bring it about?¹¹

What did Mencius mean by 'But Heaven does not yet wish that the empire should enjoy tranquility and good order'? It was not only because honour and gain took over the place of righteousness and benevolence in both governmental office and the people, but also Confucianism was very weak and under severe attack by other schools such as Motse and Yang Chu. Mencius summed up the conditions of his time in the following passage:

⁹ M. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 13.

¹⁰ M. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 17.

¹¹ M. II, Pt. II, Chap. 13.

Sage emperors cease to arise, and the Prince of the states gives the reins to their lusts. Employed scholars indulged in unreasonable discussions. The words of Yang Chu and Moï Ti fill the empire. If you listen to people's discourses throughout it, you will find that they have adopted the views either of Yang or of Moï. Now, Yang's principle is 'each one for himself', which does not acknowledge the claims of the sovereign. Moï's principle is 'to love all equally' which does not acknowledge the peculiar affection due to a father. But to acknowledge neither king nor father is to be in the state of a beast. Kung Ming E said, 'In their kitchen, there is fat meat. In their stable, there are fat horses. But their people have the look of hunger, and on the wilds there are those who have died of famine. This is leading on beasts to devour men. If the principle of Yang and Moï are not stopped, and the principles of Confucius not set forth, then those perverse speakings will delude the people, and stop up the path of benevolence and righteousness. When benevolence and righteousness are stopped up, beast will be led on to devour men, and men will devour one another.'¹²

"As an superior men being in office is like the plowing of a husbandman,"¹³ Mencius said to Seacou. And also because the whole empire was drawing, the principles of Confucius were not set forth. Those of Moï Ti and Yang Chu perversely speaking deluded the people and stopped up the path of benevolence and righteousness.¹⁴ Therefore, Mencius went to the public service. His first opportunity for trying to carry out his noble ideas was at his fiftieth year in the

¹²Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

¹³Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 3.

¹⁴Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

Principality of Wei under the King Hwuy. During that time the king was suffering the defeat from the Principality of Chi, suffering to lose his eldest son and his famous general Pan Chuen. Besides, he also lost another battle to the rising neighbor principality of powerful Chin on the west border. In the meantime, he found himself unable to resist the encroachment of the Principality of Chu on the south.¹⁵ Strong desires for renovation then took possession of his mind, and he invited to his court men of virtue. Mencius was the one among them.

Knowing the background of King Hwuy of Leang, it is no surprise to see why Mencius was asked by him as follows:

Venerable sir, since you have not counted it for to come here, a distance of a thousand li, may I presume that you are likewise provided with counsels to profit my kingdom?¹⁶

Mencius replied:

Why must Your Majesty use the word 'profit'? What I am likewise provided with, are counsels to benevolence and righteousness, and these are my only topics.¹⁷

The principles of a benevolent government were then set forth for the prince, but the prince considered them impractical and indifferently put them aside. His warlike spirit sought more satisfaction in military success than in the welfare of his people. As the King Hwuy of Leang, Mencius recalled years after his death by saying that:

¹⁵Bk. I, Pt. I. Chap. 5.

¹⁶Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 1.

¹⁷Ibid.

The opposite indeed of benevolence was King Hui of Leang. The benevolent beginning with what they care for, proceed to what they do not care for. Those who are the opposite of benevolent, beginning with what they do not care for, proceed to what they care for. The King Hui of Leang, for the matter of territory, tax and destroyed his people, leading them to battle. Sustaining a great defeat, he would engage again, and afraid lest they should not be able to secure the victory, urged his son whom he loved, till he sacrificed him with them.¹⁸

Mencius remained in Wei for about two years, but the benevolent and righteous government was not trusted by King Hui of Leang. Therefore actually Mencius held no office during his stay in Wei. He left the country because of the death of the prince and hopeless of the successor.

The philosopher left Wei for Chi. The motive which induced Mencius to come to Chi has not yet been known. That his faithful disciple Kung-sun Chow was a native of Chi might have something to do with it. According to the Works of Mencius, King Seuen of Chi sent his men to spy out how the renowned philosopher was.¹⁹ The prince must have heard his name before and his arrival was evidently reported to him. Mencius remained in Chi and accepted a position as an unsalaried minister or counsellor. He had a bright prospect before him. During his stay in Chi, King Seuen's attention was engrossed by an expedition against the principality of Yen, of which Mencius agreed by saying:

Now the ruler of Yen was tyrannizing over his people, and your Majesty went to punish him. The people supported that you

¹⁸Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 1

¹⁹ Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 32.

were going to deliver them out of the water and fire, and brought baskets of rice and vessels of congee to meet your majesty's host.²⁰

An allied army was formed to rescue the principality of Yen from the hands of Chi. And thus the ruler of Yen was restored. Much of the credit of the good counsels of Mencius, Chi was saved from the attack from the allied army.

The death of Mencius' mother forced him to leave Chi.²¹ This is one of the Confucian's teaching: that the deceased must be buried to the ancestral home. Mencius went to the home of his ancestor's in the principality of Lu to bury his mother. He then returned to his native Tsau where he remained three years of mourning period. When the time is over, he started again for Chi where his great hope is. His disciples were in high spirits, and looked forward to great future. On their way they went back to Chi. Kung-sun Chow asked Mencius by saying:

Master, if you were to obtain the ordering of the government in Chi, could you promise to accomplish anew such results as these realized by Kwan Chung and Gan?²²

Master, if you were to be appointed a high noble and the prime minister of Chi, so as to be able to carry your principles into practice, though you should thereupon raise the ruler to the headship of all the other princes, or even to the royal dignity, it would not to be wondered at. In such a position would your mind be perturbed or not?²³

²⁰Ibid. I, Pt. II, Chap. 11.

²¹Ibid. II, Pt. II, Chap. 7.

²²Ibid. II, Pt. I, Chap. 1.

²³Ibid.

Mencius seemed to have shared the hopefulness of his disciples by replying as:

The people of Chi have a saying--a man may have wisdom and discernment, but this is not like embracing the favourable opportunity. A man may have instruments of husbandry, but that is not like waiting for the farming seasons.--The present time is one in which the royal dignity may be easily obtained. In the flourishing periods of the Hsea-Yin and Chou dynasties, the royal domain did not exceed a thousand li, and Chi embraces that much territory. Cock crow and dogs bark to one another, all the way to the four borders of the state. So Chi possesses the people. No change is needed for the enlarging of its territory: no change is needed for collecting of a population. If its ruler will put in practice a benevolent government, no power will be able to prevent his becoming sovereign.²⁴

Seeing the King Seven of Chi, Mencius told him that what results would ensue if a benevolent government was put into practice.

This will cause all the officers in the kingdom to wish to stand in your Majesty's court, and all the farmers to wish to plough in your Majesty's fields, and all the merchants both travelling and stationary, to wish to store their goods in your Majesty's market-place, and all the travelling strangers to wish to make their tours on your Majesty's roads, and all throughout the kingdom who feel aggrieved by their rulers to wish to come and complain to your Majesty.²⁵

This beautiful picture and Mencius' eloquence certainly impressed the King. He frankly said to Mencius:

I am stupid and not able to advance to this. I wish you, my Master, to assist my intentions. Teach me clearly; although I am deficient in intelligence and vigour, I will essay and try to carry your instructions into effect.²⁶

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 5.

²⁶ Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 7.

The King had really no intention to practice benevolent and righteous government. He did not care too much about the welfare of the people, but did care about music, parks, hunting, love of valour, wealth and beauty. Mencius even tried to persuade the King that all the vices which intoxicated the minds of the rulers might be made subservient to good government, if proper regard for the welfare and interests of the people were maintained.²⁷ The concessions of Mencius, however, did not bring back the prince who thought a benevolent government was impracticable and began to lose interest in the lectures of Mencius. We found the conversation between them after the King listening to a lecture from the philosopher on inter-state ethics. The King concluded by saying, "Yours is a great saying. But I have an infirmity—I love valour."²⁸ Military power was so enticing to him that it sounded somewhat ludicrous that "With a great state to serve a small one."²⁹ Moreover, the King Seuen of Chi was accustomed to flattery, and the way Mencius spoke to him was certainly not very flattering.³⁰ The two persons had entirely two different characters and different

²⁷Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 1.

²⁸Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 3.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 6.

principles. Although Mencius hoped the King would change, yet the day did never come. The hope was in vain. Mencius left Chi and the King died soon after the philosopher's departure.

Another question which can not be settled is that after Mencius left Chi, did he directly return to Tsau or go to the Principality of Tang? The sources lack in both the historical records or in his own Works. In Book III, Pt. I, we find a long chapter in which Mencius expounded to the Duke Wen of Tang a very detailed description of the views of the philosopher on the benevolent government. It seems that the Duke did have the intention to give Mencius a fair trial, but never did come into effect. During his period of five years staying in Tang, The most interesting thing he did was the debate between a disciple of the "physiocrats" Hsu Hsing and him. Hsu Hsing and his followers taught a strange doctrine that prince and peasant alike should cultivate the ground and eat the fruit of their own labour.³¹ Mencius' subtle logic left the enemy absolutely helpless upon the field. He effectively vindicated the principle of division of labour, and proved the necessity of a governing class.³² The rise of the governing class marked a distinct step forward in the progress of civilization, and Mencius showed clearly the impossibility of going backwards. Moreover, during

³¹ Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

³² Ibid.

his staying in Tang, the philosopher was inquired about the international politics by Duke of Tang. "Tang is a small state, and lies between Chi and Tsoo. Shall I serve Chi or shall I serve Tsoo?"³³

Mencius replied:

If you will have me counsel you, there is one thing I can suggest. Dig deep in your moat; build higher your walls; guard them with your people. In case of attack, be prepared to die in your defense, and have the people so that they will not leave you; this is a proper course.³⁴

But if it should be asked how the people will not leave their ruler, Mencius' answer would again be "By the benevolent government." At any rate, Mencius' teaching could not be accepted by this small and weak state like Tang.

In the second year of the sovereign Shen (319 B.C.) we found Mencius in Chi again. How and why he left Tang and how and why he came to Chi the second time are still a puzzle. But we know through the Works of Mencius that unlike the first time when Mencius stayed with King Seuen, his relationship with King Ming of Chi were much cooler. One thing made the relationship even worse was Chi's expedition to her neighboring Principality of Yen in the first year of sovereign Nan (314 B.C.). King Ming seized the opportunity for attacking Yen when the latter had internal trouble. Mencius had been

³³Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 13.

³⁴Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 13.

consulted before the action was taken for the King knew that the philosopher will oppose the plan. But the opinion of Mencius was too important to be disregarded. A messenger was sent to him, and the question was so put that Mencius could not give other than the required answer.³⁵ The expedition, however, turned out to be unpopular, and Mencius was charged with having initiated it. The philosopher explained it by saying:

Shin Tung asked me whether Yen might be smitten, and I answered him, "It may." They according went and smote it. I would have answered him, 'He who is the minister of Heaven may smite it.' ... But now with Yen to smite another Yen, how shall I have advised it?³⁶

As a result the prince of Chi felt much ashamed and drew farther away from him. Therefore, Mencius offered his resignation and left Chi the second time at the advanced age of seventy-two.

The last chance for the philosopher was in Lu. He went to this principality and the Duke made his call upon the aged philosopher. Everything looked very nice. But the Duke was directed from his good purpose by the slander of a favorite named Tsang Tsang, and last hope of Mencius was broken. He was disappointed very much, but accepted his fate as the will of Heaven. He said:

A man's advancement is effected, it may be by others. But to advance a man or to stop his advance is really beyond the power of other men. My not finding in the Prince of Lu a ruler who would confide in me, and put my counsels into practice, is from Heaven. How could that scion of the Tsang

³⁵Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 8.

³⁶Ibid.

family cause me not to find the ruler that would suit me?³⁷

With those sorrowful words, Mencius seems to have closed his public service. The date was probably in the year of 312 B.C.

No doubt Mencius was a wise, lofty and a noble political philosopher, but lacked subtlety as a practical politician. He was a man of moral principles which did not allow him to go into the political intrigues of his time. As we mentioned in the introduction, we know what kind of society the Chun Chiu and Chan Kuo was. We could simply say that the time Mencius lived was unfavorable for practicing his noble principles of government. A warlike spirit took possession of every ambitious prince. Tactical schemes and political intrigues gained the ease of the rulers of the states sooner and more influential than the principles of benevolent and righteous government. The day belonged to Machiavelli type wondering scholars such as Chang I. It is no wonder why the King Seuen of Chi concluded the teachings of Mencius by saying, "Yours is a great saying."³⁸ Furthermore, his faithful disciple Kung-sun Chow also had the same complaint:

Lofty and admirable are your principles, but to apply them in actual practice may well be likened to ascending the Heavens—something which can not be reached.³⁹

Mencius knew how hard it was to put his principles into effect. He not only prepared to accept the failure as the will of Heaven, but also paved his way in case of failure. He said:

³⁷Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 16.

³⁸Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 5.

³⁹Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 41.

A scholar, though poor, does not let go his righteousness; though prosperous, he does not leave his own path. Poor and not letting righteousness go;—it is thus that the scholar holds possession of himself. Prosperous and not leaving the proper path;—it is thus that the expectations of the people are not disappointed. When the men of antiquity realized their wishes, benefits were conferred by them on the people. If they did not realize their wishes, they cultivated their personal character, and illustrious in the world. If poor, they attended to their own virtue in solitude; if advanced to dignity, they made the whole empire virtuous as well.⁴⁰

"If poor, they attended to their own virtue in solitude."⁴¹

Mencius did follow his own principle. He retired from the turmoil of the world spending the rest of his life in the society of his disciples. He engaged in lecturing to a select few and in putting on record his sentiments and teachings which have been handed down to us as the seven books of his famous Works. The philosopher died at the 26th year of sovereign Nan (288 B.C). This marked the end of the life of the great philosopher of China.

⁴⁰Ek. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 9.

⁴¹ibid.

CHAPTER III

THE WORKS OF MENCIOUS

Tradition tells us that the writings of Mencius are to be contained in the seven books known as "The Seven Books of Mencius". However, through the other sources in the history, there were four additional books of Mencius besides the present seven. We make a table in which to show the extra Works of Mencius besides the ordinary seven mentioned by other books.

Author's Name	Title of the Book	Date	Remarks
Hsun Tze	Essay of Fei Twelve Tzes ?	298-238 B.C.	These are quotations from Mencius which are not found in the seven extant books.
Tung Chung-shu	Tung Chun-shu's One Hundred Twenty-Three Essays ?		
Wang-Chung	Lung-heng	27-97 A.D.	Goodness of man's nature was mentioned.
Chau-Chi	Commentaries on the Works of Mencius	?	There are four additional books of Mencius. They are entitled (1) On the Goodness of Man's Nature. (2) Term Discriminated. (3) An Exposition of the Classic of Filial Pity. (4) The Practice of Government.

He also concluded that the extra four books of Mencius had been palmed off upon the world by persons who imitated the writings of Mencius.

Yin Shao	A Rational Explanation of Tradition and Legend	2nd century B.C.	Mencius wrote eleven books.
Pan Koo	The Book of Former Han Dynasty (In the volume entitled Records of Arts and Literature)	32-92 A.D.	The Works of Mencius are eleven books.
Chi Wu Sui	Catalogue of Books In the History of the Sui Dynasty	?	Nine books of Mencius were mentioned.
Liu Chang She	Diary of Liu Chang She	about Sung Dynasty	A copy of Mencius' book on the 'Goodness of Men's Nature' was found.
Choi Huao Chin	An Examination Of the Discrepancies Connected With the Four Books	about early years of Chin Dynasty	By the time of Sui Dynasty (589-617 A.D.) two of the four of Mencius additional books still remained.

*? means the materials are not sufficient on hand and need further proof.

A study and analysis of these books which have mentioned the additional four books of Mencius makes a person very much in doubt. There are several questions. First of all, are there really four additional books of Mencius besides the traditional seven? Secondly, if the answer is positive, how did those four books get lost through the ages? Thirdly, if the answer is negative, one can hardly believe that those books, which mention the four additional books of Mencius, were written mostly by renowned scholars. Did they tell the truth? A lot of work needs to be done on this question, if we want a positive answer.

Regarding the truth of the four additional books of Mencius, two historical facts have to be understood. Mencius was not very popular during his time. He had far less fame in comparison with those dozens of wandering scholars. He held no important office during his whole life. Princes of the principalities and the scholars of his time paid no particular interest toward his saying when he was living and his books after his death. A proof of this point could be got from a study of essay on Human Nature by Hsun Tze who lived in the third century B.C. which was very close to the period of Mencius. In the essay, the author showed not only he had an inadequate knowledge of the position of Mencius, but also that he probably only knew his teaching from hearsay. Therefore, we have reason to doubt the reliability of the writings of Hsun Tze concerning Mencius. Secondly, Shih Huang Ti, the first Emperor of Chin Dynasty, united the states in 221 B.C. In order to bury the liberal thought of the principalities, he

burned thousands of books. Therefore, many books were hidden by the people and were searched by the governmental official. After the downfall of the short-lived fourteen years Chin Dynasty, the ancient books were found again gradually in the Han Dynasty. Many books of forgery came into existence because the ancient books had been found again. Among them, the additional four books of Mencius perhaps were the case. This was the reason that Chau Chi gave his conclusion that the four additional books were imitated ones. The most authoritative historian Shih-ma Chien of Han Dynasty held the same view.

As the authorship of the seven books of Mencius, the first person who questioned it was Han Yu in the eighth century of Christian era. Han gave no reasons of his doubt, but concluded that the books of Mencius were not written by Mencius himself. They were merely his sayings put together after his death by his disciples such as Wan Chang, Kung-sun Chow. This hypothesis was followed by Lin Shan-sze of Tang Dynasty and Ching E-Chuen of Sung Dynasty. Lin in his book entitled "Continuation of Mencius" by saying in the preface that the seven books did not give a full representation of the teaching of Mencius as they were written by his disciples and therefore a continuation was necessary. After a careful study of this question, Chaou Shao-tze pointed out that all the princes mentioned in the Works of Mencius were referred to by their posthumous names. It was improbable that Mencius survived all those princes. He concluded that the books of Mencius could not have been written by the philosopher himself. This argument, however, was answered by Yen Jo-Chu in his

book called "Topography of the Four Books". Yen said the Works of Mencius were edited by his disciples after the philosopher's death. The most authoritative record is still Shih-ma Chien's "Historical Records" in which we found Mencius did outlive all the princes mentioned in his Works except King Min of Chi whose posthumous name was not called in Mencius' writings.

The most qualified scholar who could give a conclusion here about the authorship of the seven Books of Mencius is Chu Hsi, the greatest scholar of Chinese classics in Ming Dynasty. He said the seven books of Mencius showed the style of uniformity which makes him believe that Mencius himself did the work.

CHAPTER IV

MENCIUS' CONCEPTION OF THE STATE

As we mentioned in the previous chapters that the center thesis of Chinese civilization is based upon the relationship between man and man which is her part to contribute to world civilization. Through the Chinese classics we find the teaching that man cannot live apart from the five relations which sometimes are called the five constants. They are the relation of sovereign and minister, father and son, elder brother and younger brother, husband and wife, friend and friend.¹ The first represents the right and obligation between sovereign and minister. The second, third and fourth represent the family tie. The fifth indicates social intercourse. All these express man's position in the state.

We have also mentioned the ethic form of government which was

¹James Legge, trans., The Four Books--Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, The Doctrine of The Mean, and The Works of Mencius. (Shanghai, China: The Chinese Book Company, 1930), p. 384-385.

The Doctrine of the Mean, Chap. 20. Confucius said: "The duties of universal obligation are five, and the virtues wherewith they are practiced are three. The duties are those between sovereign and minister, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder brother and younger, and those belonging to the intercourse of friends. Those five are the duties of universal obligation."

the main point of Confucius' teaching and Mencius inherited. Confucius said:

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom, first ordered well their own states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate the families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts... Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their family was regulated. The family being regulated, their states were rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy.²

From the text of Confucius, we see how much emphasis the family is put as a foundation stone of a well governed state and tranquil, happy kingdom. Therefore, we will not be surprised to see Mencius say that to acknowledge neither father nor sovereign is to be in the state of a beast.³ As father symbolically means family and sovereign means state, Mencius connected both as natural state of human being.

Through the Works of Mencius, we found that people's economic needs were mentioned many times and were treated as an essential fact as to a well ordered state. The value and dignity of the man are based on their livelihood. Mencius said:

The way of the people is this--if they have a certain livelihood, they will have a fixed heart. If they have not a certain livelihood, they have not a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart, there is nothing which they will not do in the way of self-abandonment, of moral defection,

² Legge, op. cit., The Great Learning, pp. 310-313.

³ Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

of depravity, and of wild license. When they have thus been involved in crime, to follow them up and punish them:--this is to entrap the people. How can a thing as entrapping the people be done under the rule of a benevolent man?⁴

Both ethics and politics must rest upon an economical basis. The people cannot talk virtue and self-cultivation with an empty stomach. It is an accepted principle of modern moralists to improve the moral conditions of the society by improving their economics. And this, in Mencius' opinion, can best be brought by the state. He said:

Therefore, an intelligent ruler will regulate the livelihood of the people, so as to make sure that, for those above them, they shall have sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and for those below them, sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children; that in good years, they shall always be abundantly satisfied, and that in bad years they shall escape the danger of perishing. After this he may urge them, and they will proceed to what is good,⁵ for in this case the people follow after it with ease.

The philosopher then proceeds to explain how each family should plant mulberry trees, keep its live stock, and do its farming so that it may be well supplied with food and clothing.⁶

What is the conception of the state of Mencius? The philosopher told us in his Works as "The precious things of a prince are three;--

⁴Bk. III, Pt. 1, Chap. 3.

⁵Bk. I, Pt. 1, Chap. 7.

⁶Ibid.

the territory, the people, and the government."⁷ They are the essential elements of a state. This is an incomplete conception in the eyes of today's political scientists. But we have to admit that more than two thousand years ago, it was a remarkable statement. People, of course, are the most essential element to compose a state. But people alone without having a definite territory cannot be called a state in Mencius' eyes. In other words, nomad tribes can not be considered as a state. At least the people who have reached the agriculture stage and have occupied a definite territory. The third is government. It must be an organized unit with governors in contradistinction to the governed. The idea of sovereignty did not appeal in Mencius' teaching, but it does decrease the value of his Works. Actually, Jean Bodin (1530-1596) was the first one to study sovereignty in detail.

Mencius mentioned about the governing in his Works as:

With but few potters a kingdom cannot subsist;--
how much less can it subsist without men of a higher
rank than others.⁸

Therefore, men of higher rank are needed for a kingdom. Where and how those men of higher rank come from? Mencius was a great student of the Book of History. Based on that, the philosopher quoted for us by

⁷Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 28.

⁸Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 10.

saying:

Heaven having produced the inferior people, made for them rulers and teachers, with the purpose that they should be assisting to Heaven, and therefore distinguished them throughout the four quarters of the land.⁹

The rulers and teachers, according to the Book of History, are made by the Heaven. This is a distinct idea of the divine right of the ruler who is the vice-gereant of Heaven on earth. But it does not mean the ruler is not responsible or has an absolute divine right.

The state, according to Mencius, is established by divine order, and the ruler occupied his place by divine sanction. But Mencius also teaches the doctrine that the state to the ruler is a public trust, not a private possession. The philosopher also quotes the Book of History by saying the decree indeed may not always rest on us.¹⁰ This means to say the decree rests with the merits of the ruler, and will be cancelled as soon as the ruler proves himself incompetent for its execution. Further proof can be got from the Works of Mencius in which he said to the minister Ping-Lu:

„If one of your spearmen should lose his place in the ranks three times in one day, would you, sir, put him to death or not?"

"I would not wait for three times to do so," was the reply.

⁹Book of History:quoted by Mencius in Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 6.

¹⁰Ibid.

"Well then, you, sir, have likewise lost your place in the rank many times. In bad calamitous years, and years of famine, the old and feeble of your people, who have been found lying in the ditches and water channels, and the able-bodied who have been scattered about to the four quarters have amounted to several thousands."¹¹

In other words, the ministers as well as his speakers have a certain responsibility. Either of them fail to accomplish it shall receive the punishment. The ministers have no exception here.

We have reason to believe that Mencius is a democrat and his Works do breathe the democratic spirit. A post of authority means a place of responsibility to Mencius. This is applied not only to the ministers, but also the sovereign himself. His conversation with King Seuen of Chi:

"Suppose that one of your Majesty's ministers entrusted his wife and children to the care of his friend, while he himself went to Chu to travel, and that, on his return, he should find that the friend had let his wife and children suffer from cold and hunger; how ought he to deal with him?"

"Dismiss him," the King said.

Mencius again said, "If within the four borders of your kingdom there is not good government, what is to be done?" The King looked to the right and left, and spoke of other matters.¹²

If the sovereign proves himself unworthy of a trust, he should be put out of his place. Since the sovereign is the vice-gerent of the Heaven on earth, how could he be put out of his place without the proof of the Heaven? And secondly, how can the will of Heaven be

¹¹Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 4.

¹²Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 6.

known? Mencius also answered these questions in his Works.

Wan Chang said: "Was it the case that Yaou gave the empire to Shun?" Mencius said, "No, the emperor cannot give the empire to another."

"Yes;—but Shun had the empire. Who gave it to him?" "Heaven gave it to him," was the answer.

"Heaven gave it to him,—did Heaven confer its appointment on him with specific injunction?"

Mencius replied: "No. Heaven does not speak. It simply showed its will by his personal conduct, and his conduct of affairs."

"It showed its will by his personal conduct and his conduct of affairs!—how was this?" Mencius' answer was, "The empire can present a man to Heaven, but he can not make Heaven give that man the empire. A prince can present a man to the emperor, but he cannot cause the emperor to make that man a prince. A great officer can present a man to his prince, but he can not cause the prince to make that man a great officer. Yaou presented Shun to Heaven, and the people accepted him. Therefore, I say, 'Heaven does not speak. It simply indicated its will by his personal conduct and his conduct of affairs.'"

Chang said: "I presume to ask how it was that Yaou presented Shun to Heaven, and Heaven accepted him; and that he exhibited him to the people, and the people accepted him." Mencius replied, "He caused him to preside over the sacrifices, and all the spirits were well pleased with them;—thus Heaven accepted him. He caused him to preside over the conduct of affairs, and affairs were well administered, so that the people reposed under him;—thus the people accepted him. Heaven gave the empire to him. The people gave it to him. Therefore, I said, "The emperor cannot give the empire to another."

Shun assisted Yaou in the government for twenty and eight years;—this was more than man could have done, and was from Heaven. After the death of Yaou, when the three years' mourning was completed, Shun withdrew from the son of Yaou to the south of South River. The princes of the empire, however, repairing to court, went not to the son of Yaou, but went to Shun. Litigants went not to the son of Yaou, but they went to Shun. Singers sang not the son of Yaou, but they sang Shun. Therefore I said: 'Heaven gave him the empire.' It was after these things that he went to the Middle Kingdom, and occupied the emperor's seat. If

he had, before these things, taken up his residence in the palace of Yacu, and had applied pressures to the son of Yacu, it would have been an act of usurpation, and not the gift of Heaven.

"This sentiment is expressed in the words of the Great Declaration,—'Heaven sees according as my people see; Heaven hears according as my people hear.'¹³

This long chapter tells us that no sovereign reigns in his own right. He is chosen by Heaven and is installed by the consent of the people. His authority is entrusted to him for some end other than his own. It is not transferable. These principles were used in the Three Dynasties (2205-722 B.C.), the Golden Age of Chinese History from which Mencius was inspired. From the above question, we know that the emperor chose his own successor. But the successor thus chosen was a mere candidate, and before he succeeded to the throne, he must secure the approval of the Heaven which means the approval of the people. The princes of principalities seemed to represent the people's public opinion of each principality. Mencius denied that the emperor has absolute claim to any heredity right in the throne. The throne became hereditary and continued to be so just so long as it was the will of Heaven and the desire of the people. In other words, no one is born a king. Mencius answered his disciple Wan Chang by saying:

Wan Chang asked Mencius, saying, "People say, 'When the disposal of the empire came to Yu, his virtue was inferior to

¹³Bk. V, Pt. I, Chap. 5.

that of Yeau and Shun and he transmitted it not to the worthiest but to his son.' Was that true? Mencius replied, "No, it was not so. When Heaven gave the empire to the worthiest, it was given to the worthiest. When Heaven gave it to the son of the preceding emperor, it was given to him ...Seven years elapsed, and Yu died. When the three years' mourning was expired, Yih (the one Yu had chosen to succeed him) withdrew from the son of Yu to the north of Mount Ke. The princes, repairing to court, went not to Yih, but they went to K'ia (the son of Yu). Litigants did not go to Yih, but they went to K'ia, saying, 'He is the son of our sovereign; the singers did not sing Yih, but they sang K'ia, saying, 'He is the son of our sovereign.'¹⁴

It is clear that the Heaven expressed its will through the princes and the people to transmit the sovereign to the worthiest. If this worthiest candidate happened to be the former sovereign's son, it is all right. The principle, however, is to transmit the sovereign to the worthiest. Therefore Mencius denies the heredity right to succeed the throne.

Do the people have the right forming a revolution to overthrow the sovereign? As we mentioned before, the sovereign is the vice-garant of the Heaven and also his post means the post of responsibility. In Mencius' eyes, if the sovereign failed to meet the responsible benevolent government, he is no longer the vice-garant of the Heaven. We can easily see the philosopher's point through his conversation with King Seuen of Chi.

The King Seuen of Chi asked, saying, "Was it so, that T'ang banished Kee, and that Woo smote Chow (Kee and Chow were sovereigns of Hsia and Yin Dynasties)? Mencius replied, "It is so in the records."

The King said, "May a minister then put his sovereign to death?"

¹⁴Bk. V, Pt. I, Chap. 6.

Mencius said, "He who outrages the benevolence proper to his nature is called a robber; he who outrages righteousness is called a ruffian. The robber and ruffian we called a mere fellow. I have heard of the cutting off of the fellow Chow, but I have not heard of the putting of a sovereign to death, in this case."¹⁵

It is very clear and does not need any comment.

The people play a vital role of Mencius' state. In his conversation with King Seuen of Chi to consult the attacking of Principality of Yen, Mencius said:

If the people of Yen will be pleased with your taking possession of it, then do so. If the people of Yen will not be pleased with your taking possession of it, then do not do so."¹⁶

Furthermore, as we mentioned, the people also play an important role in the expression of Heaven's will. The most clear expression is Mencius quoted from the Great Declaration by saying: "Heaven sees according as my people see; Heaven hears according to my people hear."¹⁷ Suppose a sovereign fails to meet the people's requirement, to fulfill the will of Heaven, are there some ways to carry the government in order again? Mencius seems to think that the ministers should do something on this. The philosopher in his conversation with King Seuen of Chi expressed his idea.

The King Seuen of Chi asked about the office of chief ministers. Mencius said, "Which chief ministers is your majesty asking about?"

¹⁵Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 8.

¹⁶Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 10.

¹⁷Bk. V, Pt. I, Chap. 5.

"Are there differences among them?" inquired the King. "There are," was the reply. "These are chief ministers who are noble and relatives of the prince, and there are those who are of a different surname." The King said: "I beg to ask about the chief ministers who are noble and relatives of the prince." Mencius said, "If the prince has great faults, they ought to remonstrate with him, and if he does not listen to them after they have done so again and again, they ought to dethrone him."¹⁸

Mencius here seems to think that the ministers who are members of the royal family have the greatest interests in the welfare of the House. In order to save the House, an unworthy sovereign has to be dethroned by them. It is their obligation to do so. The philosopher gave an example in the conversation with his disciple Kung-sun Chow.

Kung-sun Chow said, "E Yin said, 'I can not be near and see him so disobedient to reason,' and therewith he banished Tae-Kea (the sovereign) to Tung. The people were much pleased. When Tae-Kea became virtuous, he brought him back, and the people were again much pleased.

"When worthies are ministers, may they indeed banish their sovereign in this way, when they are not virtuous? "

Mencius replied, "If they have the same purpose as E Yin, they may. If they have not the same purpose, it would be usurpation."¹⁹

It requires, of course, a good deal of statesmanship and also strong will to handle the situation. It is dangerous because the power is easily to be used by the ambitious ministers. The people can be as easily pleased as they can be deceived. Mencius knows the danger of abusing this power. He added that a minister may depose his sovereign,

¹⁸ Bk. V, Pt. II, Chap. 9

¹⁹ Bk. VII. Pt. I. Chap. 31.

provided he has the same purposes as E Yin had. What Mencius meant by the purpose of E Yin is the benevolent government and the welfare of the people. In Mencius' mind, he always thinks of the welfare of the people and the benevolent, righteous government first. The sovereign is only the means, while the people are the end. The philosopher clearly expressed this point by saying:

The people are the most important element in a nation; the spirits of the land and grain (an expression often used to indicate the state) are the next; the sovereign is the slightest.²⁰

To gain the peasantry is the way to become sovereign; to gain the sovereign is the way to become a prince; to gain the prince of a state is the way to become a great officer.²¹

It is, then very easily confused with the democratic teaching of Mencius to modern democracy. After carefully studying the democratic idea of Mencius, we do find that the philosopher's teaching does breathe a strong democratic stand. No less than Jean Jacques Rousseau,²² Mencius believes that not only all men can be Yao and Shun, but also before they become equal in their moral and intellectual attainments, are already equal before the law of the country. Men, in the eyes of the Chinese philosopher, are all created equal. They are equally endowed; and, they are capable of equal attainments. We have many evidences that Mencius has a strong idea that popular consent of

²⁰Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 14.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ebenstein, William, Great Political Thinker (New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1961), p. 441.

the people plays a very important role in his conception of state. It is, however, different with the democratic government of modern time. Let us borrow Lincoln's famous and simple definition of democracy of the people, for the people and by the people. Mencius put a lot of emphasis on the 'of the people', and 'for the people', but he never did touch the modern sense of 'by the people.'

Through the Works of Mencius, we only found a trace of 'by the people' that is to express the will of Heaven through the people. The will of Heaven is also the will of people in the philosopher's eyes. Mencius did mention the will of the people he expressed through the princes,²³ the litigants,²⁴ singers²⁵ and the high ministers.²⁶ But he never did touch the modern sense of 'by the people'.

We have seen that the state has for its basis a divine sanction, and the ruler is regarded as the vice-gerent of Heaven. The divine will of the state is always interpreted or revealed by the opinions of the people. The state as conceived by Mencius is a monarchy in form and her quality is democratic but lacking the modern sense of 'by the people'.

²³Ibid., V, Pt. I, Chap. 5.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid., V, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

CHAPTER V

MENCIUS' GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL

Government, according to Mencius, is based upon the necessary division of labour. The philosopher spoke to Ch'in Seang by saying:

Is it the government of the empire which alone can be carried on along with the practice of husbandry? Great men have their proper business, and little men have their proper business. Moreover, in the case of any single individual, whatever articles he can require are ready to his hand, being produced by the various handicraftsmen:—if he must first make them for his own use, this way of doing would keep the whole empire running about upon the road. Hence, there is a saying, 'Some labor with their minds, and some labor with their strength. Those who labor with their minds govern others; those who labor with their strength are governed by others. Those who are governed by others support them; those who govern others are supported by them.' This is a principle universally recognized.

The philosopher gives more reasons about the necessity of division of labors. He said:

If there were not men of a superior grade, there would be none to rule the country-men, and if there were not country-men, there would be none to support the men of superior grade.²

Mencius draws his model of government in the Golden Age of Yaou and Shun of the Three Dynasties. Were Yaou and Shun the philosophical kings? Were their governments the benevolent and righteous governments as Mencius described is still a question. If the answer is negative, that must be the so called 'old bottle with new wine' which made his teaching easier to be accepted. The philosopher gives his reasons that

¹Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

²Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

he likes to learn from the former kings.

To raise a thing high. We must begin from the top of a mount or a hill; to dig a great depth, we must commence in the low ground of a stream or a marsh. Can he be pronounced wise, who, in the exercise of government, does not proceed according to the ways of former kings?

As for the form of government in the time of Yao and Shun, Mencius left us no detailed description. He merely indicates in different places that the government of Yao and Shun was the most benevolent one. Its sole object is the welfare of the people. In the Works of Mencius, we could find his highest political ideal which might be what the philosopher meant by the benevolent government. In his conversation with King Hsueh of Leang, he said:

If the seasons of husbandry be not interfered with, the grain will be more than can be eaten. If close net are not allowed to enter the pools and ponds, the fishes and turtle will be more than can be consumed. If the axes and bills enter the hills and forests only at the proper time, the wood will be more than can be used. When the grain and fish and turtle are more than can be eaten, and there is more wood than can be used, this enables the people to nourish their living and bury their dead, without any feeling against any. This condition, in which the people nourish their living and bury their dead without any feeling against any, is the first step of Royal Government.

Let mulberry trees be planted about the homesteads with their five mows, and persons of fifty years may be clothed with silk. In keeping fowls, pigs, dogs, and swine, let not their time of breeding be neglected, and persons of seventy years may eat flesh. Let there not be taken away the time that is proper for the cultivation of the farm with its hundred mow, and the family of several mouths that is supported by it shall not suffer from hunger. Let careful attention be paid to education in schools, inculcating in it especially the filial and fraternal duties, and gray-haired men will not be seen upon the roads, carrying burdens on their backs or on their heads. It never has been

that the ruler of a state, where such results were seen,-- persons of seventy wearing silk and eating flesh, and the black-haired people suffering neither from hunger nor cold,--did not attain to the imperial dignity.⁴

It is a doubt to us, that the nearest dynasty to Mencius was Chou Dynasty. But the philosopher seemed not to know much about its form and organization of government. How he knew more ancient dynasties such as Tang and Yu which sage ruler Yaou and Shun belonged. Once Pai-kung asked about the political institutions of Chou Dynasty, the philosopher replied:

The particulars of that arrangement cannot be learned, for the princes, disliking them as injurious to themselves, have all made away with the records of them. Still I have learned the greatest outline of them.⁵

Mencius mentioned in his Works about what he knew of the outline of the government of Chou Dynasty. This is, however, the only governmental system he gave to us and has its significance in Mencius' political philosophy. The political institution of House of Chou was based on the feudal system. The feudal rank of the Empire classified in five. They are the Kung or the Duke, the highest of the dignitaries. Next was Hau or the Marquis. Each of these received from the imperial suzerain, the son of Heaven, a fief of a hundred Li square. The Pai, or the Earl who was next to the Hau in rank, was given a fief of seventy Li square. The Tze or the Viscount and the Nan or Baron

⁴Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

⁵Bk. V, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

received each from the emperor a feudal estate of fifty Li square. At the top of those feudal lords was the emperor who directly ruled a territory of a thousand Li square which was called Imperial Domain. Under him were his ministers, the Ching or the chief minister. Next to him was the Tai-fu or the Great Officers. And the next was the Scholars of the First Class, Scholars of the Middle Class and the Lowest Class. Mencius answered Pei-kung E about the feudal system of the Dynasty of Chou by saying:

The Emperor constituted one dignity; the Kung one; the Hau one; the Pai one; and the Tze and Nan each one of equal rank;—altogether making five degrees of dignity. The Sovereign again constituted one dignity; the Chief Minister one; the Great Officers one; the Scholars of the First Class one; those of the Middle Class one; and those of the Lowest Class one :—altogether making six degrees of dignity.⁶

As the territory of each rank and their relations, Mencius continued:

To the emperor there was allotted a territory of a thousand Li square. A Kung and a Hau had each a hundred Li square. A pai had seventy Li, and a Tze and a Nan had each fifty Li. The assignments altogether were of four amounts. Where the territory did not amount to fifty Li, the chief could not have access himself to the emperor. His land was attached to some Hau-ship, and was called Foo-Yung.

The chief ministers of the emperor received an amount of territory equal to that of a Hau; a great officer received as much as a Pai; and a scholar of the first class as much as a Tze or a Nan.⁷

The philosopher also mentioned the differences of the income among those

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

feudal ranks. He said:

In a great state, where the territory was a hundred Li square, the sovereign had ten times as much income as the chief ministers; a chief minister four times as much as a great officer; a great officer twice as much as a scholar of the first class; a scholar of the first class twice as much as one of the middle; a scholar of the middle class twice as much as one of the lowest; the scholars of the lowest class, and such of the common people as were employed about the government offices, had the same emolument;—as much, namely, as was equal to what they would have made by tilling the field.⁸

In a state of the next order, where the territory was seventy Li square, Mencius illustrated their income differences by saying:

The sovereign had ten times as much revenue as the chief minister; a chief minister three times as much as a great officer; a great officer twice as much as a scholar of the first class; a scholar of the first class twice as much as one of the middle; a scholar of the middle class twice as much as one of the lowest; the scholars of the lowest class, and such of the common people as were employed about the government offices, had the same emolument;—as much, namely, as was equal to what they would have made by tilling the field.⁹

In a small state, where the territory was fifty Li square Mencius pointed out their income differences.

The sovereign had ten times as much revenue as the chief minister; a chief minister had twice as much as a great officer; a great officer twice as much as a scholar of the highest class; a scholar of the highest class twice as much as one of the middle; a scholar of the middle class twice as much as one of the lowest; scholars of the lowest class, and such of the common people as were employed about the government offices, had the same emolument;—as much, namely, as was equal to what they would have made by tilling the fields.¹⁰

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

What are the incomes of the majority of the common people who tilled the fields? Mencius said to us.

As to those who tilled the fields, each husbandman received a hundred mow. When those mow were matured, the best husbandmen of the highest class supported nine individuals, and these ranking next to them supported eight. The best husbandmen of the second class supported seven individuals, and those ranking next to these supported six; while husbandmen of the lowest class only supported five. The salaries of the common people who were employed about the government offices were regulated according to these differences.¹¹

The system described by Mencius in this long chapter was evidently a feudal monarchy resting on the agricultural basis.

The division of the land has been a problem since mankind organized their first society. Mencius has a way to solve this problem for his benevolent government. He said:

A square li covers nine squares of land, which nine squares contain nine hundred mow. The central square is the public field, and eight families, each having its private hundred mow, cultivate in common the public field. And not till public work is finished, may they presume to attend to their private affairs. This is the way by which the countrymen are distinguished from those of a superior grade.¹²

The nine-square division of the land is, in the eyes of Mencius, not only the best system for the land use, but also the social benefits resulting from it. Mencius pointed out.

On occasions of death, or removal from one dwelling to another, there will be no quitting the district. In the fields of districts, those who belong to the same nine squares render all friendly offices to one another in their going out and

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

coming in, aid one another in keeping watch and word, and sustain one another in sickness. Thus the people are brought to live in affection and harmony.¹³

For the feudal system of the House of Chou, Mencius had a detailed description in his Works as we mentioned before. But the philosopher seemed not to put much faith in it. The nine-square of division of land, Mencius gave much praise to it. This could be considered one of the foundations of his benevolent government.

During the time of Mencius, the philosopher was asked many times by the princes of principalities about how was the benevolent government to be brought about. Mencius holds that an extensive territory is not essential to the practice of the benevolent government. He said:

He who, using force, makes a pretense to benevolence, is the leader of the princes. A leader of the princes requires a large kingdom. He who, using virtue, practices benevolence—is the sovereign of the empire. To become the sovereign of the empire, a prince need not wait for a large kingdom.¹⁴

A kingdom of seventy Li or hundred Li is quite enough to practice the benevolent government.¹⁵ In the conversation with King Hui of Leang, the philosopher suggests the steps to build an ideal political institution. He said:

If your Majesty will indeed dispense a benevolent government to the people, being sparing in the use of punishments and fines,

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

¹⁵Ibid.

and making the taxes and levies light, so causing that the field shall be plowed deep, and the weeding of them be carefully attended to, and that the strong-bodied, during their days of leisure, shall cultivate their filial piety, fraternal respectfulness, sincerity, and truthfulness, serving thereby, at home, their fathers and elder brothers, and, abroad their elders and superiors.¹⁶

After the government is benevolent, there is no enemy in Mencius' eyes. When the philosopher was asked about the military preparation to defend the benevolent nation by his disciple Wan Chang:

Sung is a small state. Its ruler is now setting about to practice the true royal government, and Chi and Tsoo hate and attack him. What is the case to be done?¹⁷

Mencius replied:

Sung is not practising true royal government as you say. If it were practicing royal government, all within the four seas would be lifting up their heads, and looking for its prince, wishing to have him for their sovereign. Great as Chi and Tsoo are, what would there be to fear from them?¹⁸

The benevolent government does not require the material strength such as a big territory and a strong army. A virtuous sovereign and ministers will be enough.

Mencius praised the sage rulers Yaou and Shun every time while talking about the benevolent governments of the Golden Age, the three Dynasties. Are the sage rulers like Yaou and Shun very hard to imitate? The philosopher answered King Soang of Leang about who can

¹⁶Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 5.

¹⁷Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 5.

¹⁸Ibid.

unite the empire by saying that the one who has no pleasure in killing men can so unite it.¹⁹ It contains the same meaning that Mencius said elsewhere that everyone could be Yao and Shun.²⁰ Another characteristic of a sage ruler is he occupies both positions, the ruler of the state and the teacher of the people. What the sovereign does is followed by his people. Mencius pointed out:

If the sovereign be benevolent, all will be benevolent. If the sovereign be righteous, all the people be righteous.²¹

Military force was looked down upon by the philosopher. It was considered a failure in the long run. Therefore, wherever Mencius went; whoever he talked about, the center thesis there was nothing but peace and order, benevolent and righteous government. He said:

When one by force subdues men, they do not submit to him in heart. They submit, because their strength is not adequate to resist. When one subdues men by virtue, in their hearts' core they are pleased, and sincerely submit, as was the case with the seventy disciples in their submission to Confucius.²²

The philosopher looked down upon military force as a protest to the war-like spirit of his time. The rulers of the states wanted to satisfy their ambitions. They sacrificed thousands of precious lives, desolated hundreds of cities. The crops were destroyed and the people were starving. Therefore, Mencius is thirsting for order.

¹⁹Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 6.

²⁰Dk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

²¹Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 5.

²²Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

Sage ruler is important in Mencius' benevolent government. But the job is a team work. Sage ruler alone can not do it. Even the philosophical kings like Yaou and Shun found themselves insufficient to administer the state with single hand.²³ Therefore, Mencius said:

A prince who is to accomplish great deeds will certainly have ministers whom he does not call to go to him. When he wishes to consult with them, he goes to them. The prince who does honor the virtuous, and delight in their ways of doing, to this extent, is not worth having to do with. Accordingly, there was the behavior of Tang to E-Yin:—he first learned of him, and then employed him as his minister; and so without difficulty he became emperor. There was the behavior of the duke Hwan to Kwan Chung:—he first learned to him, and then employed him as his minister; and so without difficulty he became chief of all the princes.²⁴

From the above quoted passage, we know that the ideal minister in Mencius' mind is the minister whom he does not call to go to the sovereign. With a sovereign who has no pleasure in killing men²⁵ plus his ministers who do not call to go to him,²⁶ the benevolent government can be established.

²³Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

²⁴Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

²⁵Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 6.

²⁶Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

CHAPTER VI

THE FUNCTION OF MENCIOUS' BENEVOLENT GOVERNMENT

The function of Mencius' benevolent government is to secure for the people's physical well being. In order to meet this requirement, the people's livelihood should be first considered. This is why the foundation of Mencius' ideal government has an economic basis. He said:

If the seasons of husbandry be not interfered with, the grain will be more than can be eaten.¹

Around the homestead with its five mow, the space beneath the walls was planted with mulberry trees, with which the women nourished silkworms, and thus the old were able to have silk to wear. Each family had five brood hens and two brood sows, which were kept their breeding seasons, and thus the old were able to have flesh to eat. The husbandmen cultivated their farms of one hundred mow, and thus their families of eight mouths were secured against want.²

Elsewhere, the philosopher added:

The people cannot live without water and fire, yet if you knock at man's door in the dusk of the evening, and ask for water and fire, there is no man who will not give them, such is the abundance of these things. A sage governs the empire so as to cause pulse and grain to be as abundant as water and fire. When pulse and grain are as abundant as water and fire, how shall the people be other than virtuous.³

To achieve the pulse and grain as abundant as water and fire, wasteland must be reclaimed, thicket and marshes must be removed; wild beasts and wild birds which are injurious to men must be driven away, rivers and

¹ Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

² Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 22.

³ Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 23.

streams must be well managed so that flood and inundation may not occur.⁴ Then, the nine-square system of land division should be carried out. Each family thus has its means of living.

Not only the healthy and able people who are under the care of the benevolent government, but also those unfortunate ones as widows, childless, solitaries and the young and fatherless are all made the first object of the government. Mencius gave King Wen's benevolent government for example:

There were the old and wifeless, or widowers; the old and husbandless, or widows; the old and childless, or solitaries; the young and fatherless, or orphans:--these four classes are the most destitute of the people, and have none to whom they can tell their wants, and King Wan, in the institution of his government with its benevolent action, made them the first objects of his regard.⁵

Furthermore, Mencius gave his answer to King Seuen of Chi about the benevolent government.

The King Said: "May I hear from you what the true royal government is?" "Formerly," was the reply, "King Wan's government of K'e was as follows:--The husbandmen cultivated for the government one ninth of the land; the descendants of officers were salaried; at the passes and in the markets strangers were inspected, but goods were not taxed; there were no prohibitions respecting the pond and weirs; the wives and children of criminals were not involved in their guilt."⁶

⁴Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4.
Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

⁵Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 5.

⁶Ibid.

Education is the necessary step towards the benevolent government and also is the main function of the state. Mencius pointed out:

Man possess a moral nature if they are well fed, warmly clad, and comfortably lodged, without being taught at the same time, they become almost like the beast.⁷

Elsewhere, the philosopher mentioned more about the importance of education:

When the prince has no principles by which he examines his administration, and his ministers have no laws by which they keep themselves in the discharge of their duties, then in the court obedience is not paid to principles, and in the office obedience is not paid to rule. Superiors violate the laws of righteousness, and inferiors violate the penal laws. It is only by a fortunate chance that a kingdom in such a case is preserved.

Therefore, it is said, 'It is not the exterior and interior walls being incomplete, and the supply of weapons offensive and defensive not being large, which constitutes the calamity of a kingdom. It is not the cultivable area not being extended, not stores and wealth not being accumulated, which occasions the ruin of a kingdom.' When superiors do not observe the rules of propriety, and inferiors do not learn, then seditious people spring up, and that kingdom will perish in no time.⁸

The only way to win people's hearts is education. Good government without educating the people, the hearts of the people can not be won.

Therefore, Mencius added:

Good government does not lay hold of the people so much as good instructions. Good government is feared by the people,

⁷Ek. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

⁸Ek. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 1.

while good instructions are loved by them. Good government gets the people's wealth, while good instructions get their hearts.⁹

This is why, as Mencius pointed out, that the sage ruler Shun of the Three Dynasties turned his attention to education as soon as the physical welfare of the country had been secured. Mencius recorded:

Shun appointed See to be the minister of instruction, to teach the relations of humanity:--how, between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between friends, fidelity.¹⁰

Mencius left us no detailed description about the educational system. He simply pointed out the names of the educational institutions and their brief function. He said:

Establish Tseang, Seu, Heo and Heaou,-- all those educational institutions,--for the instruction of the people. The name Tseang indicates nourishing as its object; Heaou indicates teaching; and Seu indicates archery ... The object of them all is to illustrate the human relations.¹¹

What are the obligations and rights of a state in international politics? The war between the states shall be the first topic we are going to discuss. According to the international law, the war could be defined as two or more countries in order to carry out their own country's policy engaging in a military struggle.¹² The war is

⁹ Ek. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 14.

¹⁰ Ek. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

¹¹ Book III, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

¹² Pang Min-ming, International Law (Taipei, Taiwan: Ching-Sui Commercial Company, 1959), p. 463.

accepted as a means to settle the international dispute so long as it follows the international law. Mencius is a person who opposes this conception. A state, according to his philosophy, engaged herself in an offensive war is never justifiable. He pointed out:

In the 'Spring and Autumn' there are no righteous wars. Instances indeed there are of one war better than the other. 'Correction' is when the supreme authority punishes its subjects by force of arms.

Hostile states do not correct one another.¹³ One of the objectives of the offensive war for which the philosopher agrees that a state has an obligation to deliver the oppressed people from their tyrannical yoke of the neighbouring state. But the means employed must not lead to unnecessary blood shedding. The motive to deliver the oppressed people from their tyrannical yoke in a neighbor state should be unselfish. Otherwise, it equals to, as Mencius described, 'One Yen smiting another Yen.'¹⁴

In the bottom of the philosopher's heart, the virtue of benevolence still occupies the whole room. He hates to see any blood shed. He condemned those who are engaging in professional war.

There are men who say--'I am skillful in marshalling troops, I am skillful in conducting a battle.'--they are great criminals.¹⁵

¹³Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

¹⁴Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

¹⁵Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 4.

He continued with his benevolent government. If the ruler of the state loves benevolence, he will have no enemy in the world.¹⁶

Benevolence is the center of the international peace. If a state is benevolent, a big and strong state can serve a small and weak one. Thus the international peace can be maintained. The philosopher told King Seuen of Chi:

The King Seuen of Chi asked, saying, "Is there any way to regulate one's maintenance of intercourse with neighboring kingdoms?" Mencius replied, "There is, but it requires a perfectly virtuous prince to be able, with a great country, to serve a small one,--as, for instance, T'ang served Kou, and King Wan served the Ewan barbarians ... He who with a great state serves a small one, delights in Heaven."¹⁷

Did Mencius see another function of the state--the national defense? He did not ignore it. As his usual view point, he put his entire responsibility to the benevolent government. He said that if the ruler of the state loves benevolence, he will have no enemy in the world.¹⁸ Elsewhere, the philosopher said: "In case of attack, be prepared to die that the people so that they will not leave you."¹⁹ If the question why the people will not leave the ruler and fight for him, be asked, the answer simply will be again the ruler practising the benevolent government.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 3.

¹⁸ Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 4.

¹⁹ Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 13.

CHAPTER VII

A COMPARISON BETWEEN PLATO AND MENCIOUS

Mencius (372-288 B.C.) and Plato (428-348 B.C.) were the most distinguished philosophers of antiquity. They were born only in a difference of fifty-six years; and both of them lived apart in the two brilliant periods of the history of philosophy in the East and West. The two periods they lived inspired the two great philosophers to form their own teachings which have strongly influenced our lives for more than two thousand years. Except Confucius and Socrates, Mencius and Plato are second to none in the field of philosophy.

In making a comparative study of the two sages, there are many similarities as well as differences. This is, of course, too big for this chapter to make a detailed comparison covering their whole teachings. However, an emphasis on their political philosophy will be followed in this chapter.

In the year of 348 B.C. while Mencius was twenty-four years old, he studied under the disciples of Tze-Sze, the grandson of Confucius. At the same time, Plato was approaching his last year in Greece. Both of them had been respectively under the discipline of the two most influential philosophers. The difference is, however, that Plato directly learned from Socrates while Mencius was only a disciple of the disciples of Confucius' grandson. The similarity is that they not only digested the whole teachings of Confucius and Socrates, but also expanded them.

Unlike Socrates, Confucius had his own writing namely Confucian Analects, while Socrates' thoughts could only be traced through the Works of Plato. Compare the Works of Mencius and Confucius' Analects, we have no doubt that Mencius was the true disciple of Confucian School. It is the same thing to compare the thoughts of Socrates in the Works of Plato and thoughts of Plato himself.

It is interesting to notice that there is a uniformity of way to express their ideas in their Works. Confucius, Plato and Mencius used the same dialogue method and form to compose their Works. Why had the great Works of antiquity used the same method? Is this a coincidence?

The great philosophers in the East and West used the same methods of writing, however, in Plato's Republic Socrates is both the narrator and chief figure; others involved in the argument are Cephalus and his son Polemarchus, Plato's two elder brothers, Glaucon and Adeimantus, and a sophist, Thrasymachus. While in the Works of Mencius, the key figure was Mencius himself with the princes of the principalities of his time plus the philosopher's disciples.

This is a general rule that the great thinker usually reflects the social and political, intellectual background of his time. No doubt there is a close relationship between the two. We have already discussed the historical background and its development in Chun Chiu and Chan Kuo period of which Mencius was inspired for his great teachings. Unlike the historical background of Plato, Mencius was living in a society of disorder, constant warfare between the ambitious principalities and the

endless suffering of the people. At the same time in Greece, Plato lived at a time when Greece had touched political greatness. Therefore, the differences of the two philosophers' teachings reflect the differences of their historical backgrounds in Greece and China. Owing to the limitations of paragraph, we are going to compare only the political philosophy.

Mencius left us no political systematic treatise such as Plato's Republic. The study of the political philosophy of Mencius has to find our own way through the seven books of Mencius and pick up the material concerning the topic.

The foundation of the political philosophy of Mencius is the goodness of man's nature,--first of all. It is natural that man's nature is good. It is just like the water which flows from upward to downward.

"Man's nature is indifferent to the east and west" philosopher Kaou said. Mencius replied: "The tendency of man's nature to good, is like the tendency of water to flow downwards. There are none but have this tendency to good, just as all water flows downwards."

Then, what is the relationship between the goodness of man's nature and his political philosophy? Mencius said:

The feeling of commiseration belongs to all men; so does that of shame and dislike; and that of reverence and respect; and that of approving and disapproving. The feeling of commiseration implies the principle of benevolence; that of shame and dislike, the principle of righteousness; that of reverence and respect, the principle of propriety; and that of approving and disapproving, the principle of knowledge.²

¹Ek. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 2.

²Ek. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 6.

Benevolence, righteousness, propriety and knowledge are all derived from the man's nature--commiseration, shame or dislike, reverence and respect, approving and disapproving. This is common man's nature and everyone owns it. The benevolent government is based upon everyone's goodness of nature. Carrying it out and expending it, the state will turn to benevolence right away. This is why when Keaou of Tsaou asking Mencius whether it is possible that all men can be Yaous and Shuns, the philosopher replied affirmatively.³ If everyone is Yaous and Shuns, how could the state not be benevolent?

In Plato's "Republic", we can not find the discussion about whether man's nature is good or bad. Plato did not touch the moral virtues in the individual. He failed to point out the goodness and badness of man's nature and its relationship with government.

Due to the background, Mencius emphasizes too much the protection of the people against the tyrannical rule in comparison with Plato. Mencius described his time as the people suffering.

Notwithstanding good years, their lives are continually embittered, and in bad years, they do not escape perishing.⁴

Elsewhere, Mencius said:

Moreover, never was there a time further removed than the

³Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

⁴Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 7.

present from the appearance of a true sovereign; never was there a time when the suffering of the people from tyrannical government was more intense than the present.⁵

Therefore, Mencius protested for those who suffered in the tyrannical rule. He said to Hing Kwuy of Leang:

Beast devour one another; and men hate them for doing so. When a prince, being the parent of his people, administers his government so as to be chargeable with leading on beasts to devour men, where is that parental relation to the people ... In your kitchen there is fat meat; in your stable there are fat horse. But your people have the look of hunger, and on the wilds there are those who have died of famine. This is leading on beast to devour man.⁶

Furthermore, the philosopher pointed out:

When contentions about territory are the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men till the fields are filled with them. When some struggle for a city in the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men till the city is filled with them. This is what is called 'leading on the land to devour human flesh.' Death is not enough for such a crime.⁷

And more, he added:

Those who nowadays serve their sovereigns say, 'We can for our sovereign enlarge the limits of the cultivated ground, and fill his treasure and arsenals. 'Such persons are nowadays called 'good ministers' but anciently they were called 'robbers of the people'.⁸

'Robbers of the people' simply means to Mencius that those ministers are the paws of those tyrannical rulers. Both the tyrannical rulers and

⁵ Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 1.

⁶ Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

⁷ Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 14.

⁸ Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

their ministers are condemned by Mencius that death is not enough for such a crime. More than Confucius, the philosopher showed much of his concerns about the protection of the people. This one of the proofs that people suffered more in Chan Kuo period of Mencius than that of Chun Chiu period of Confucius.

Compared with Plato, the strong idea of protecting the people from the tyrannical rule is completely lacking. Plato merely mentioned the Guardians' Temperament in his Republic by saying:

They (the Guardians) must be gentle to their own people and dangerous only to enemies.⁹

It is simple that the difference merely reflects the philosopher's background of their time.

Economic basis plays a very important role in Mencius' theory.

The philosopher said to King Hwuy of Leang:

If the seasons of husbandry be not interfered with, the grain will be more than eaten. If close nets are not allowed to enter the pools and ponds, the fishes and turtles will be more than can be consumed. If the axes and bills enter the hills and forests only at the proper time, the wood will be more than used ... Let there not be taken away the time that is proper for the cultivation of the farm with its hundred mow, and the family of several mouths that is supported by it shall not suffer from hunger.¹⁰

This certain livelihood is the foundation to practising the benevolent government. Furthermore, Mencius explained:

⁹Plato's Republic quoted from: William Ebenstein, Great Political Thinkers (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 24.

¹⁰Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

If they have not a certain livelihood, it follows that they will not have a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart, there is nothing which they will not do, in the way of self-abandonment, of moral deflection, of depravity and of will license.¹¹

There is nothing equivalent to Plato's Republic concerning the livelihood of the people.

When a certain livelihood is reached, education comes next. Mencius did not give a detail system of education of his time. He merely mentioned:

Establish Tseang, Seu, Heo and Heaou,--all those educational institutions,--for the instruction of the people ... The object of them is to illustrate the human relations.¹²

Those educational institutions, unlike Plato's Republic, are for all the people. The object of the education is to illustrate the human relations. This is another difference with Plato's aim of education. Furthermore, Plato reserved educational opportunities of prolonged duration and intensity for future rulers only.¹³ In Republic, we can find the primary education of the Guardians,¹⁴ but nothing concerning the education of the whole people. In the teaching of Mencius, the

¹¹Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 7.

¹²Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

¹³Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁴Plato's Republic quoted from: Ebenstein, op. cit., pp. 25-28.

sovereign is not only the ruler of the state, but also the teacher of his whole people. The philosopher said; "If the sovereign be benevolent, all will be benevolent. If the sovereign be righteous, all will be righteousness."¹⁵ There is no equivalent in Plato's Republic about this idea.

Concerning the dignity, equality and value of mankind, Mencius seems to put more emphasis in comparison with Plato. A sovereign has no privileges and he is equal to his ministers. As Mencius said to King Seuen of Chi:

When the prince regards his ministers as his heads and feet, his ministers regard their prince as their belly and heart; when he regards them as his dogs and horses, they regard him as any other man; when he regards them as the ground or as grass, they regard him as a robber and an enemy.¹⁶

And elsewhere we found that everyone can be Yaous and Shuns in Marcius' Work.¹⁷ We read Republic and find that the selection of rulers could best be made through the prolonged training of men and women, generally those born into the ruling class or picked, in exceptional situations from lower classes of the workers, farmers, and merchants.¹⁸ This is very differently with Mencius. As the dignity of value of man, no matter how inferior the person is, man equals to

¹⁵Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 5.

¹⁶Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 3.

¹⁷Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

¹⁸Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 4.

man in value and dignity. Mencius said : "To put a single innocent person to death is contrary to benevolence."¹⁹ There is no equivalent teaching in Plato's Republic.

Plato in his Republic tells us there are threefold divisions of the population. They are rulers, fighters, and producers (farmers, artisans, traders). The last class which constitutes from fifth or more of the total population. Plato claims that the threefold class division of the second city is but an extension of the principle of the division of labor, characteristic of the first city.²⁰ The three classes in the second city, according to Plato, are the class of rulers or guardians in narrower sense; the class of military and civilian executive aid or auxiliaries; the class of producers or handworkers.²¹

Plato's points of view about the class has the similarity and difference with that of Mencius' view. Approving to Plato, Mencius has the same class idea. He said:

Hence there is the saying, 'Some labor with their minds, and some labor with their strength. Those who labor with minds govern others, those who labor with strength are governed by others.'²²

The difference is, however, Plato has a detailed division of classes, while Mencius only roughly divided the classes into two. Those who

¹⁹Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 33.

²⁰Ebenstein, op. cit., pt. 6.

²¹Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 7.

²²Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

labor their mind are belonging to ruling class who equal to Republic's Guardians and auxiliaries. They are the minority and are supported by the majority who labor with their strength.²³ The majority class in Mencius' teaching is equal to Plato's class of producers. The big difference between the two philosophers is the spirit concerning the topic. In other words, the class is unchangeable in Plato's mind; while it is changeable in Mencius' Works. There is no rigid class division in Mencius' political philosophy. Everyone can be sage ruler Yaous and Shuns.²⁴ Moreover, Mencius clearly pointed out: "What kind of man was Shun? What kind of man am I? He who exerts himself will also become such as he was."²⁵ It is strongly contradictory with what Plato thought.

All in all, Plato is an aristocrat, while Mencius is a democrat. Class demarcation finds no strong footing in Mencius' mind. The class means more the division of labour than the basic difference among men. Plato put a rigid point on the class view. He seems to believe that men are made of different materials as gold, brass and iron. Moreover, Mencius does not consider it is necessary to make the warriors a special class, but Plato does. This is another difference.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 2.

²⁵Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 1.

What is the difference between Plato's philosophical king and Mencius' true sovereign? In Republic we read:

Unless either philosophers become kings in their countries or those who are now called kings and rulers come to be sufficiently inspired with a genuine desire for wisdom; unless, that is to say, political power and philosophy meet together, while the many natures who now go their several ways in the one or the other direction are forcibly deterred from doing so, there can be no rest from troubles for states.²⁷

Political power and philosophy meet together. This is Plato's ideal sovereign who based upon wisdom. He should be swift, strong and spirited.²⁸ As Mencius' point of view, the character of a true sovereign should have a peace-loving spirit and can practise benevolence in the spirit of virtue.²⁹ Unlike Plato, Mencius did not exactly point out what characters a true sovereign should have, but mentioned many times about the ancient sage kings Yaou and Shun. He painted a picture of their benevolent governments. The two philosophical kings of Mencius not only always kept in their minds the economical abundance of the country, but also aimed at the welfare of the people all the time. As Mencius described the sage rulers should love their people like the parents love their children. This is the way the Chinese sage pictured his philosophical king.

²⁷ Plato's Republic, quoted from Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 55.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 25.

²⁹ Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 3.

Division of labor is another topic to compare with. In Plato we read:

These guardians of our state, then, inasmuch as their work is the most important of all, will need the most complete freedom from other occupations and the greatest amount of skill and practice.³⁰

It admitted that the guardian special profession is different from others. Moreover, Plato's Republic indicates three classes: the class of rulers or guardians, the class of military or auxiliaries and the class of producers or handworkers.³¹ Furthermore, Plato pointed out:

But we would not allow our shoemaker to try to be also a farmer or weaver or builder, because we wanted our shoes well made. We give each man one trade, for which he was naturally fitted.³²

Plato believed that everyone has a trade that naturally fit him best. Thus is his basic foundation for the division of labour. He also said: "So it is our business to define, if we can, the natural gifts that men to be guardians of a commonwealth, and to select them accordingly."³³ This is clearly to say guardian is one kind of division of labour for which a man is naturally gifted. Not any one

³⁰Plato's Republic, quoted from: Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 24.

³¹Ibid., p. 7.

³²Ibid., p. 24.

³³Ibid.

can be Yao and Shun.

Mencius, however, does favour the division of labour. When he was told by Chin Seang, a disciple of Hsu Hsing by saying:

Wise and able princes should cultivate the ground equally and along with their people, and eat the fruit of their labour. They should prepare their own meals, morning and evening, while at the same time they carry on their government.³⁴

Mencius did not agree at all. After a long debate, Chin Seang had to reply to Mencius by saying:

The business of the handicraftsman can by no means be carried on along with the business of husbandry.³⁵

The philosopher then resumed:

Then, is it the government of the which alone can be carried on along with the practice of husbandry?³⁶

Mencius agreed with Plato that the ruler needs the most complete freedom from other occupations. Unlike Plato, Mencius only divided labour into two kinds. He pointed out:

Hence, there is the saying, 'Some labor with their minds, and some labor with their strength ... This is a principle universally recognized.'³⁷

Without the division of labor, as Mencius described: "This way of doing would keep the whole empire running about upon the roads."³⁸

³⁴Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

In other words, if every one has to produce everything he needs by himself, people will be busy running on the road all the time. Nothing could be done.

National defense will be an interesting topic to compare between the two philosophers. In Plato's "Republic", we read:

This will mean a considerable addition to our community--a whole army, to go out to battle with any invader, in defense of all this property and of the citizens we have been describing.³⁹

Furthermore, Plato also thinks war is an art and the fighters have to have planned training. Just taking up a shield or other weapon will not make a man capable of fighting that very day in any sort of warfare.⁴⁰

Mencius, however, has a different approach towards this topic.

He said:

If a ruler of a state loves benevolence, he will have no enemy in the world.⁴¹

Elsewhere when the philosopher was asked about how to defend the state under the enemy's attack by Duke Wan of Tang, he said:

Dig deeper your moats, and build higher your walls; guard them along with your people. In case of attack, be prepared to die in your defense and have the people so that they will not leave you.⁴²

³⁹Plato's Republic, quoted from: Ebenstein, op cit., p. 24.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 4.

⁴²Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 13.

The people will not leave the ruler because the latter is practicing benevolent government. Therefore, benevolent government including the national defense will have no enemy in the world. Unlike Plato, Mencius went different approach towards this topic.

Does the sovereign have the absolute power towards the people? Mencius definitely rejected it. Plato seemed not to approve it either. Mencius said:

The people are the most important element in a nation, the spirits of the land and grain are the next; the sovereign is the lightest.

Therefore to gain the peasantry is the way to become emperor; to gain the emperor is the way to become a prince of a state; to gain the prince of a state is the way to become a great officer.⁴³

No comments needed to be put here. The statement is very clear itself.

Elsewhere, the philosopher said to King Seuen of Chi:

Suppose that the chief criminal judge could not regulate the officers under him, how would you deal with him? The King said: "Dismiss him." Mencius again said: "If within the four borders of your kingdom there is not good government, what is to be done?" The King looked to the left and right, and spoke of other matters.⁴⁴

Therefore, it is clear in Mencius' eyes that the people are the sovereignty of the state and if the ruler is not able, he can be dismissed. The ruler, of course, does not have the absolute power towards his people in Mencius' political philosophy.

⁴³Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 14.

⁴⁴Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 6.

In Plato's "Republic, we found:

And yet they (the guardians) must be gentle to their own people and dangerous only to enemies; otherwise they will destroy themselves without waiting till others destroy them.⁴⁵

Plato did mention the sovereign has the absolute power or not in his "Republic". But the above quoted passage, we may presume that he disapproves it.

There is a very interesting political philosophy of Mencius — a period of good order and followed a period of confusion—which Plato never did touch. Mencius said:

A long time has elapsed since this world of men received its being, and there has been along its history now a period of good order, and now a period of confusion.⁴⁶

Mencius is a great student of history. He discovered this circulation of periods of order and confusion through studying history. He even concluded that there mostly like to have a change after five hundred years. He pointed it in his Works.

From Yaou to Shun down to Tang were five hundred years and more. From Tang to King Wan were five hundred years and more. From King Wan to Confucius were five hundred years and more.⁴⁷

Moreover, the philosopher clearly said:

It is a rule that a true imperial sovereign should arise in the course of five hundred years, and that during that time there should be men illustrious in their generation.⁴⁸

⁴⁵Plato's Republic from: Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 24.

⁴⁶Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 9.

⁴⁷Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 38.

⁴⁸Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 13

Mencius' study of the circulation of period of order and period of confusion is examined in the history before Mencius. It is also surprising to see that his theory has been mostly accurate too during the history after Mencius. This is a great discovery.

There are many ideas in Plato's "Republic", however, never have been touched by Mencius. We should admit that the first book that deserves to be called political science, in that it applies systematic reasoning and critical inquiry to political ideas and institutions, is Plato's "Republic".⁴⁹ Take the simple definition of the origination of state for example, Plato gave us by saying:

A state arises out of the needs of mankind; no one is self-sufficing, but all of us have many wants.⁵⁰

Moreover, the definition of justice is the interest of the stronger.⁵¹

The reason to cause a war:

The country, too, which was large enough to support the original inhabitants, will now be too small. If we are to have pasture and plough land, we shall have to cut off a slice of our neighbours' territory; and if they too are not content with necessaries, but give themselves up to getting unlimited wealth, they will want a slice of ours ... So the next thing will be that we shall be at war.⁵²

⁴⁹Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 2.

⁵⁰B. Jowett, trans. The Works of Plato, (New York: The Dial Press, 1936), p. 60

⁵¹Plato's Republic, from: Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 13.

⁵²Plato's Republic, from: Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 23.

As a definition of the origination of a state, definition of justice and the cause of war etc., we can not find the same thing in the Works of Mencius.

Mencius inherited Confucius that observed the family as the foundation of the benevolent government. As in the Great Learning, we find "Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their family."⁵³ It is strongly contradictory with Plato's "Republic" that the guardians should abandon their family life.⁵⁴ Mencius always regards that a sufficient material supplied families are the foundation of a benevolent government. Sage ruler should have his family as well as his people. Moreover, the rulers are the teachers of their people. Their families are the models of the families of their people. It must be incredible for Mencius to think the rulers should abandon their family lives. If the Chinese sage should have known this in his lifetime, he would not have hesitated to criticize it as another 'state of beast'.

Others as the censorship of literature,⁵⁵ the virtues in the state, such as wisdom, courage, temperance and justice,⁵⁶ Mencius did not touch.

⁵³The Great Learning, quoted from: James Legge, translator, The Four Books, (With English Translation and Notes, Shanghai: The Chinese Book Company, 1930), p. 313.

⁵⁴Plato's Republic, quoted from: Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 47.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp.32-36.

Plato indicated that reason, passion (spirit) and desire are the three parts to compose the soul.⁵⁷ Mencius left no knowledge about it. In the "Republic", equality of women was discussed.⁵⁸ Mencius did not mention it, but we could presume the Chinese sage has the same idea according to the spirit of his Works.

Born in a difference of only fifty-six years, the two great philosophers lived apart in China and Greece in about the fourth century B.C. Their different teachings merely reflected their own historical backgrounds and their different philosophical approach. In spite of the differences, their greatness is the same.

⁵⁷B. Jowett, op. cit., p. 165.

⁵⁸Ebenstein, op. cit., p. 43.

SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

Analyzed:

1. The origination of the world civilization and the Chinese contribution to it.
2. The political, social and economic, and intellectual aspects of the Chun Chiu and Chan Kuo period, the golden age of Chinese philosophy.
3. How the philosophy of Mencius reflected his time.
4. Four principal schools of Chinese philosophy of the said period which influenced China for more than two thousand years.

II. LIFE OF MENCIUS

1. Name, origin and birth.
2. Chronological review.
3. Three periods of Mencius.
 - A. Period of early life.
 - B. Period of public service.
 - C. Period of retirement.
4. Others.

III. THE WORKS OF MENCIUS

1. Traced the "Four Additional Books" through the history.
2. Authorship of the Seven Books of Mencius.
3. Others.

IV. MENCIUS' CONCEPTION OF STATE

Analyzed

1. The economical basis, three essentials and the divine origin of the state.
2. How the will of Heaven, which the sovereign based upon to rule the country, was interpreted by the opinions of the people.
3. People serve the end in the benevolent government.
4. How Mencius' democracy different from the modern democracy.
5. Others.

V. MENCIUS' GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL

Analyzed

1. Economic needs and the benevolent government.
2. Yao and Shun's benevolent governments.
3. Mencius' feudal monarchy.
4. Nine-square division of land and its economical and social benefits.
5. The relations between the sovereign and ministers.
6. Others.

VI. FUNCTION OF THE STATE

1. People's physical well-being.
2. Education.
3. Obligations in international relations.
4. National defense.

VII. A COMPARISON BETWEEN PLATO AND MENCIUS

1. Human nature.
2. Livelihood.
3. Protection to the people from the tyrannical rule.
4. Value and dignity of man.
5. Education.
6. National defense.
7. Divine right of the sovereign.
8. Guardians family life.
9. Mencius five hundred years of circulation—a period of order and a period of confusion.
10. Other teachings Plato had but Mencius did not touch.
11. Others.

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Tang Wan Kung. Part II

Book IV

Le Lou. Part I
Le Lou. Part II

Book V

Man Chang. Part I
Man Chang. Part II

Book VI

Kaou Tze. Part I
Kaou Tze. Part II

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Tsin Sin. Part II

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APPENDIX I

CHINESE DYNASTIES

Chinese Name	English Name	Date	Remarks
神話時代	Mythical	2697-2206 B.C.	Legendary
夏 商(殷) 周	Hsia Shang(Yin) Chou	2205-1784 B.C. 1783-1123 B.C. 1122-222 B.C.	Hsia, Shang and Chou are called "Three Dynasties". Chun Chiu period 722-481 Chan Kao period 403-221
秦	Ch'in	221-207 B.C.	Reunified China
漢	Han	206 B.C.,-A.D.219	"Eastern Han" from A.D. 25
魏	Wei	220-264	Wei, Shu and Wu forming the "Three Kingdoms" from about A.D. 200
晉	Chin	265-419	"Eastern Chin" from 317. Barbarians' kingdoms in North China, 304-439

宋 齊 梁 陳	Sung Chi Liang Chen	420-478 479-501 502-556 557-558	These are called "North and South" Dynasties for distinction. Together with preceding Wu and Eastern Chin, called "Six Dynasties," a term referring to southern culture. Reunified China.
隋 唐	Sui T'ang	589-617 618-906	
後 唐 晉 漢 周	Loang Tang Chin Han Chou	907-922 923-935 936-946 947-950 951-959	These are called "Wutai" or "Five Dynasties" for distinction from other dynasties of the same name
宋	Sung	960-1276	"Southern Sung" from 1127 onward, with Northern China under Manchus and Mongols
元 (蒙古)	Yuan (Mongol)	1277-1367	Foreign rule
明	Ming	1368-1643	Restored to Chinese rule
清 (滿洲)	Ch'ing (Manchu)	1644-1911	Foreign rule
民國	Republic	1911	

APPENDIX IIENGLISH TRANSLATIONS AND CHINESE TITLES

A

A Collection Of Supplemental

Observations On Four Books

四書補註

A Collection Of The Memoirs

Of Eminent Women

列女傳

A Examination Of The Discrepancies

Connected With The Four Books

四書考異

A Rational Explanation Of

Traditions And Legends

風俗通義

B

Book Of The Former Han Dynasty

前漢書

Book Of History

書經

C

Catalogue Of Book In The History

Of Sui Dynasty

隋書經籍誌

Chang I

張儀

Chan Kuo

戰國

Chai Hsue Chin

刁謙情

Chan Seang

陳相

Chaou Shu-tze

晁說之

Chau Chi

趙岐

Cheng Sheou Ku

鄭玄

Chi Wu Sui

秦母選

Chi

齊

Chin

清

Ch'in

秦

Ching		Foo Yung	
卿		附庸	
Ching E-Chuen			G
程伊川		Gan	
Chou		是	H
周		Han	
Chow		漢	
紂		Han Yu	
Chu Hai		韓愈	
朱熹		Hau	
Chun Chiu		侯	
春秋		Historical Records	
Confucius		史記	
孔子		Hsia	
Confucian School		夏	
儒家		Hsu Hsing	
	D	許行	
Doctrine of the Mean		Hsun Tze	
中庸		荀子	
	E	Huang Bun-Chi	
E Yin		黃本昌	
伊尹		Hwan	
	F	齊桓公	
Five Constants		Hwey	
五常		魯惠王	

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Kung Tsung Tze

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北宮騶

Ping Lu

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R

Records Of Arts And Literature

藝文誌

Records Of Observations In The

Land Of The Sages

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Taoist

道教

The Comparative Chronological Table

Of The Six Principalities

六國年表

The Genealogical Register Of Heng's

Family

孟氏譜

The Great Learning

大學

Ting

定王

Tsai

邴

Tsang Tsang

臧倉

Tsao Tse-sen

曹公孫

Tsin

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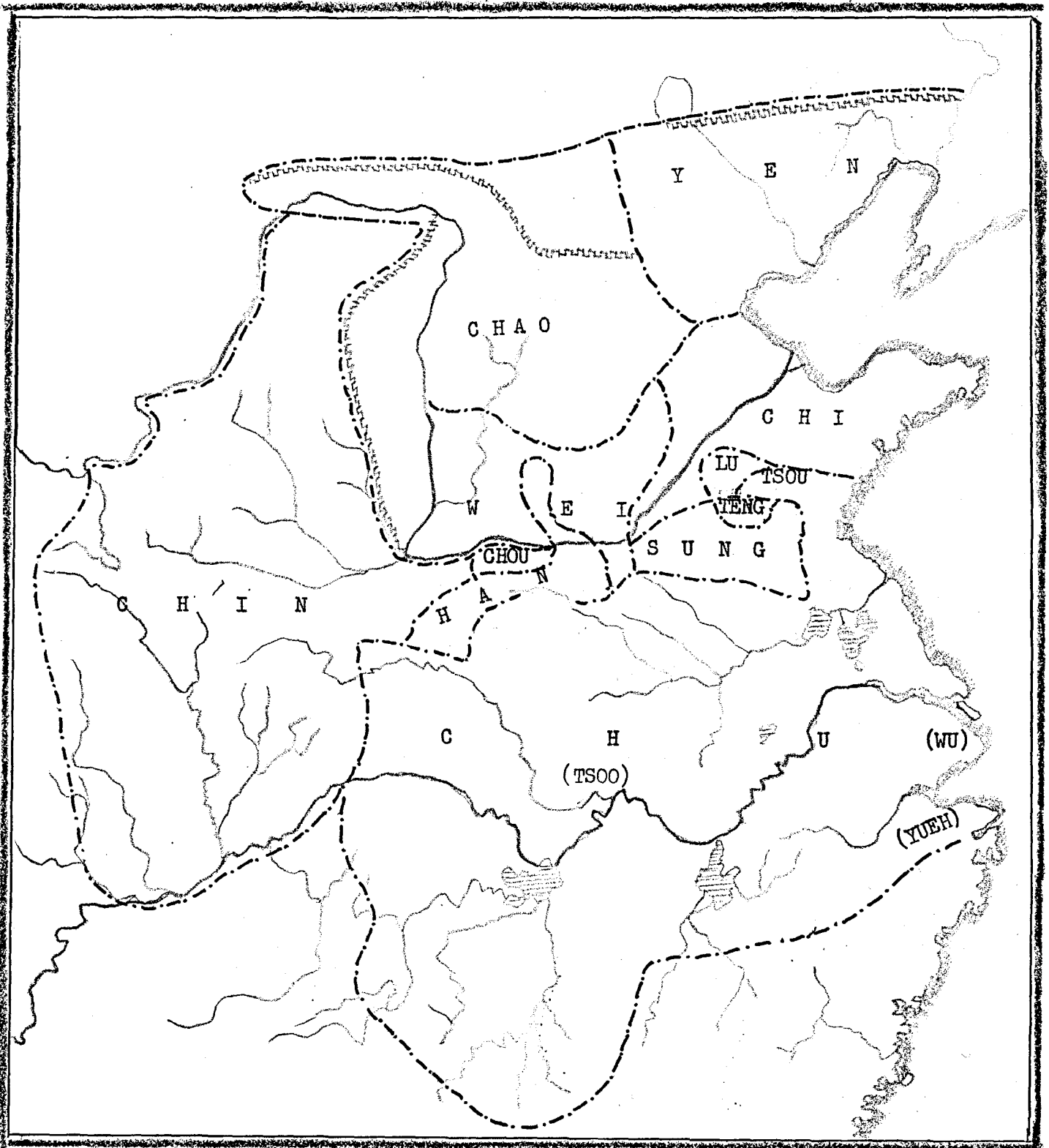
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China under the Warring States (403-221 B.C.)



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*From Fung Yu-lan, History of Chinese Philosophy, Vol. I. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952.