THE CONCEPT OF NATURE (TZU JAN) IN KUO HSIANG
AND ITS ANTECEDENTS

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ABSTRACT

THE CONCEPT OF NATURE (TZU JAN) IN KUO HSIANG AND ITS ANTECEDENTS

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Kuo Hsiang (d. A.D. 312) stands at the threshold of a major change in Chinese intellectual history. He is one of the last great figures in the mainstream of Chinese thought before the introduction of Buddhist ideas. He also stands at the end of a half-century of lively intellectual ferment, and might be seen as the capstone of this mini-epoch. He is usually regarded as one who tried to synthesize the polarities of naturalism and conformism in the late third century. He achieved this synthesis in part by using the term tzu jan, conceiving it as the most fundamental reality knowable to man. Thus he borrowed a term rich in meaning for the naturalists and built an ontology which must have pleased the conformists in its approval of societal structures.

The naturalists of the third century popularized the expression tzu jan through a revival of the study of the Lao tzu and the Chuang tzu. Yet in this pre-Han literature tzu jan is not a major concept, and it is certainly not merely on the basis of renewed interest in these texts that this expression became paramount in the third century. Rather the naturalists are heirs to developments in the Han dynasty,
primarily the thought of the skeptical rationalist Wang Ch'ung and that of the Huai nan tzu, a collection of Taoist writings from the late second century B.C.

This is how the thesis is organized. In Chapter I the problem is defined. There is a brief analysis of the term tzu jan, showing some of its potential uses. It is then compared with a Western concept of nature in which nature is seen as virtually equivalent to law. All the occurrences of tzu jan in pre-Han philosophical literature are analyzed and two fundamental uses are discovered. First, since tzu jan literally means "so-by-self", it may be used to indicate independence. When applied to things cosmically universal, such as the Tao, tzu jan is a mark of a religious absolute. Secondly, when applied to creatures, tzu jan indicates the natural state of things, that is, creatures as they exist without interference from other creatures.

Chapter II deals with the literature of the Han dynasty. In the Huai nan tzu, there is a joining together of these two themes of pre-Han literature. The natural state of creatures is given the attributes of independence and reliability. Tzu jan became the indicator or guarantee of the more general Taoist understanding that the natural state of creatures is the means of gaining knowledge of the Tao. Wang Ch'ung added the idea that tzu jan also implied self-production. Wang made tzu jan an attribute of ch'i, the fundamental substance of the universe.
Chapter III deals with the transition from the Han dynasty to the Wei-Chin period. The Taoist texts of the Hsiang-erh commentary on the Lao tzu and the T'ai-p'ing ching take the step of making tzu jan an attribute of the Tao itself, on a par with terms like void or origin. In the Wei-Chin period, Wang Pi used tzu jan to indicate the most fundamental characteristic or highest point of the realm of being. It is that in the realm of being which refers beyond itself to the realm of non-being, or the Tao. Juan Chi virtually substitutes the concept of tzu jan for Tao, making it the limitless, natural basis for all reality. Hsiang Hsiu also tried to make tzu jan an ultimate principle, but failed to reconcile the notion of self-production implied by tzu jan with the concept of Tao as origin.

Chapter IV deals with the thought of Kuo Hsiang. Kuo rejected the realm of non-being as the origin of reality. Being was seen as an entirely self-sufficient, self-existing realm. Although virtually rejecting the concept of Tao, Kuo Hsiang retained the Taoist sense of natural action as more fundamental than contrived action, viewing tzu jan as a virtual equivalent of cosmic law, the principle under which all reality operates.

Chapter V concludes the thesis, summarizing Kuo's dependence on the Han dynasty and proposing three theoretical patterns to understand Kuo. He is analyzed as both a skeptic and a mystic, and a general comparison is made between his type of thinking and the European theme of the a priori.
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CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPT OF NATURE (TZU JAN) IN PRE-HAN LITERATURE

THE ISSUE

The original intention of this thesis was to study the concept of nature in the movement, Mystery Learning, hsuan hsueh 学 , of the third and fourth centuries A.D. in China. It was called Mystery Learning because the scholars in the movement studied the three books of mystery, the Lao tzu 老子 or Tao te ching 道德經 , the Chuang tzu 莊子 , and the I ching 易經 . The term came to refer to anyone whose language and concepts related to the Mystery. As a movement it crossed traditional school lines and included both conservative moralists and radical naturalists.

It was my intention in particular to demonstrate Mystery Learning's dependence on the developments in the Han dynasty. Many scholars view Mystery Learning as being related in some way to the Old Text school of Confucianism in the Latter Han dynasty. Fung Yu-lan suggests that the Old Text school was naturalistic, although why it with its political rationalism should be more naturalistic that the New Text school with its cosmological speculations on Yin yang, the five phases, and I ching hexagrams is rather puzzling. For Fung naturalism apparently means that nature is impersonal and not that natural things play a dominant role in determining cultural activities. Thus the New Text school is not naturalistic
because its view of nature is magical and non-empirical in Fung's opinion. He also calls Mystery Learning Neo-Taoism, which he says is a term of convenience to distinguish it from original Taoism.\(^1\) But whether it is a variation of Taoism or Confucianism is still a matter of debate. Over the last few decades a number of eminent scholars, T'ang Yung-t'ung, Erik Zürcher, and Mou Jun-sun among others have been working to establish the link between the thought of the Han dynasty and the subsequent Wei-Chin period. Zürcher suggests that the victory of the Old Text school over the New Text school at the end of the Han meant the downfall of Confucian metaphysics, that is, of cosmological yin-yang and five phases speculation. Because the Old Text school restricted itself to political and social questions, a vacuum was left in Confucianism. This was filled by material from outside the Confucian tradition, whose main role was to fill in gaps in Confucianism.\(^2\) Thus Zürcher conceives Mystery Learning as essentially an attempt to modify Old Text Confucianism by adding Taoist concepts. Donald Holzman's studies of Juan Chi and Hsi K'ang also confirm the thesis that these so-called naturalists and students of Mystery Learning were essentially Confucians. He argues that they were loyalists to the imperial house, alienated by a military dictatorship.\(^3\) The thesis of


of these scholars is built on two kinds of analysis. First, there are studies, such as Holzman's, of the scholars of Mystery Learning which show their basic Confucian orientation. Second, there are studies, such as those of T'ang and Mou, which demonstrate personal, historical connections between Mystery Learning and the Old Text school. However, the philosophical connections between Mystery Learning and Han dynasty thought has only been lightly explored. There has been little demonstration that specific concepts of the third century A.D. depend on conceptual development of the first and second centuries.

Therefore, I set out to demonstrate that the development of the concept of nature in the third century depended on developments in the Han dynasty and could not be interpreted as a mere recombination of pre-Han ideas. I began my work with two persons, Kuo Hsiang (d. A.D. 312) and Wang Ch'ung (ca. A.D. 27-ca. 97). Kuo Hsiang is usually represented as a figure who synthesized the two wings of Mystery Learning and who produced the most clear and systematic exposition of the thought of the movement. Because he stands at the end of the era, his writing seems almost weary with the sense that this has all been said before. Yet his thought is independent

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4 Richard Mather, *A New Account of Tales of the World*,
from his contemporaries and worthy of analysis. Wang Ch'ung was the renegade Confucian of the Han dynasty. Although he was not an expert in the classics, he is identified generally with the Old Text school of classical exegesis. In that he was somewhat familiar with all of the classics, he was part of a group of men whose broader learning was associated with the Old Text school. Wang, however, was also a skeptic and a rationalist who held no great reverence for the ancients and borrowed freely from non-Confucian sources as he saw fit. In spite of his brilliance, he remained on the fringes of scholarly society in his lifetime and was virtually unknown for a century after his death.

In particular I began to study the concept of *tzu jan*, which is prominent in both of these men. In modern Chinese the term *tzu jan*, or its expansion, *ta tzu jan* means the natural world, the complex of animal, plant and physical things (including, of course, the sky and earth as physical things). It is generally understood that this sense derives from its standard classical sense of "natural" or "spontaneous". But in view of the fact that these latter meanings are still derivative and not yet the most literal, one of the questions with which I approached the literature (Minneapolis, 1976) suggests that in the early fourth century, Mystery Learning was "jaded with cliches". Introduction, p. xxv. It is also the main thesis of E. Zürcher's *The Buddhist Conquest of China* that Buddhism only made inroads into the Chinese literati with the advent of the fourth century.
is to ask at what point this derived meaning became commonplace. Since it was a technical, philosophical term in both Kuo Hsiang and Wang Ch'ung, I did not wish to begin the study by assuming that I understood its meaning. This question left me no alternative but to go farther afield to search for the original development of this term.

As I shall show in parts of these first two chapters, tzu jan was not always a fixed expression. When it developed into an expression, its meaning was still some distance from "the natural world", and perhaps could not even be thought of as "natural". Very literally the expression means "self-so". Tzu ǎ means "self" in classical Chinese. It may be used before a verb, such as jan 照 , either as a reflexive pronominal adverb or as a reflexive pronominal object. In the first case it indicates that the subject is definitely involved in the action of the verb. In English grammar we sometimes call this the emphatic sense, as in, for example, "I myself do such-and-so...." The second case is making oneself the object as well as subject of the verb, as in "I hit myself." The word jan 照 means "to be so" or "to be in a certain way". It is frequently used as an affirmative reply--"That's right." or "That's the way it is." It refers then to the mode of being rather than the fact of being. The occurrence of tzu jan as two words can mean either the subject is of himself that way, or the subject regards himself as right. When nominalized, the expression indicates an action whose mode of being is due
to the subject. In philosophical terms, *tzu jan* can be conceived as a principle of identity. It is that characteristic of a thing which preserves its identity over time. Its "so-ness", the "how" of its being, is guaranteed by an internal principle. *Tzu jan* can then also be understood as self-identity.

**THE WESTERN CONCEPT OF NATURE**

How do we get from an abstraction of "mode of being due to the subject" to "natural"? In a certain way the answer is obvious. If the nature of a thing is something in the thing which makes it the way it is, to the extent that it is so of itself, it is expressing its nature and is therefore "natural", as opposed to something forced by external circumstances. But when we say "nature", what do we mean? The term "nature" in both its Greek and Latin usages is one of the most fundamental and semantically richest words in our European heritage. Arthur O. Lovejoy traces the development of the word "nature" in early Greek thought as follows. The original sense of *physis*, "nature", was probably "birth", or "origin", but this sense was quickly lost and is only hinted at in extant literature. In the earliest literature *physis* already meant "quality", the what of a thing, a meaning perhaps deriving from a sense of *innate* characteristics. From this sense of innate characteristics, which could be individual and temporary, there developed the idea that *physis* represented real or permanent characteristics. The real nature was thought...
to be more fundamental than the occasional wayward deed or appearance. Among the physiologists, those who speculated on "nature", physis became the inherent element in things, the underlying substance which might not be apparent. Everything was thought to be reducible to something more fundamental, the latter being the thing's nature. Hence physis came to refer to the fundamental, objective reality of the external world. In cultural affairs, it came to be contrasted with nomos, the subjective rules and laws of custom. Whereas these nomoi varied from man to man and culture to culture, physis came to designate the characteristics common to all men, a description of the permanent, universal conditions of human life. It came to be used for ethical as well as physiological universals, so that by the end of the fifth century B.C., physis was being used with the sense "the cosmic system as a whole", or at least, the laws thereof. "Nature" was roughly equated with the gods and became quasi divine. Thus there is nearly an identity between nature and law. Thereafter Greeks used "nature" frequently because it tended to invest their ideas with a self-evident authority. That which was according to nature was true and good. Thus, as R. G. Collingwood also points out, "nature" originally meant the nature of things and only later the aggregate of natural things.

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Collingwood suggests that we in the West have had three principal views of Nature (in the sense of the Natural World). From Greek times until the Renaissance, we have viewed nature as an organism. From the late Renaissance, beginning with Copernicus and Galileo, nature was seen as a machine. Finally, under the influence of Darwin, Bergson, and Whitehead, nature was seen as an evolutionary process, a historical progression. All of these models have in turn been applied to Chinese thinking in an attempt to generalize Chinese views of nature.\(^7\)

In each of these models, nature as a whole is conceived as an analogy of something of which man has more specific, empirical knowledge. While some of the analogies might be valid for Chinese thought, there is a danger in supposing that the Chinese understand the analogy in the same way. The clearest example of what I mean may be the 'machine' model. In the West this is a post-Christian development which requires a law-giver outside the cosmos, a maker of the machine. The world as machine is "an arrangement of bodily parts designed and put together and set going for a definite purpose by an intelligent mind outside itself."\(^8\)

If one suggests that a certain thinker in the history of Chinese thought is mechanistic, perhaps because he has conceived the cosmos as running according to a


\(^7\)Certainly a comparison with Whitehead's process philosophy is increasingly popular. A glance through the issues of the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* or *Philosophy East and West* will show many explorations of this comparison.

regular rule without personal interference on the part of a creator, will not a Westerner think of "the intelligent mind" outside of the machine? One can place all kinds of qualifications on the model, but it seems to me that as many problems are caused as are solved.

In my opinion, comparisons between cultures are best made when they are made of more specific, less abstract problems. I have in mind such problems as the problem of unity and diversity or subject and object. Here at least entire conceptions are not involved, and we are comparing how a part functions in a whole rather than a whole to a whole. If we are to be empirical, we only hinder ourselves by seeking analogues on too large a scale, and prevent the discovery of new models for nature which have never developed in the West.

OTHER CHINESE EXPRESSIONS FOR 'NATURE'

Whether one thinks of nature as the principle in a thing or as the natural world, the cosmos, pre-han Chinese thought already had several words besides tsu jan to express these ideas.

The term used to express the inner principle of a specific thing is hsing . A.C. Graham defines it as a thing’s "proper course of development during its process of sheng (life)". It is the course of ongoing development, not a static, innate principle received at birth. For "the way one is at birth"

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the Chinese have a second term ku 故 , the original. The concept of hsing was the subject of hot debate for several centuries of Chinese philosophy. All debaters accept that it is man's nature to feed himself and keep himself from harm; his bodily pleasure and comforts belong to his hsing. The debate centers on the fact that since heaven provides one's hsing, is or is not morality included in it?

For "nature" in the sense of the natural world there are several terms. T'ien 天 , heaven, is perhaps most widely used. Originally an anthropomorphic deity, it came to be used as the source of order outside of man. When skepticism deprived it of its personality, as in Hsiin tzu for example, it comes to mean the natural order. However, it never seems to include the earth as the world of natural things below, for which the expression wan wu 物 , the ten-thousand things, was common. Wan wu, as a collective term for all things, sometimes included man and sometimes not, according to conception of the writer. In the Lao tzu, the Tao 道 functions as the source of natural order. Tao can also mean a way of conduct in other writings, but eventually it was taken over by the Taoists as their word for the universal one which lies at the foundation of the world.

The term used to characterize the "stuff" of the universe is ch'i 氣 . Coming out of Warring States naturalism or Five

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10 Ibid. p. 218
Elements thinking, *ch'i* originally meant "air" or "breath", but it was early given cosmic proportions. It became the basic stuff of the universe which divided into yin and yang *ch'i* through the process of condensation and rarefaction.

**AN INITIAL EXPLORATION OF Tzu Jan**

Just how *tzu jän* relates to these other terms will become clearer only in the course of this study. But beginning with the parsing of the grammatical structure which I did above, we can already draw certain conclusions about the basic meaning. We may eliminate one possibility from consideration immediately. When *tzu jän* means "to regard oneself as right", it has no relation to the philosophical development of the term. It does not bear the logical relationship to nature that we have already mentioned, and in fact occurs only once in the literature I have examined. When *tzu jän* means "being so of oneself", there is an immediate semantic relation to nature. That which *hsing* 衛 expresses, namely, the inner principle by which a thing develops in the course of its life, implies that to the extent a thing is the expression of that inner principle, it is an expression of itself. We assume, of course, that one's nature, if not equivalent to one's deepest self, is at least thought of as part of the self. Semantically, therefore, one could discuss one's nature, *hsing*, in terms of self-development and hence "self-so-ness". This is not to say that something like "the self-so" or "self-so-ness" is the inner principle,
but only that *tzu jan* is a suitable adjective to be used as a characteristic of nature.

A second meaning, however, may be more important than the first. *Tzu jan* takes part of its meaning through contrast with its opposite, *shih jan* 使然, to cause to be so. What we shall find is that *tzu jan* comes to mean independence as opposed to dependence. When this is extended to a cosmic scale, *tzu jan* in this sense of independence signals an absolute. It refers to a fixed point, an arché, which is utterly reliable, because it relies on nothing other than itself. Now we can see that if a thinker does in fact appropriate this sense of *tzu jan*, he may not wish to apply it also to *hsing*, the nature of specific things, for *hsing* would likely be subordinate to a higher principle such as heaven or Tao.

Although this thesis will concern itself primarily with philosophical problems, this sense of *tzu jan* shows us that we cannot think of philosophy in an intellectual vacuum. In all philosophy there is that which points to a deeper level, namely, religion. By this I mean that a man must find something to rely on. His decision, expressed or implied, about what is ultimately reliable, is a religious decision, regardless of what kind of reasons he finds for that decision or what process he goes through to get to it. It is only natural that this decision is reflected in his philosophy when he begins to think about the origin and nature of the cosmos and man. He will
have to give philosophical expression to his own religiously
determined starting point. When philosophical concepts come
close to this starting point, these concepts become more
important through that relationship. They point outside the
philosophical conception to the roots of the person's belief.

An example from Greek philosophy may illuminate the
possibilities here. The word *apeiros* has two different
derivations, one meaning "without experience" or "unaquainted
with", and the second meaning "unbounded" or "unlimited".
This latter sense is the one that becomes a philosophical
problem. In pre-philosophical uses, as in Homer, this word is
an adjective describing the sea and the earth; there it indicated
that there was no boundary to be seen on the other
side. In philosophical usage, although this term could be
and was applied to subjects, for example, Empedocles' denial
that the earth was deep without limit,\(^{11}\) when it was applied
to objects, it became a powerful concept. For Anaximandros,
*to apeiron*, the limitless, the boundless, became the indeterminate,
unitary origin of determinate diversity. The indeterminate was
an indeterminate object which in divergence became determinate
objects. The fact that objects came from the limitless gave
them an ascendance over subjects; objects were incapable of
being ontologically exhausted. Even the gods as subjects

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were limited by it.\textsuperscript{12}

The term \textit{tzu jan} has the potential to be an indicator of an absolute, since it expresses the relation of independence.

I shall devote the rest of this chapter to examining in what way \textit{tzu jan} developed in the classical period of Chinese philosophy, by examining all the occurrences of \textit{tzu jan} in pre-Han literature, that is, literature of the third century B.C. or earlier.

\textbf{THE LAO TZU}

The \textit{Lao tzu} is a text which according to most critical scholarship dates to about the fourth century B.C., although it may reflect some earlier trends of thought. We cannot say whether it is earlier or later than the \textit{Chuang tzu}, also from the mid-fourth century, but we can observe that since the term \textit{tzu jan} does not appear before these two texts, it appears in Chinese literature at a comparatively late date for such a fundamental term.

The concept of nature in the \textit{Lao tzu} is a much broader subject that I can deal with in this paper. To discuss nature in the \textit{Lao tzu} is in fact to discuss the entire ontology of the work. Nature is dominant throughout; culture is at best a derivation, at worst a corruption, of nature. The many concepts associated with nature, such as harmony, change,

\textsuperscript{12}This summary is based on D. H. Th. Vollenhoven, \textit{Geschiedenis der Wijsbegeerte}, (Franeker, The Netherlands, 1950), pp. 230-232, 238-240.
permanence, genesis, are treated to some degree in every study of Taoism, but I will refer to these broader concepts only as they might relate to a particular passage under discussion. I shall restrict my discussion to the five occurrences of tzu jan in the Lao tzu and, in order to illuminate the meaning of tzu jan, to an analysis of tzu 自 , self, as a reflexive pronominal adverb.

In this analysis I shall try to discover from the context first, whether tzu jan is one word or two, and second, if it is one word, does it already mean "natural" or "spontaneous". Since the Lao tzu and the Chuang tzu are the earliest sources in which the two characters tzu and jan occur together, it is legitimate to ask whether that later meaning of the term tzu jan is already present in its earliest uses.

The most difficult instance of tzu jan in the Tao te ching is in Chapter 25. The passage concerned reads as follows:

Man models himself on earth, earth models itself on heaven, heaven models itself on the Tao, but the Tao only repeats the way it is of itself.13

13I have used several editions of the Lao tzu. My basic text was the Ssu pu pei yao edition with Wang Pi's commentary. I used the critical edition of the Ho shang kung text by Cheng Ch'eng-hai, Lao tzu Ho shang kung chu chiao li 老子河上公注釋理 (Taipei: Chung-hua Book Co., 1971). I consulted the collection of stone inscriptions by Chu Ch'ien-chih 朱謙之, Lao tzu chiao shih 老子校釋.
We must not be misled by the parallel grammatical structure of this passage. Since we know more or less what man, earth, heaven, and Tao mean, can we add the term tzu jan to this list and presume it makes a fifth element? A recent dissertation by Wang Hsien-chih in fact makes this claim. Wang argues that tzu jan is an independent reality which transcends even the Tao. He supposes that since we can attach some kind of hierarchical order to the first four elements, the parallelism should lead us to postulate the fifth element as the highest in the series.  

Wang is not the first to suppose this. Li Yüeh (fl. ca. A.D. 1231), in his new interpretation of this passage, says that everyone else in his day was reading this sentence as indicating five elements. Kao Heng first drew my attention to this. He refers to Li Yüeh's Tao te chen ching hsin chu as the source of an alternate punctuation of the sentence as follows:

Man models himself on earth, on heaven, on the Tao, and thus on natural principles.

Finally, I compared these with the silk manuscripts found at Ma wang tui as printed in Yen Ling-feng, Ma wang tui po shu Lao tzu shih t'an 試談 (Taipei: Ho-luo t'u shu Publ. Co. 1976)  

Li devotes most of his preface to an explanation of this passage. He says that in imitating earth, heaven, and Tao, man imitates their natural, subtle principles, *tzu jan miao li* 自然妙理, and thus orders the world. As for the repetition of the words earth, heaven, and Tao, he compares it to other repetitions in the language such as *ch'un ch'un ch'en ch'en*. This he says, is the only interpretation which avoids making 'five greats' in the place the four, Tao, heaven, earth, and king, mentioned in the main text just previous to this sentence. Li reports that an interpretation making 'five greats' was present in all twelve schools of his day. If Li is correct in his remarks about his contemporaries, Wang Hsien-chih's interpretation is an old, established one.

However, it is questionable whether this sentence has any connection with what precedes or follows it. King, *wang* 王, is listed as one of the four greats, whereas man, *jen* 人, is listed in the series we are considering. Li explains the disparity between "king" and "man" by saying that it means that only a man who models himself on these three natural principles can become king. Kao Heng emends *jen* to *wang* claiming that the insertion of *jen* stems to the Wang Pi


text (ca. A.D. 240). However, the newly discovered Ma wang tui texts, versions of the Lao tzu which date to the early second century B.C., lead us to reject this emendation. Both of the Ma wang tui texts give jen and not wang. The Ho shang kung text also reads jen. As for the punctuation, Li's argument that it is parallel to other repetitions in the language doesn't bear up. Kao recognized this and emended the text again by dropping one of the two terms in each case. However, since the Ma wang tui texts support the present text here, the emendations seem unjustified. Rather, it is Kao's theoretical model which is at fault.

Li Yüeh was probably correct in that he did not want to consider tzu jan as a special entity parallel to the other four things mentioned. But his main argument for this depends on the semantic connection to the preceding sentences in the text. Such a connection is tenuous at best; at certain other points in the Lao tzu similarly proximate sentences have practically no connection. Li did not wish to make tzu jan a thing above the Tao, but seemed to have no qualms about using it as a synonym for the Tao. But since Li produced no corroboration from the Lao tzu itself, I am not prepared to accept this explanation.

The Ho shang kung commentary, the earliest complete commentary, explains the last phrase of the sentence saying, "The nature of the Tao is that way of itself; there is nothing

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17 Ibid. preface and commentary to Chapter 25.
18 Cheng Ch'eng-hai 鄭成海, Lao-tzu Ho shang kung chu
which it imitates." (道性自然，無所法也。) If "there is nothing which it imitates," then we cannot conceive of tzu jan as a substantial entity which is in some way imitated. If we were to read the Ho shang kung's use of tzu jan as "nature", we would be a step away from the meaning. The sentence already has one word for nature, hsing , the proper course of development for a thing. Tzu jan would have to mean nature in another sense which cannot be determined from this passage. Nor can we, from any concept of nature whatsoever, make the logical jump to "there is nothing which it imitates". Hence we must read tzu jan as I have translated it. Therefore, the sentences in both the Ho shang kung commentary and the Lao tzu reflect the fact that Tao is the ultimate reality and that it is the way it is on its own authority.

Ellen Marie Chen, in her dissertation Tao, Nature, Man, devotes a great deal of attention to this chapter. However, she does not seek the development of the meaning of tzu jan as a composite term. She analyzes the two words separately, and then combines the two etymologies to get "so-by-self" or "so-changing-by-self". She assumes that from the first appearance of the two terms together, it already expresses chiao li.


20 Ibid. p. 66.
some cosmic principle: "Tao... is pure spontaneity."

Having identified tzu jan with nature, she further equates it with heaven and earth, as a collective term for nature. Thus she reads this passage--"Nature follows Tao, Tao follows nature." By not examining the possibility that tzu jan might be two words, she is forced to engage in some mental gymnastics:

Tao is the principle in nature, meaning the natural world. But since nature is self-becoming itself, it is again the principle of Tao.

It is recognized already by the Han Fei tzu, dating to the late third century B.C., that the permanent Tao of Chapter 1 of the Lao tzu is one that is "not subject to change and has no permanent qualities; having no permanent qualities and no spatiality, it cannot be told of." It would be inconsistent with this concept of Tao to hypostatize tzu jan as a permanent quality of the tao. At best tzu jan could be a description of the non-dependent character of the Tao as perceived by beings which are dependent. When Chen calls tzu jan an internal principle of the Tao, this is some measure in conflict with the ineffability of the Tao. If the Tao cannot be named, can we really conceive of its internal principle? Not-naming surely means not-conceiving. Man cannot extend

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21 Ibid. p. 67.
22 Ibid. p. 65.
23 Ibid. pp. 67-68.
his analytical activity to the Tao which produced it. At best he can think of and name the relationship of Tao to man, or the visible activity of the Tao. When used to name that relationship, the term tzu jan expresses the negative of the relationships which dependent creatures experience all the time in the world. They are dependent; the Tao is not. Although the form of the expression self-so, tzu jan, is positive, the only content we can give it is negative, that it is not influenced by anything outside of itself. Even the language we use if we try to describe the Tao itself is analogical language. If the Tao cannot be named, how can we speak of the self of the Tao?

In the end the meaning of this sentence in Chapter 25 is unclear. We can, for example, only guess at the content of the phrase, "Man models himself on the earth." Presumably it is equivalent to the relationship of man to the earth in other passages of the Lao tzu, but nowhere else is this verb fa, to model, used. There is some form of hierarchy here, but the Tao must be the end of the order. There is no room in the Lao tzu for a reality which transcends Tao. The Tao is a law unto itself; it imitates only itself and hence continually repeats itself.

The idea of the Tao repeating itself echoes what occurs earlier in Chapter 25, namely, that the Tao "revolves cyclically without being remiss."25 (周行而無終) . The Tao

25 The Chung wen ta tz'u tien 中文大辭典 (Taipei:
rotates about itself, or reverses on itself.

The next occurrence of tzu jan which I will discuss comes at the end of Chapter 17. There we read:

Hesitating, do I not value my words, accomplish my task and things get done? And the people all say that I am this way of myself.

猶其貴言成功事遂,百姓皆謂我自然。 26

The subject of this paragraph is obscure. Although I have translated it as a first person narrative, it has traditionally been interpreted as a third person narrative, whose understood subject is the sage-king. In this paragraph the word wei "to say that", "to call (it)" is a difficult word. In classical Chinese of this period, it does not introduce direct quotations. All interpreters that I have seen understand the term wo 我, "I, (we)" to have the people, pai hsing 百姓 as its antecedent. However, this would imply the presence of a direct quotation and is therefore grammatically impossible. However, the logic of the sentence suggests that wo can only have an antecedent if the entire sentence is a direct quotation. Such a situation occurs, for example in Mencius I.1.7, in which King Hsüan of Ch'i says, "It is natural that the

Bureau for Study of Chinese Culture, 1968) quotes the Lao tzu shih wen 老子釋文 (unavailable to me) as glossing tai 務 as tai 慫, meaning lazy, remiss, or negligent. E. M. Chen, Tao, Nature, Man, pp. 73 ff. has a similar interpretation.

26 The Wang Pi text reads yu hsi 愀兮 "anxious", in place of yu 酒. Another variant of yu 酒 is yu 由, which commentators gloss as having the same meaning. I follow the Ma wang tui texts, both of which read yu 酒, along with numerous versions cited in Chu Ch'en-chih, Lao tzu chiao shih.
There is no indication, however, here in the Lao tzu that this sentence is part of a direct quotation. Although the context may have nothing to do with this sentence, the rest of the chapter is written with a third person subject, and thus gives no support for an argument that this is a direct quotation. However, one may argue that in the Lao tzu, there is an alternation of subject throughout. Some passages appear to be a first person narrative, the subject of which is a wise man, although not a king. Other passages are third person narrative with either a sage-king or the people as subject. In some cases, such as Chapter 49, these points of view will alternate within the same chapter. I believe this is also the case in this chapter. The sentence under consideration must be treated as an isolated epigram in first person narrative. This is the only interpretation which does not arbitrarily emend the text.

The interpretation of tzu jan also poses a problem. Since he places the word in the mouth of the people, we do not know whether he affirms the sentence himself, or whether he is referring to a common popular (mis)conception. In either case, it is implied that the wise man's valuing of words and accomplishing of his task is that which he does of his own accord. Thus right action or prescribed conduct is governed by the subject's natural state, the way he is in himself. There is no suggestion
of a cosmic independence, a religious elevation of a natural state of being, but only the ordinary assertion that the wise man is responsible for the conduct of his own affairs.\textsuperscript{27}

In Chapter 51 there is a clear and lengthy context for the use of \textit{tzu jan}:

\begin{quote}
Tao gives them life, Te rears them, matter gives them shape, and circumstances complete them. Therefore the creatures all honor Tao and value Te. As for the honoring of Tao and the valuing of Te, no one gave this position to them, but they have always been that way of themselves.
\end{quote}

道生之, 德畜之, 物形之, 势成之。是以萬物莫不尊道而貴德。道之尊, 德之貴, 夫莫之爵而常自然。\textsuperscript{28}

At this point, \textit{tzu jan} essentially means "naturally" or "spontaneously". To translate the last phrase "they have always been that way naturally" does not seem to alter the meaning. I think this is because the explanatory phrase "no one gave this position to them" makes the meaning perfectly clear. The point is that there is nothing greater or deeper

\textsuperscript{27}D. C. Lau, \textit{Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching} (Penguin, 1969), also interprets \textit{tzu jan} as nature. I note in passing that T'ang Ch'\u{u}n-i, "Lun Lao tzu yen 'fa Tao' chih ssu ts'eng-mien" 論老子言「法道」之四層 面 (Four levels of "imitation of the Tao" in the \textit{Lao tzu}), \textit{The Journal of the Institute of Chinese Studies} (中國文化研究所學報), The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1 (Sep., 1968) 171-207, has an interpretation similar to mine. See especially pp. 175-176. The problem with the verb \textit{wei} was first drawn to my attention by E. G. Pulleyblank.
than the Tao. The relationship of Tao and Te to the myriad creatures of the world does not depend on a third agent. I also note that in this case tzu jan is not an abstract property of Tao and Te but a description of the relationship between Tao-Te and the creatures of the world.

The fourth use of tzu jan occurs at the opening of Chapter 23 and is extremely cryptic. It reads:

It is spare of words and self-so.

Wang Pi relates this to Chapter 14. "Listened to, it cannot be heard. It is called 'soundless' (hsi 希 )." Thus Wang takes it as a description of the Tao. Paul Lin translates the phrase, "To spare words is to be natural". This interpretation is also suggested by the Ho shang kung commentary and is certainly possibly. Strictly speaking, we have no way of knowing who or what is sparing of words. It is difficult to imagine any connection between this short sentence and either what follows it or, as Kao Heng suggests, what precedes it in Chapter 22. We might connect the idea of sparing of words to the Sage-king's valuing of words which we saw in Chapter 17. If it is the Sage-king who is sparing of

28 I read chüeh 倆 in place of ming 明 . Ming occurs in the Wang Pi text; both Ma wang tui versions and numerous others read chüeh. Wang himself notes that other texts read chüeh.


30 Ibid.
words, then it is he who is described as tzu jan. But nowhere else is the Sage-king described as tzu jan, and we can only guess at the meaning. I lean towards the interpretation of Wang Pi and regard the subject of the sentence as the Tao. In the end this example provides no evidence in any direction for the question I am posing.

Finally, in Chapter 64, after a descriptive list of the Sage-king's actions, the Lao tzu concludes that the Sage,

...thereby assists the natural state of all things and does not presume to interfere.

This is the only passage in the Lao tzu in which tzu jan clearly refers to something other than the Tao or Te. It is also the only case in which tzu jan is clearly nominalized. The natural state of the creatures of the world has been corrupted, presumably through misdirected government, and requires the assistance of the Sage-king. However, this assistance excludes interference. The Sage accomplishes his task by desiring only not to desire and learning not to be learned, thereby leaving the people free to pursue their own course. The tzu jan which the creatures then gain is not a cosmic principle, but is a typical characteristic of things in an idealized, primitive social order. This concept is

31 The Ma wang tui texts both read neng 能 for i 人, but this change does not substantially alter the meaning.
clearly corroborated in Chapter 57. Although *tzu jan* itself does not occur there, several synonyms such as *tzu hua* and *tzu cheng* are ascribed to the people as a result of the king's non-action, *wu wei*, and love of stillness, *hao ching*.

From the hindsight of history, we see that in those thinkers in which *tzu jan* is an important concept, there is an accompanying increase in the use of *tzu* as a reflexive pronominal adverb. There is an emphasis on the fact that various kinds of action are done by oneself. In the *Tao te ching* there are nine occurrences in four different chapters which fit this pattern. All of these cases are actions of persons or things in idealized society, close to the sense of our study of Chapter 64. Insofar as this primitive community is idealized, it acts as a model for human life and, by extension, a rule for human conduct. This pattern applies to the followers of the king. The people's sense of doing things themselves is to some extent an illusion. They are happy if they suppose they are doing the work themselves and do not recognize the work of the Sage.

In summary, there are two basic uses of *tzu jan* in the *Lao tzu*. The first is that of Chapters 25 and 51 in which *tzu jan* indicates the ultimate independence of the Tao. The second one is that of Chapters 17 and 64 in which things are so of

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32 See Chapter 32 (2 times), Chapter 37 (2 times), Chapter 57 (4 times), and Chapter 73 (1 time).
themselves in an ideal society because the Sage-king does not interfere.

THE CHUANG TZU

The Chuang tzu is a text of which parts are as old, or even older, than the Lao tzu. By tradition it was written by Chuang Chou, who probably flourished sometime in the latter half of the fourth century B.C. If he wrote any of the text that now survives, it is likely to have been the first seven chapters. Most scholars agree that the 'inner chapters', the first seven, are the oldest of the work, although sections of the 'outer' and 'miscellaneous' chapters may be equally old. However, hardly anyone can distinguish with any certainty which these older sections might be. Therefore, I shall regard the 'inner chapters' as reliable sources from the fourth century B.C., and assume that the remaining chapters, where they do not clearly agree with the 'inner chapters', belong to later periods.  

The first occurrence of tzu jan is in Chapter 5, Te ch'ung fu. This passage has been carefully analyzed by A. C. Graham, in order to demonstrate that in pre-Han literature ch'ing always means "genuine" and does not have the later meaning, "passions". It must be read

in the light of Chuang tzu's rejection of the false discrimination of right and wrong, shih fei 非. Twice in the context of this passage he identifies this discrimination as that which is genuinely man (jen chih ch'ing 人之情) and as that which therefore separates him from other creatures in the world. Chuang tzu says that the sage has the form of a man but does not have that which is genuinely man. Because he has the form of man, he associates with men; because he is without what is genuinely man, right and wrong will not be found in him. At this point the sophist Hui Shih objects: how could he be a man and be without that which is genuinely man? After an unsatisfactory answer and then a repeat of the question, Chuang tzu replies:  

Judging right and wrong is what I mean by "genuine". When I say "being without that which is genuinely man", I mean that a person does not take likes and dislikes to inwardly wound himself. He always accords with the way he is of himself and does not add to his life.

34 I have paraphrased the text up to this point based on the translation of A. C. Graham, "The Mencian Theory of Human Nature," Ch'ing hua hsüeh pao 清華學報 VI(1967), p. 261. I have altered it slightly since Graham did not interpret the subject of the whole discussion as being the sage, but he understood it as man in general. Since the sage is a model for human conduct, the point of the passage is not significantly changed.

35 Chuang tzu 草子, 2:23a-b. Compare the translation of Watson, Chuang tzu, pp. 75-76.
Here to follow or accord with *tzu jan* seems to be the major conclusion of the argument. Chuang tzu clearly sets up two alternative ways; man may accept the guise given by the Tao with the form granted by heaven or follow the path of contrived right and wrong, likings and dislikings. *Tzu jan* is associated with the former category. *Tzu jan* is here a substantive, a nominalized verbal expression. We may therefore ask who or what is the subject of this expression. The first possibility is that the sage must follow the Tao, relying on the self-so character of the Tao. However, I believe this interpretation would conflict with the context. The sage is the subject of the whole discussion. It is he who has made the choice not to contrive distinctions of right and wrong. The focus is thus on the life of the sage and not on the role of the Tao. We must also assume that the meaning of the second clause of the last sentence is at least complementary to the first. If the sage adds nothing to his own life, he accords with what is given to him. He adds nothing to its natural course but goes along with the way he is of himself. Hence, I believe that the subject of *tzu jan* in this passage must be construed as the sage. *Tzu jan* is held up as an ideal or model for all human conduct, or at least an aspect of a model conduct. Of course, in the *Chuang tzu*, model conduct is the ability to respond to change rather than a given set of moral imperatives.
The other occurrence in the 'inner chapters' is in Chapter 7, Ying ti wang 应帝王. It occurs given as an answer by the Nameless Man to T'ien Ken's question on how to rule the world.

Let your mind wander in simplicity, blend your spirit with the vastness, follow along with things the way they are, and make no room for personal views—then the world will be governed.

Here the term tzu jan applies to creatures outside oneself. It is not as if tzu jan is a peculiar characteristic of Tao or man. It is rather only one way among several of expressing the injunction to identify with the universe and flow with change. Kuo Hsiang calls our attention to the passage from Te ch'ung fu 德充符 analyzed above, when he says that "personal views" are the same as the desire to enhance one's life, yi sheng 益生 . Clearly, tzu jan expresses the way the world is without human interference.

It is difficult to make any great generalizations about these examples. Tzu jan is tied closely to Chuang tzu's rejection of human discrimination, although it is not a concept which he uses to bring his thought into sharp focus. In contrast to its use in the Lao tzu, it is not connected to a conception of an ideal social order, nor is it a cosmic

36 Ibid. 3:16b. Compare Watson, Chuang tzu, p. 94.
principle applied to the Tao. Rather it is a characteristic of the manifested world when in harmony with the Tao.

Of the remaining six cases, one is in a passage whose validity is questioned. Commentators suggest it was a Kuo Hsiang comment which crept into the main text. A second case occurs in a passage whose date must be rather late, perhaps from the former Han dynasty, as Burton Watson suggests. Its mixing of Confucian and Taoist ideas is foreign to most of the Chuang tzu. A third case occurs in the "Autumn Floods" chapter. This chapter is very close to the thought of the 'inner chapters', although it seems more systematic and represents either the work of a disciple or perhaps a later phase of Chuang tzu's own writings. In this case tzu acts as a pronoun object, and jan functions as a verb, "to regard as right". It is presented as a fault of Yao and Shun, and is in no way related to the philosophical development of the expression tzu jan.

In Chapter 16, Shan hsing 祭牲, we are reminded of the Lao tzu. Describing a world before even the earliest legendary emperors, a time when everything was in harmony and all lived without a ruler in perfect unity, the Chuang tzu concludes:

37 Ibid. 5:20b. In Chuang tzu pu cheng, 莊子補正 (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1947), 5 hsia: 5b, Liu Wen-tien notes that it was suspected already in the Sung dynasty. See also Watson, Chuang tzu p. 56, no. 7, and Wang Hsien-ch'ien 王先謙, Chuang tzu chi-chieh 莊子集解, 1908 (Taipei reprint: Shih-chieh Book Co., 1965) p. 89.

38 Ibid. 10:5b. For suggested dating see Burton Watson, Chuang tzu, p. 15.
No one made it this way; it was always this way of itself.40

The phrasing is very close to that of the *Tao te ching*, Chapter 51, and the society described reminds us also of Chapter 64, both discussed above. Although it doesn't seem to be an outright contradiction with the cases of 'inner chapters', the associated image of a golden age in a primitive past is foreign to the 'inner chapters'.

In Chapter 14, **T'ien yün** 天尊, we find something we have not yet encountered. In a long and somewhat obscure passage on music, there seem to be dimensions or levels of being suggested. Ch'eng of the North Gate reports three reactions to the music of the Yellow Emperor; he is first afraid, then weary, and finally confused. The Yellow Emperor replies that his music was tuned to different things. In the first stage it responded to man, heaven, ritual, principle, and the great purity. This produced fear. At the second stage, it responded to Yin and Yang, and the result was weariness. In the third stage, the Yellow Emperor,

...played it with the sound which is without idleness and harmonized it by the decree which is self-so.41

The music played then reflected chaos and obscurity. It "moved in the directionless and resided in deep darkness."

39 Ibid. 6:9b. See also Watson, *Chuang tzu*, p. 180
Some call it death; some call it life.\textsuperscript{42} It is clear that it is the Tao that is being talked about. The use of \textit{wu tai} \textit{无为} may also be a veiled reference to Chapter 25 of the \textit{Lao tzu}.\textsuperscript{43} But it could also be said of the first two stages that they reflect the Tao; the language is reminiscent of other sections of the \textit{Chuang tzu}. Perhaps there are not three levels, but only three kinds of manifestations of Tao being talked about here. In this instance \textit{tzu jan} is nominalized, but its meaning is not clear, primarily because we do not know what is meant by here by \textit{ming} \textit{命}, meaning command, decree, fate, destiny. Burton Watson translates \textit{tzu jan chih ming} \textit{自然之命} as "the command of spontaneity". This places the semantic weight of the phrase on \textit{tzu jan}. It assumes that \textit{tzu jan} has come to mean the abstract quality of spontaneity. The first half of this sentence with parallel structure, \textit{wu tai chih sheng} \textit{无为之生}, Watson translates as "unwearying notes". Just as \textit{sheng} is the primary object of concern in this phrase, so \textit{ming} should be the principle object in the second phrase, and \textit{tzu jan} only a modifier. Ch'eng Hsüan-ying (T'ang Dynasty A.D. 618-906) suggests that \textit{ming} here means \textit{hsing-ming} \textit{性命}, one's fated life-span.\textsuperscript{44} This does not seem correct since the context nowhere refers to individuals to whom this destiny applies. But it seems analogous to the

\textsuperscript{41}Ibid. 5:21b. \textit{Watson, Chuang tzu}, p. 157.

\textsuperscript{42}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{43}See the discussion of \textit{tai} \textit{太} and \textit{tai} \textit{泰} in footnote 25.
Decree of Heaven, t'ien ming 天命, translated into the language of the Lao tzu. Ming, conceived as the decree of the Tao, does not relate here to the establishment of earthly governments, but probably in some way reflects the necessity in the working of the Tao. It implies that the actions of the Tao are beyond human control. Such a ming is the way it is of itself. We cannot read then, as Watson implies, that tzu jan is a reality which has its own ming, its own power to command. What I suggest is that tzu jan is here, as in other cases, a religiously loaded term which indicates the power inherent in the Tao and the power available to the man who harmonizes with the Tao. Clearly the Yellow Emperor overwhels Ch'eng with the power of his music. That power comes from a truly independent Tao, whose necessary workings, ming, are subject to no higher or outside influence.

The last occurrence in the Chuang tzu is in Chapter 21, T'ien tzu fang 天子方. In a response to a question of Confucius implying that even the perfect man had to have transmitted teachings about the Way in order to cultivate his mind, Lao Tan (one of the persons reputed to be the original Lao tzu) replies:

Not so! Water's settling in deep and clear pools is not contrived and its ability is so of itself. As for the perfect man's relation with Te, he does not cultivate it, yet things cannot depart from him. It is like heaven's being high of itself, earth's being vast of itself,

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44 See the su 述, explanation, on this passage in Chuang tzu pu cheng, 6 shang: 9a.
45 The meaning of shuo (or cho) is quite obscure. The
and the sun and moon being of themselves bright. What does one cultivate in them?

In the whole conversation of which this paragraph is the conclusion, Lao Tan describes the perfect man as one who obtains beauty and happiness by wandering in the primordial flux produced in the harmonizing of yin and yang. He is the one who embraces the oneness of all creatures and knows what is within himself. From this description we might expect him to be a mountain hermit who rides about in the clouds, but we are told in this last paragraph that things do not depart from him. This is reminiscent of the political theory of Mencius, who tells us that a king need not expand his borders by war, but if he is benevolent, the people will all flock to him. In this Taoist passage, the "people" become "all creatures", and the leadership of the perfect man is not expressed as an official position. Indeed his leadership seems to be on a mystical, cosmic scale rather than a national, political one. We are told the perfect man does not cultivate himself and all creatures

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Chuang tzu shih wen (quoted in Chuang tzu pu cheng) glosses it as ch'ü 取, to take. Watson translates it as "murmuring", which is similar to Giles's definition of it as the sound of water bubbling up, A Chinese-English dictionary, (Shanghai, 1912). Ch'eng Hsüan-ying says that this means water that is clear and deep, cheng chan 澄 澈 (quoted in Chuang tzu pu cheng). That I follow Ch'eng is a somewhat arbitrary choice.
follow him. By analogy with the water, we may also conclude that the perfect man does not act, and the creatures of the world may then be self-so. This complementary division which assigns wu-wei to the leaders and tzu jan to the followers is similar to uses found in the Lao tzu.

However, there seems to be an intentional ambiguity in the meaning of wu wei here. Wu wei is a technical philosophical term eventually used by many writers of pre-Han literature. It can mean a general lack of purposive or intentional action, and by extension, a reluctance to engage in any cultural activity. Or it can mean the non-action of a ruler as a technique for ruling. But both senses are present here. When describing water, the former sense is the only one that can apply. But when by analogy wu wei is also applied to the perfect man, the second meaning seems to apply. However, the perfect man needn't be a ruler, and the reference to his rule is in this case only a veiled one. Perhaps the author is trying to say that wu wei as a technique for ruling is nothing other than the non-contrivance of natural things.

We might at this point ask whether there is a logical connection between wu wei and tzu jan. I raise the question

46 Chuang tzu 7:18b. See Watson, p. 226.

because some later Chinese thinkers, such as Wang Ch'ung (A.D. 27-97), commonly link the two terms as a pair. But would a pre-Han thinker make such a connection? In this case there is a close juxtaposition of *wu wei* and *tzu jan*, but I suggest that there is no necessary logical link. That water's behavior is not contrived has nothing to do with its being so of itself. The first term relates whether or not there is purpose in the action; the second term indicates whether the action is caused from within or without the subject. Both purposive and non-purposive action might be *tzu jan*. It is only when *wu wei* and *tzu jan* are distinctively associated with ruler and subject respectively that there is some logical connection. There, in the broken or fallen society, the *tzu jan* of the followers can only result when the leader practices *wu wei*.

One could, as Watson does, translate this paragraph's use of *tzu* and *tzu jan* as "naturally". We must of course understand that there is no expressed substance or essence within these things whose nature is here being given expression. Rather it only denies outside influence. But it is natural in that it is the way of being of all creatures with the exception of man.

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49 Kao Heng also remarks on this. See his comments on the passage discussed above from Chapter 64, *Lao tzu cheng ku*
The denying of outside influence implied in the expression tzu jan can also be connected to Chuang tzu's understanding of names. Much of the excitement and interest of the Chuang tzu comes from his belief in the arbitrariness of naming. And the corollary of that belief is that species and genuses do not exist, except in man's imagination. For Chuang tzu, that which makes a horse a horse is merely the human activity of naming. There is nothing in the horse itself which calls forth man's naming activity. By naming, man unjustly isolates a portion of a continuum of space and time; the boundaries he selects are entirely artificial. If the boundaries had some reality, there would really be something objective which makes the horse the horse, and thus establishes the species horse. Implicitly, there would be something which transcends the individual animal and restricts his being the way he is of himself. In short, he would not be tzu jan. As a result man's true course of life lies in going along with changes. There is nothing that prevents the Tao from turning one creature into another, or from changing the shape of one of its creatures. Indeed one must exult and enjoy the workings of change; it is resistance to change which causes misery and according with change which brings happiness. This line of logic is

50 This is shown clearly in Chapter 6 with the stories of Master Yü and Master Lai. See Watson, *Chuang tzu* pp. 84-85. These changes are clearly illnesses, but Chuang tzu unfortunately doesn't try to explain why illness should cause pain and assumes that one is happy through acquiescing to change.
not pursued in the Chuang tzu, but it does seem to be implicit, waiting to be picked up by later thinkers.

OTHER PRE-HAN CASES

The combination *tzu jan* occurs in only four other pieces of pre-Han literature, the *Hsün tzu* 笈子, the *Lü shih* ch'un ch'iu 吕氏春秋, the later Mohists' writings, and the *Kuan tzu* 管子, all works probably written in the third century B.C.

In *Hsün tzu*, there are two instances of *tzu jan*. The first is in Chapter 22, *Cheng ming* 正名. *Hsün tzu* is in the process of defining human nature, *hsing* 性, and he gives it two different senses. In the second definition *Hsün tzu* writes:

One (also) calls nature life's harmonizing with that which produces it, its sensory contacts and response to stimuli, and being self-so without working at it.

性之和所生精合感應不事而自然謂之性。  

In this second definition of nature, *Hsün tzu* is describing the actual process of living as one's nature, in part. This appears to be an elaboration of his first definition in which nature is the principle or guide of life. He adds that in so far

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as one's life process is harmonious with that given at birth (perhaps **ku 故**) and with one's sensory contact with objects and response to their stimulation, this, too, is one's nature. He concludes that nature is being self-so without contrived effort. Nature, then, is the appetites of the body and emotions not yet checked by the artificial activity of culture, and in particular, ritual.

The second case in the **Hsün tzu** occurs in Chapter 23, **Hsing 性**. In addition to linking **tzu jan** to sensory perception, **Hsün tzu** also links it to **ch'ing 情**, the genuine, as opposed to that which is assumed. The likings, **hao 好**, of eye, ear, mouth, and mind all...move (instinctively) and are so of themselves; they are things which do not wait for an effort and only then come into being.

感而自然，不待事而後生之者也。**54**

The grammatical function of **tzu jan** is exactly the same as in the previous case. Likewise, the terms **kan 感**, to move, to feel and **pu...shih 不為也** not being worked for, again appear in the same sentence with **tzu jan**. Clearly what he is describing is a spontaneous process, one not yet affected by

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**53** See Graham, "The Mencian Theory of Human Nature," pp. 264-265 for a discussion of this concept in **Hsün tzu**.

**54** **Hsün tzu**, 17:3a. See also Watson, **Hsün tzu**, pp. 160-161.
the rational, culture-forming activity of man. When we say spontaneous in this case, we must not take it in the sense of being irregular or being without principle or law, but rather as being without pre-meditation, without the rational activity of man.

It is also interesting to note that tzu jan is not connected to the concept of the natural world. Hsün tzu has the reputation of being the most 'naturalistic' of the pre-Han Confucians. It is he among the Confucians who first removes will and ethical impulses from the concept of heaven. But in doing so he emphasizes the well-orderedness and constancy of heaven's ways. The presence of will would imply the ability of heaven to alter its actions, but this is impossible, according to Hsün tzu. Heaven is still the creator of man in the sense that it provides man with all the regular functions of his life, but it is not responsible for the cultural activity of man, and hence social order and disorder. Man's task is to harmonize with the heaven-established order. Part of man, as we have seen, is part of the regular order, which, being self-so, is not subject to man's cultural activity. Nor should man seek to know more of heaven than those things which affect him directly. To enquire about the principle behind heaven's regularity is for Hsün tzu beyond the range of human knowledge.  

55 Hsün tzu, Chapter 17, T'ien lun 天論, 11:9a-11a and passim.
The Lu shih ch'un ch'iu 吕氏春秋 contains three instances of tzu jen. This work is a collection compiled around 240 B.C. Lu Pu-wei, a relative of the royal house of the state of Ch'in, commissioned a number of scholars to write and gave them freedom to write what they wished. Although it cannot be said to be the work of any one school, it may tell us how tzu jen is used as an expression at the end of the Warring States period. The first occurrence is in Chi ch'un chi 春秋記, the third of the twelve chapters named after the months, in section 4, Lun jen 論人, "Discussion of others". It reads as follows:

The way of the ruler is limited. That which the Lord guards is near. The highest one turns back to himself. The lower ones seek it in others...What does it mean to say "turns back to himself"? He reproves his ears and eyes, restrains lust and desire, releases knowledge and cunning, gets rid of cleverness and reasonings; he lets his ideas wander in the inexhaustible places and applies his mind to the path which is so of itself. In this way he takes nothing which will harm his heavenly nature.

This section is linked with the previous one entitled "Putting oneself first", hsien chi 先己, in which the ruler is advised

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57 Lu shih ch'un ch'iu 吕氏春秋, Ssu pu pei yao ed. 3:7b.
that making himself personally complete and in order will also cause the world to be in order. Completing oneself in this case means moral uprightness, frugal living, and being a proper Confucian example. Although the alleged conversations with Confucius in this section are not recorded in the present Analects of Confucius, there are similar concepts in the Analects. In Analects 15:20 we find,

The superior seeks it in himself; the petty man seeks it in others.

君子求諸己, 小人求諸人。58

Yet the Lü shih ch'un ch'iu is by no means expressing a purely Confucian sentiment. Confucius probably meant that the gentleman did not take his standard of proper conduct from the approval of others, but kept to his own standard. He did not imply that the ruler should reject knowledge and desire as the Lü shih ch'un ch'iu suggests. In this respect the passage reminds us also of the Lao tzu, although the Lao tzu does not reject knowledge and desire as such, but only the contrived and artificial divisions of knowledge and sense perceptions.59 Perhaps the author also intends that here. He goes on to relate that as a consequence of the ruler's actions, he attains unity and all


59See for example Lao tzu, Chapters 2, 12, and 19.
creatures are thereby completed. The ruler responds to the changes of things.

The sentence containing tzu jan occurs just where the author is beginning to wax eloquent about the powers of such a ruler. Tzu jan is parallel to wu ch'iung 無窮, the inexhaustible. The sentence suggests that somewhere in his self, the king will find a certain reality which is independent, a source of true knowledge. Then good government will result. The appearance of this term wu ch'iung is interesting because of the similarity to the Greek notion of to apeiron, which I discussed earlier. Wu ch'iung seems to have first come into philosophical use in the Chuang tzu. At some points in the Chuang tzu it seems to have a non-philosophical function as an adjective meaning "without end". But in other places he identifies the boundless with the process of change. Change is always dominant over structure and things in Chuang tzu. Structures change and are therefore finite, while change continues indefinitely. The sense of "infinite" is also used very pregnantly when it is applied to the infinite reaches of the cosmos in order to belittle the efforts of man. The case we are discussing here is especially reminiscent of the end of Chapter 7, "embody completely the boundless and wander in the trackless." (體盡無窮而遊無朕。) 60

If this is what the author of the Lü shih ch'un ch'iu passage had in mind, then tzu jan is probably also being

60 See Chuang tzu, 3:19a, and Watson Chuang tzu, p. 97.
identified with change. Tzu jan is at least a characteristic of the path to be followed, the path which leads to a righting of all wrongs in the order of creation. Here I suspect tzu jan is being used as I earlier suggested was possible, namely to signify the absolute reliability of that which one takes as his arche, the true path of human conduct.

There is another case in the Lü shih ch'un ch'iu very similar to the first. In book 17, Shen fen lan , section 1, the author discusses various characteristics of the sage ruler. In this paragraph rectification of names is described as the source of good government and the source of a life free from worry and toil. The ruler does not "manage things", chih wu , his spirit penetrates in all six directions, and his virtue shines beyond the seas. The ruler truly obtains the people and knowledge, after having gone through the process of forgetting them. That which he knows is the infinitesimal, the subtle stuff of things, miao , and thereby his form and nature receive rest in the place which is self-so (形性得安乎自然之所安 ). Though he completes all creatures, he is no ruler (pu tsai ). His measure covers the world yet none knows where it comes from. As in the first case, there is an assortment of ideas here. The concept of rectification of names was a Confucian one, although it probably first came from the theorist of administration, Shen Pu-hai. But his attitude toward knowledge and the fact that he rules without his subjects'
knowledge is derived from the idea of the hidden sage of the Taoists. In particular, as in *Chuang tzu* Chapter 21, discussed above, his rule extends over the whole cosmos. The place which is so of itself may be similar to what we found in the previous case, a realm of indeterminateness, which is the source of the determinate. By knowing that which cannot be named, he is somehow able to rectify names. This is different from the ideal social order of the *Lao tzu*, in which things were all self so. That harmony was the result of the sage's action to remove alienation from the Way, but in this case the self-so place is the source of the harmony. That the king's nature can "rest" here confirms that this is a place of ultimate significance. There is nothing higher or deeper to which he must move before he can find rest.

The last occurrence in the *Lü shih ch'un ch'iu* seems to be a non-technical use. It shows clearly that one could at least challenge its connection to nature. At the opening of *Hsiao hsing lan* 處刑覽, Chapter 14, sec. 4, *I shang* 義賞 , "Justice and rewards", we read:

When spring air comes grass and trees flourish.
When Autumn air comes grass and trees decline.
Something causes flourishing and declining: It is not that they are so of themselves.

春氣至則草木產。秋氣至則草木落。
產興落或使之，非自然也。62

62 Ibid. 14:10a.
Tzu jan is nominalized here and is seen as opposite to being caused. The point of the passage is to show that all things, even something so apparently independent as grass and trees are caused by outside forces. Thus the ruler could use rewards and punishments to lead the people, causing their actions to go in one direction or another. We get the feeling that the author is going against common opinion in the opening sentence. By startling his readers with his cleverness in the first case, he probably hoped to carry them along to his conclusion. Tzu jan is not given any particular philosophical content; it is merely used for contrast.

In the writings of the later Mohists, we find a single occurrence of tzu jan. These were written around 300 B.C. and thus are earlier than both the Lu shih ch'un ch'iu and the Hsün tzu.63 Tzu jan occurs in the section called "Explanations of the Canons", Ching shuo 釋說. These extremely difficult works have been the subject of several years of study and a series of articles by A.C. Graham. I consider it my good fortune that he has already published something about the sentence in question. It occurs in a discussion of matching and assent. Matching, wu 五 (read 伍)64, is the agreement of the idea of something and the thing itself. In a debate you must check whether or not your opponent's ideas match

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64 Ibid. p. 179, n. 8. Graham says this substitution occurs elsewhere as well.
reality, and if they do, you give your assent, no 言其若
Graham quotes and translate the passage as follows:

Matching and assent enter the consciousness together. When an explanation is offered and you assent to more than that they match (for example, to a circle being nowhere straight), or when no explanation is offered but you assent on the basis of the matching, it has become as though it were so of itself.

五諾偕入於知。有說遇五諾, (若
員無直), 無說用五諾若自然矣。65

The text argues that a person's logical faculties will go beyond accepting only another's explanations and will make its own deductions, or will make deductions without any explanation at all. These jumps made in the mind are not caused by any outside force of argument but are as if they are so of themselves. In so far as zu jan is used to place inner development over against outside cause, there is formal similarity to other cases. But what is important here is that zu jan is a characteristic of something which the Mohists took as that which transcended the vicissitudes of change. Graham remarks on this:

An awareness of changing times, of past knowledge becoming obsolete, of the example of the sages losing its relevance, pervades all the philosophical schools of the third century B.C. Taoists welcome it, Confucians dread it, the Mohists (who alone among the schools have committed themselves wholly to logic) respond to the challenge by seeking

65Ibid. pp. 180-181. Graham has quoted from the Ssu pu ts'ung k'an 四部叢刊 ed., 11B/2,3. I have followed his emendations in my quote and refer the reader to Graham's text for explanations of these emendations.
a kind of knowledge invulnerable to time. 66

That logical processes are so of themselves is the same as saying they are independent; hence tzu jan is here a sign of their religious certitude, their confidence that logical processes will provide a sure guide in life.

The last case I have found in pre-Han literature is in the Kuan tzu. It occurs in the Ching yen "Canonical statements", section 2, which W. A. Rickett suggests is probably the oldest section of the text. This chapter was cited in the Shih chi of Ssu-ma Ch'ien (c. 145-c.86 B.C.), and it is likely to be pre-Han material, although of uncertain date. 67 There we read that if one desires to be king of the world but loses the way of heaven, he cannot attain the world. But if he obtains the way of heaven, his affairs will be as if they ran themselves. 68 And if heaven's way is obtained, no one will know that he rules. This unknown ruler we have met before in the Lao tzu and the Lü shih ch'un ch'iu. But the Kuan tzu further argues that the ruler himself, if he follows heaven, will have to make no effort; his acts will be as though they proceeded of themselves. Tzu jan occupies a place similar to that which we found in the Lao tzu, as a description of the harmonious world

66 Ibid. p. 167.


68 Kuan tzu yáng zì, 1.6b.
when it was right with the Tao. It describes the result and not the cause of the king's actions. Tzu jan is here not a sign then of an arche. Yet it differs from the Lao tzu in that the ruler also receives the benefits of his actions. Ruling is also part of the harmonious, ideal society, as much as the eating, working, and sleeping of the ruled. He is thus in a more legitimate position that he was in the Lao tzu. In the Lao tzu, the ruler corrected and guarded against the tendency of man to alienate himself from the Tao. If there were no alienation, there would be no ruler. It seems similar to the Christian problem of whether or not the state, that is, government, is a result of sin. Many would argue that if man had not sinned, there would be no state. Others would agree with the Kuan tzu that even in a perfect world there would be a place for a ruler.

SUMMARY

I suggest that the material I have discussed so far can be arranged in two categories. The first is all those cases in which tzu jan is used in a non-technical, pre-philosophical sense as two words. It refers in these cases to specific, usually concrete, things or events common in everyday experience. To this group belong the occurrences in Chapters 17 and 64 of the Tao te ching with their references to an ideal social order, all cases in the Chuang tzu except the mysterious reference of Chapter 21 to the self-so decree, both cases in the Hsün tzu, the occurrence in the Kuan tzu, and that in Chapter 14 (the
denial that plants are self-so) of the Lü shih ch'un ch'iu.

In all of these the events or things described are contrasted to normal cultural activity. Where they are included in an ideal culture, that culture is minimal. All these works recognize the deliberate, rational character of culture. As a planned product of man's activity, cultural structures could hardly be thought to be things which were so of themselves. This agreement causes tzu jan to be identified with natural processes. It is never thought of as nature itself, either as the natural world or as the principle of things, but is always a descriptive characteristic which means "natural", in the sense of "so-by-self".

The second category is those cases in which tzu jan contains the religiously pregnant idea of independence. Included in this category are the occurrences in Chapters 25 and 51 of the Tao te ching (Chapter 23 is too ambiguous to classify), Chapter 21 of the Chuang tzu, Chapters 3 and 17 of the Lü shih ch'un ch'iu, and the case in the Later Mohist writings. In this category the pre-philosophical sense of the words is also very important. As I discussed in the introduction, the sense of self-so gives added strength to what one takes as reliable, as truth. As in the first category, in these cases as well, the term tzu jan never became the designation of a thing; it was never thought of as an abstract entity but was only a descriptive epithet. In this latter category it is misleading to think of tzu jan as meaning "natural". There is, of course, an implied analogy in some of these cases. One
may suppose that the operation of the Tao was conceived as an analogy to natural operations, but I believe this remains implicit. In the cases of this second category, the idea of independence clearly dominates over any analogies to a natural process.

In paying a great deal of attention to the grammatical development of \textit{tzu jan} in Chapter I of this thesis, I have not asked whether \textit{tzu jan} is used only in certain types of thinking or in peculiar sets of problems. Its very infrequency makes a very specific philosophic sense difficult to decipher. In the following chapter I will examine writings from the Han dynasty, and I will shift my emphasis from an analysis of grammatical structure to more systematic philosophical concepts. As the frequency of use increases and as it becomes more integrated into a system, we may also expect that \textit{tzu jan} may become both more specific and more complex.
CHAPTER II. THE HAN DYNASTY.

With the advent of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.), the rivalry of the schools of philosophy became sensitive to the favors of the imperial court. It is not that they weren't sensitive to the opinions of rulers in pre-Han times, but under unified rule, the opinion of the ruler carried greater weight. The Han court apparently tolerated diversity among scholars for the first half century, as it consolidated its grip on the country. Somewhat anti-Confucian at first -- the first emperor Kao-tsu had a legendary dislike of pedantic scholars --, the Han dynasty came to embrace Confucianism outwardly while maintaining an essentially Legalist structure of law and bureaucracy. This bureaucracy was in fact modelled on that of the Ch'in dynasty (221-201 B.C.), but since the Han rulers had overthrown the Ch'in, they could not publicly admit that the Ch'in philosophy of government was correct, and thus they eventually adopted a public stance which endorsed Confucian forms and literature. Thus in 141 B.C. Emporer Wu 武 (r. 141-86 B.C.) declared that legal and administrative theorists, followers of Shen Pu-hai, Shang Yang, Han Fei, Su Ch'in, and Cheng I, were to be dismissed from office.\(^1\) In 136 B.C. scholars specializing in each of

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the five classics, which were then regarded as Confucian texts, were given court appointments. In 135 the Empress Dowager Tou died, and with her death the court lost its last ardent supporter of Taoism. In the same year the imperial academy was established to provide scholars for the realm. Thus Confucianism became the umbrella under which court ideology was developed. Naturally enough a wide variety of thought had to be included under this rubric. We would be safe in assuming that Confucius would hardly have recognized much of this Confucianism. At the same time we must remember that having Confucianism as an official court ideology did not prevent Emperor Wu from personally surrounding himself with a great number of spiritualists and necromancers and spending a good deal of his energy on the search for immortality.

This eclecticism was a hallmark of other schools in the Han dynasty as well. The Tao chia 道家, the school of the Tao, is described by Ssu-ma T'an 司馬談 about 100 B.C. as relying on the main outlines of yin and yang, taking the best points of Confucianism and Mohism, selecting the essentials of legalism and logicism, and responding to the times.

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Following the analysis of Liu Hsiang and Liu Hsin, Pan Ku a century and a half later described the tsa chia, the eclectic school, in almost identical terms. What Pan Ku called the tao chia was primarily political theories of the ruler who uses wu wei as a ruling technique. Both the tao chia and the tsa chia took the doctrines of Lao tzu as their basis, but the latter combined it with other works as they saw fit. As for the Chuang tzu, Ssu-ma T'an did not even include it in his categories, although his son, Ssu-ma Ch'ien, included the 'outer chapters' of the Chuang tzu as an expansion of the thought of the Lao tzu. Pan Ku followed Ssu-ma Ch'ien's lead in this respect. 

The only major work of the Former Han period from the tsa chia (or tao-chia of Ssu-ma T'an) is the Huai-nan tzu. This is a work by several authors under the sponsorship of Liu An (d. 122 B.C.), the Prince of Huai-nan. Liu An's grandmother was a consort of the first Han emperor, Kao tsu. When her brother rebelled, she would have been killed, but was spared since she was pregnant. However, she committed suicide shortly after giving birth.

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4 This summary is based on the account of Tanaka Masami, "E nanshi no 'jizen' ni tsuite: Zenkan dōka shisō no ichinen" (On tzu jan in the Huai nan tzu: one aspect of Taoist thought in the Former Han dynasty), Shūkan Tōyōgaku shō (Nov. 1976) p. 69-71.

5 See Wallacker, Huai nan tzu, p. 5. Huai-nan is apparently at or near the modern-day Huai-nan on the Huai River in Anhwei. The territory held by An and his brothers may have extended down to the Yangtze River.
The infant, Liu Ch'ang, was then raised by the Empress and in 196 B.C. given the title of Prince of Huai-nan. In a dispute with Emperor Wen (r. 179-157 B.C.) Liu Ch'ang was deprived of his fief and exiled to Shu (Szechwan), and he died enroute in 174 B.C. Emperor Wen regretted his actions and enfeoffed Liu Ch'ang's four sons first as Marquises and later as Princes. Thus, in 164 B.C. Liu An became the Prince of Huai-nan. Ssu-ma Ch'ien reports that he was good to his subjects and was highly praised among them, but that he did not forget his father's death and watched for a chance to rebel.

Thus there was certainly enough reason in Liu An's personal history for him to harbor plans of rebellion. It may be that his support of a large number of scholars was part of those plans. At any rate, the Huai nan nei p'ien was presented to Emperor Wu in 139 B.C. during Liu An's first visit to the capital after Wu's succession. From this he probably gained a reputation as a supporter of Taoists, and after the events of 136 and 135 described above, it seems that many non-Confucianists fled to Huai nan. The Han shu reports that he attracted several thousand retainers versed in magical techniques, fang shu. Their works were collected in three parts, of which the above mentioned nei p'ien was one. These totalled more than 200,000 words. The nei p'ien is the work that we still have today known as the Huai nan tzu. Liu An's antagonism to the court apparently increased later, until

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6 See Kao Yu 高誘, "Hsü mu" 釋日, Huai nan tzu 淮南子, Hsü mu: la-b. This information is also found
he was finally ordered to be prosecuted in 122 B.C. Before the order could be delivered, he committed suicide.

There were apparently many other writings completed under the sponsorship of Liu An. Yii Ta-ch'eng has located in dynastic histories and bibliographies eighteen different titles which have some connection with Huai nan. Some of these are merely collected materials from that region, and some are different titles for the same work. Still the impression remains that there was a thriving center of scholarship at Huai nan.

As mentioned above, the Huai nan tzu is a collected work. The Latter Han commentator Kao Yu lists eight men by name who together with Liu An and the Confucians of the Great Mountain and Small Mountain discussed in Shih chi, (Peking: Chung-hua Book Co., 1959), ch. 138, "Huai-nan Heng-shan lieh chuan" 淮南衡山列傳 pp. 3075-3094. For this last report see p. 3082.


8 Han shu 漢書, ch. 44, "Huai-nan Heng-shan Chi pei wang chuan" 淮南衡山濟北王傳, as quoted in Kuo Ch'an-p'o 郭湛波, Chung-kuo chung-ku ssu-hsiang shih 中國中古思想史 (Hongkong: Lung-men Book Co., 1976) p. 49.

the Tao and Te, gathered and united benevolence and propriety, jen i 仁義, and then wrote the nei p'ien. How these authors are distributed over the various chapters and what role Liu An himself played is unknown, but we are fairly safe in assuming that several authors were involved in its composition, and that in spite of discussions among them, there may still be a considerable difference of opinion from one chapter to the next. We can expect that most of the work will be somehow in the tradition of the Lao tzu as Kao Yu suggests, but even this may be only nominal. As in my discussion of the Lü shih ch' un ch'iu, I shall attempt not to assume that material from one chapter supplements that of another.

THE HUAi NAn Tzu

In the opening chapter of the Huai nan tzu, "Basic meaning of the Tao" yüan tao hsün 原道訓, there is the most complete conception of tzu jen in the work. Before analyzing tzu jen, I would like to discuss a central concept of this chapter, the distinction between heaven and man, or between heavenly and human. The writer defines the former as "that which

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10 Huai nan tzu, Hsü mu: lb-2a. The Confucians of the Great Mountain and small mountain were literary men who specialized in fu 賦 and tz'u 䵲 poetry forms, respectively. This division was apparently modelled on classes in the Shih ching 詩經 (Poetry Classic), called Ta ya 大雅 and hsiao ya 小雅. See Morohashi Tetsuji in his Dai Kan-Wa jiten 大漢和辭典, under the entry 大山小山 who quotes Wang I 王逸, Ch'u tz'u ch'ang chü 楚辭章句 (Explanations of the Ch'u tz'u) for this information.
is pure and simple, upright and stainless, not yet mixed with things." The human element is but "direct perception and discriminatory knowledge, crooked skills and artificial action, and is that by which, with an eye on the opinion of men, one gets entangled in common affairs." 

The individual human is actually made up of both something heavenly and something human. There is some inner still point which is his heavenly nature, and this inner still point should not respond to things. When discriminatory knowledge is applied to things, likes and dislikes arise. Therefore discriminatory knowledge has no place in the heavenly nature. The perfect man moves with things on the outside, but on the inside does not lose what is genuine. He accepts the way things are without preferring one over the other, but does not lose track of himself. He does not use what is human to alter what is heavenly. This perfect man is also a ruler; the world is drawn to him and evil persons fear him. 

Tzu Jan is used several times in this chapter as a characteristic of the world which the sage governs. Both the natural world and certain forms of cultural development are included in his realm. This arrangement appears similar to the

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11 See Wallacker, p. 5. Huai nan tzu.
12 Huai nan tzu, ch. 1, "Yuan tao hsûn", 1:6b.
13 Ibid. 1:4a.
ruler-ruled relationship we found in the Lao tzu, but there is a significant difference. In the Lao tzu, that the ruled were so of themselves depended on the wisdom of the ruler. It was only possible to be self-so under a sage ruler. But here we are told that the perfect man must rely on the fact that heaven, earth and all the creatures are so of themselves. The ruler must seek the truth in that state of affairs. Tzu jan is here a condition of perfection rather than a result. It is not only that a ruler should not try to manage or control things, but that he cannot. The events, things, and situations which are self-so have more power and greater necessity than any work of man.

As examples of situations which are so of themselves (然之勢), the author cites the fact that two sticks rubbed together will burn, gold put in fire will melt, round things turn, and cylindrical things float, all examples from what we call the world of nature, that is, the realms of animals, plants, and minerals. Such things, he says, surely follow tzu jan, so what could the sage do?  

Tanaka Masami suggests that this sense of relying on and following tzu jan is a new development in the Huai nan tzu, being a combination of different sources. He suggests that the notion of following tzu jan was also found in Chuang tzu, chapter 7, Ying ti wang. There we find the phrase, "Follow

14 Ibid. 1:3b, 5b, 6a.
15 Ibid. 1:6a.
along with things as they are in themselves." (順物於自然). As I noted in chapter one of this thesis, this is one of several injunctions to flow with the universe. It is certainly true that in the *Chuang tzu* the way things are in themselves is a better state than anything contrived by man. Nevertheless, I think that in the *Huai nan tzu* one's attention is brought more sharply to the fact that these things are self-so. I base this conjecture on the following evidence: (1) the fact that in phrases like "the being self-so of heaven and earth" 天地之自然, or "the being self-so of all things" 萬物之自然, *tzu jan* is the primary object, rather than a modifier of the primary object as in the *Chuang tzu* reference; (2) the presence of the adverb *ku* 固, "surely", in the case already quoted above; and (3) the powerlessness of the sage over against situations which were so of themselves. This last reason, in particular, is something that would have been incomprehensible to *Chuang tzu*. I doubt that he could even suppose a conflict between a sage and a proper state of affairs. That the author of this chapter makes such a contrast shows that he wants to impress upon his readers that no man, not even a sage, is able to withstand the power of that which is so of itself.

That man learns the truth about reality through the world of nature is, of course, expressed in other ways in the *Chuang tzu*. That man must flow with the changes of things means that

17See Chapter one, p. 31.
he must acquiesce in the workings of the natural world around him as well as whatever changes go on within himself. The Chuang tzu says the Tao is in all the processes of the world, even down to the lowliest ant or pile of dung. But in the Huai nan tzu there is a new emphasis in what it means to follow nature, namely, to rely on the way nature is of itself.

The fact that tzu jan now refers to things which cannot be otherwise indicates a tendency to exalt the apparently necessary functioning of natural things and processes. Whereas Chuang tzu took the changes of nature as the fundamental, in this chapter of the Huai nan tzu, the fact that things are self-determined and unalterable is primary. I do not here point out a fundamental difference in outlook so much as a shift in emphasis. In fact the notion of change is pushed into the background. It may be that because things are now thought of as reliable, they are also supposed to have more regular functioning.

The concept of Tao is also one that does not receive a lot of treatment in the text. Since the self-so character of things is now to be followed, does man also follow the Tao? At one point the author says that he who follows the heavenly (in himself) is the one who wanders in the Tao. Although there is no explicit linking of the heavenly nature of man with affairs which are self-so, in other chapters man is enjoined to follow the self-so nature, hsing 性, of things (presumably including

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18 Chuang tzu, ch. 22, Chih pei yu 知北遊, 7.26a.
man's own nature), and it may not be wrong to assume that the heavenly nature of man in this chapter is also self-so. The text also uses the phrase "cultivate the arts of the Tao" 備道理之數 in parallel construction to "rely on heaven and earth's being self-so" 因天地之自然. What he does not do is use tzu jan to describe the Tao. As a theoretical model, we might imagine that the Tao expresses or manifests itself in the world through the self-determination of natural things and events. This manifestation is the ontic basis which provides the possibility of true knowledge on the part of man. As a manifestation of the Tao, things are not self-so in an absolute sense. An individual horse, for example, is not thought of as being undetermined by any other reality, since he is a product of the Tao.

Tanaka Masami also draws our attention to another important aspect of tzu jan, namely, its connection with wu wei. Through the very device of "relying on", yin 無, the two concepts are made interdependent, so that wu wei is almost an equivalent of yin tzu jan. Whereas formerly the relationship was one of complementary cause and result in an idealized social order, here it has become a tighter logical relationship. Wu chih 無治, "non-ruling", which is the ruler's expression of wu wei, is defined by the writer as "not altering the way things are of themselves" 不易自然也. The complement of that

19 Huai nan tzu, 1:5b, 6b. For the phrase "follow the self-so nature" 因自然之性, see 8:5a and 9:5b.
phrase, *wu pu chih* 無不治, "there is nothing not ruled", is explained as "relying on the interdependence of things" 相然也. The linking concept of reliance is here connected not with *wu wei* and *tzu jan*, but with their respective complements. But this reference still demonstrates the reliance of man in his governing on a natural order.

The term *hsiang jan* 相然, "mutually so", is not an opposite of *tzu jan* but a complement. It implies that although a thing is so of itself, it still has external relationships. A horse may be self-so, but as such he is still related to a cow, for example. The horse and cow do not define each other; they are each self-so. But when each thing is self-so, then the world is well-ordered. This assumption of underlying harmony reveals the limited character of the concept of self-so. The development of individual things is subject to the requirement of harmony. We might be fairly safe in assuming that the substance or source of this harmony would be expressed by a concept of *Tao*, perhaps elaborated by a theory of *yin-yang* and the five phases which is found elsewhere in the *Huai nan tzu*, although the nature of the substance of the harmony does not really affect the fact that *tzu jan* is limited.

We can find a certain analogy to this kind of reasoning in the thought of Thomas Hobbes (1558-1679). Hobbes conceived of man in his natural state as a mass of individuals, each

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20 Ibid. 1:8a

21 See especially *Huai nan tzu*, chapter 5, *Shih tse* 時則.
pursuing his own self-interest. Such a state was one of continual war of each against each, and life was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."22 The result of this state is that it is further in man's self-interest to relinquish a part of his natural liberty over to the state and the rule of law. Hence it is in his self-interest to voluntarily limit some of his self-interests. In Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), the founder of English Utilitarianism, the ethical principle of acting for "the greatest happiness for the greatest number" also included the recognition that a true self-interest would place benevolence above self-seeking and that legislation and control would be needed to harmonize self-interest and public interest.23 While Bentham wished that personal pleasure and pain be the basis for human action, he recognized that pleasure could not result from the free pursuit of individual desires, that individual actions must viewed as relative to the actions of the group.

Of course, in the Huai nan tzu, and in all other cases I have discussed so far, the consideration of personal freedom found in Bentham and Hobbes is not present. Nevertheless, these examples illustrate that if a thing is self-so, and if there is to be harmony between it and other self-so things, their being self-so must be limited. A thing cannot be self-so

in a manner which would prevent other things from being self-so.

In other chapters of the *Huai nan tzu*, an interesting theme is developed, namely the use of things which are self-so for cultural development. The culture of primitive democracy which was pictured in the *Lao tzu* was a spontaneous, grassroots culture of a primarily agrarian character. It did not require any positive culturally formative activity on the part of the leaders in order to develop except insofar as the inventors of things were to be called leaders. The sage's function was to remove historically developed hindrances to the free operation of society. But in the *Huai nan tzu*, there is a concept in which the sage may engage in the direct use of things if he does so in accordance with their natural (tzu jan) state. Consider the following passage:

...when the sage engages in activity, how could he, resisting the technique of the Tao and its principles and opposing the self-so nature of things, take the crooked as straight and the contracted as extended? He never fails to use them according to their disposition.

In Chapter 19 an opponent suggests that *wu wei* means sitting quietly doing nothing. The writer replies that all the great

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24 *Huai nan tzu*, 9.8b.
sages of history would then not be sages. Did not Shen Nung teach the people cultivation of the land and did not Yi control the floods? These sages were certainly active. He then gives his own definition of *wu wei*:

What I call *wu wei* is not having private concerns enter public life and not allowing desires to harm proper techniques. Rely on principles to conduct affairs. Establish things according to their disposition. Bend things by weighing their natural circumstances... If one tries to dry a well with fire or use the Huai River to irrigate a mountain, this is using oneself and turning one's back on the self-so. Therefore I call these actions contrivance.

The writer of the first passage qualifies nature, *hsing*, as that which is self-so. One may use things if he accords with their nature. The other important term in both of these passages is *tzu*, which I have translated "disposition", but also means "natural endowment". The uses of things which accord with their disposition are uses which complement their natural condition, the way they are of themselves. Presumably the result or product of this use is something which would never have come from the natural development of the thing. Using water for irrigation and domesticating plant life are acceptable

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25 Ibid. 19.3b.
cultural activities.

This way of man relating to nature may be compared with the Confucian tradition. Although the vocabulary is different, the broad concept is similar to that of Hsün tzu. For Hsün tzu man's cultural activity was artificial, but complementary to the natural world. Man's activity is in accordance with his heavenly functions, that is, his given, natural functions. He forms a triad with heaven and earth, and completes the triad when he harmonizes with the other two members. Of course, Hsün tzu's view of what that complementary culture would be differs considerably from the Huai nan tzu's view. Hsün tzu considers a greater sophistication of culture to be still complementary to nature.

The relationship with nature might also be compared with the Aristotelian concept of potentiality. In Aristotle matter is considered to have a potential; it is pre-disposed to change. It has an inherent capacity to be acted on and to become a new thing. Aristotle also argues that the actuality which the potentiality becomes is both temporally and logically prior. Grass, for example, has the potential of becoming the flesh of a cow, but only when cows actually exist which give birth to little calves. And if there were no cows, the potential of grass to become a cow would vanish. This concept of potentiality gave rise to a hierarchy of being, since less complex things, which

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26 Hsün tzu, "T'ien lun" *, 11:9b-10b. See Watson, Hsün tzu, pp. 80-81.
were actuality considered in themselves, were potentiality for more complex beings, which in turn were potential for others.\textsuperscript{27}

The notion of disposition in the \textit{Huai nan tzu} is only a problem concerned with man's technical use of natural objects. The relationship between two natural objects (the cow and the grass) is not discussed in this connection. Thus the Aristotelian distinction of matter and its potentiality for form is a more general concept. Secondly, potentiality is really a way of explaining the nature of change, and the \textit{Huai nan tzu} is addressing itself to use. In reality, this need not be as far apart as the words make it seem. A stone which is hewn and used to build a house is still a stone. This would be a use according to its disposition. Yet it would also actualize a potential of the stone, to become part of a wall. What is fundamental to both concepts is that they are ways of dealing with the limits which the structure of various natural things places on the technical use which man can make of them.

I opened this discussion with the remark that the \textit{Huai-nan tzu} contained a theme about the relationship of self-so things and cultural development. We can now see that technical development of a certain kind is probably meant. Joseph Needham has pointed out that in the \textit{Huai nan tzu} and other Taoist writings "knack-passages" are a recurring theme. These passages are an

approval of craftsmen and artisans, an approval of intuitive skill in manipulation of their material, which was not backed by a fund of scientific knowledge. The practical products of everyday life are approved, but the higher technology backed by scientific knowledge and used to ensure the continuance of an oppressive state is rejected. However, the ruler in the passages we are discussing encourages technical development, rather than merely acting to remove hindrances to the free operation of intuitive craft. This may be a sign that there is a recognition that even in technique which accords with the nature of things, there is room for the support of general scientific theory. But further exploration of this topic would demand a closer examination of the Huai nan tzu than I have been able to make.

In chapter 20 of the Huai nan tzu, tzu jan has a new function which we have not elsewhere encountered. This writer conceives heaven to be the basis of the universe, but its operations are imperceptible. No one sees how it brings things to life and death. Yet there is some kind of sympathy in the world. When heaven is about to send wind, although the trees have not yet begun to move, the birds begin to flutter. Hot and cold vapors move each other, and an echo reproduces the sound. Similarly the sage embraces heaven's mind and sounds, and he is thus able to transform the world.

29 Huai nan tzu, 20:1a-b.
At this point, the writer is expressing a sentiment rather common in the Han dynasty. The notion that there was some kind of sympathetic resonance in the creation was widespread. Tung Chung-shu 鄧仲舒 (179 ? - 104 ? B.C.) is the best representative of such a position. His writings and ideas would certainly have been in circulation about the time that the Huai nan tzu was written.

The author further discusses spirits and notes that by divination and prayers one can decide one's affairs, obtain good fortune, or request rain. Then he quotes the Shih ching 詩經:

The spirits' arrival
Cannot be calculated.
Who can ignore them?

神之格思
不可度思
矧可射思 30

Immediately thereafter, he comments as follows:

Heaven brings its height (up): earth brings its breadth (out). The moon shines on its night; the sun shines on its day. The yin and yang transform; the stars shine. It is not (through) their way, but things are so of themselves. Therefore yin and yang and the four seasons do not exist in order to produce all the creatures. The seasonal fall of rain and dew does not exist in order to nurture plants and trees. The spirits join, the yin and yang harmonize, and the myriad creatures are born. Therefore high mountains and deep forests do not exist for the sake of tigers and leopards. Large trees and flourishing branches do not exist for flying birds.

30Shih ching 詩經, Ta ya, t'ang, 大雅, 蕭, 仰, verse 7. This appears in the Harvard-Yenching Sinological index series, Mao shih yin-te 毛詩引得 as number 256/7, p. 68.
This passage has a few variant readings. The phrase *fei ch'i tao* is given in the Cheng t'ung tao ts'ang, 863-867 ts'e册, 20:3a (Taiwan: I-wen Printing Co. 1962) as *fei yu tao*. This reading also appears in the Ssu pu ts'ung k'an 四部叢刊 ed. (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936) vol. 96. p. 151, top. A second variant is given in Huai nan hung lieh chieh 淮南鴻烈解, 1590, Wang I-luan 王一麟 ed., which reads *cheng yu tao*. The first variant, *fei yu tao*, "they are not the possessing of the way," does not differ substantially from *fei ch'i tao*, since it affirms that the way of those heavenly bodies and natural phenomena is not basis for the natures of the creatures, which are self-so. The variant *cheng yu tao*, "set right (their) possessing of the way," implies that natural things each follow their own course, "and things are self-so." That conclusion has a slightly less adversative nuance than in the case of *fei ch'i tao*. However it still indicates that it is not in the nature of one thing to produce a thing of a different nature. The Ssu pu ts'ung k'an edition has another variation, reading *lieh hsing ch'i* 列星期 for the
This discussion arises in order that author may comment on the passage from the *Shih ching*. While not actually denying "The spirits' arrival", he insists that they have no causal power in the order that exists among the creatures. The author's only reference to the spirits, "The spirits join", places them in a context with other independent but harmoniously co-operating elements in the universe. He is arguing against any causal operation of these elements which would interfere in the natural, self-so functioning of the creatures of the world.

Secondly, the passage is in part directed against a certain

lieh hsing lang 列星朗 which appears in the *Ssu pu pei yao* and other editions. Lieh hsing ch'i means "The stars have their periods," and this is merely another way of indicating a natural function. Finally Cheng Lang-shu 鄭良術 suggests that yin yang hua 陰陽化 should read yin yang ho 陰陽和 to conform with the occurrence of yin yang ho in several places in the context. See *Huai nan tzu chiao li* 淮南子料理 (Taipei: National Taiwan University, Dept. of Chinese Literature, 1969) p. 304. This is a minor variation which does not change the point of the passage.
understanding of theories of the origin of the cosmos common to that time. In such theories some kind of grand origin or unity produces heaven and earth, or yin and yang, and these in turn produce the four seasons and give rise to the myriad creatures between heaven and earth. The passage does not deny the fact of this order of production, but does deny that the creative or productive function is an essential part of their being. Thus the author says that yin and yang do not exist in order to produce the myriad creatures. It might be that there is some production relationship between them, but it is certainly not essential to the nature of yin and yang. Yin, yang, and each of the creatures have their independent, self-so mode of existence. It is suggested at the opening of this chapter that Heaven establishes, she 三 , the sun, moon, and stars, and regulates or harmonizes, t'iao 諧 , the yin and the yang. Thus Heaven as cosmic origin

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33 Huai nan tzu, 20:1a.
does seem to have some kind of creative or regulative function in its very nature.

The author, indeed, goes on to state clearly that some things do produce other things. The large produces, sheng, the small, the many produce the few, and this is the way of Heaven. Lice are produced in the sweat of horses and cows. By implication, horses and cows would also be produced in some way by something larger in their environment. However, the manner of their being, their nature is entirely their own. The intrinsic nature of cows is that they produce cows. It is only accidental that lice are produced by their sweat. That is the central idea of tzu jan in this passage. Each thing is self-so; their intrinsic nature is not dependent on another thing, although the fact of their existence may be so dependent.

I would like to discuss here a problem which has been implicit in all the sources we have looked at so far, but which seems to come more to the forefront in the Huai nan tzu because of its close association of tzu jan with the natural world. That problem is the relationship of man and nature. In general man is seen as relying on the world of nature in the Huai nan tzu.

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34Huai nan tzu, 20:2b.
Even in Chapter 20 which I have just discussed, although the sage embraces Heaven (something prior to natural objects), his governing of the world "does not exist in order to alter the nature of the people". 

His contact with Heaven does not give him license to do as he pleases on earth. This is to some degree in harmony with the injunctions in other chapters to rely on the nature of things, which we assume means man's nature as well. Certainly in Chapter 1 where the author conceived of the "heavenly" as a part of man, there is some kind of common ground between man and the rest of the creatures, who also have heavenly natures. More importantly, that common ground is always in some way more reliable for the conduct of life.

This suggests that the authors of the *Huai nan tzu* did not conceive of man as standing absolutely over against nature. Through his false discriminatory knowledge and his contrived actions he was in fact alienated from nature, but the sage could show the way back by using things according to their dispositions, their natural endowments. Ideally then, man follows the lead of the nature of things.

We may contrast this, for example, to a Christian understanding of nature. Since man and natural objects are all in one creation, they clearly have that creatureliness in common. But the source of the order in that creatureliness is outside of the world. Man respects the order of the world because it

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35 *Huai nan tzu*, 20:3a.
is a creature of God. This point is somewhat similar to the position of Chapter 20 of the *Huai nan tzu* in that there too man respects the Heavenly order. But in Christianity, man is also called to dominion (see *The Bible*, Gen. 1:28). Dominion, however, is understood as an administration on God's behalf, as service or stewardship (See II Cor. 9:6-13). This has been distorted in the history of Christianity to a notion that man may use nature for his own ends. This concept is now seen by many as the source of Western man's concept of man-against-nature, the historical root of our ecological crisis, as Lynn White so eloquently puts it.  

Finally, comparing the use of *tzu jan* in the *Huai nan tzu* with the two main ways of using it in pre-Han literature, it seems that it falls largely into the first category, namely, a non-technical word used as an attribute of natural things and processes. But in fact it also borrows a sense from the second category, *tzu jan* used as "independent", signalling a religious absolute. It is not the case that natural processes are a religious absolute in the *Huai nan tzu*, at least in the places we have analyzed, but nature has become something reliable for man. Its reliability is not derived from being absolutely self-so, for natural things still receive their natures from Heaven or Tao. Things are self-so only within the boundaries

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36 See the now famous article by Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155, no. 3767 (10 Mar 1967) 1203-1207.
set for them by Heaven or Tao. They receive importance by the fact that their natures create the possibility of true knowledge for man.

TUNG CHUNG-SHU (CA. 179 - CA. 104 B.C.)

Tung Chung-shu was a contemporary of the writers of the Huai nan tzu. The basic concepts of his thought are well known in both Chinese and Western literature. He is known as one who integrates the concept of heaven with natural functioning to such a degree that the extra-ordinary functions of the natural environment may be taken as signs of heaven's pleasure or displeasure. According to Tung, the natural portents can occur because the universe is a system ordered in the patterns of yin-yang and the five phases. Because heaven and earth are the origin of all things, all things must conform to the pattern of heaven and earth to find their rightful place. In forming culture, man must consciously emulate the patterns of heaven. The natural functions of yin and yang and the five phases permeate man's cultural life, but, in the tradition of Hsün tzu, Tung attributes that permeation to the conscious activity of man. Man directs or alters his activities according to how they harmonize or conflict with the heavenly pattern.

Discussions of Tung Chung-shu in Western literature may be found in Joseph Needham, Science and Civilization in China, II, pp 279 ff., in Kung-chuan Hsiao, Chinese Political Thought, pp. 484-503, and others. Translated excerpts from the Ch'un ch'iu fan lu may be found in Wing-tsit Chan, A
Although one might call Tung's thinking naturalistic, it differs significantly from the naturalism of the Taoists prior to him. Tung does not conceive nature to be an unstructured, ever-changing flow of forms. Therefore, the concept of *tzu jan* has no significant place in his thought. At one point he clearly focuses on the philosophical implications of *tzu jan*, arguing decidedly that things cannot be self-so, because things find their manner of being (their *jan*) in a cosmic resonance with other things. In his discussion in Chapter 57 of his surviving writings, the *Ch'un ch'iu fan lu* (Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals)\(^3\) Tung discusses the interaction of things of the same genus. Such interaction takes place, he argues, in the same manner as musical resonance. When one lute string is struck, and nearby strings vibrate on the same pitch,

...this is a case of things being activated according to their class. They are moved by a sound, which has no visible form. Men do not see a form by which it moves, so they say it sounds of itself. Furthermore, when there is any mutual action without form, they say it is so of itself (*tzu jan*). In fact, it is not self-so, but there is something which causes it to be so.

"此物之以類動者出，其動以聲而無形。人不見其動之形，則謂之自鳴也。又相動無形，則謂之自然。其實非自然也，有使之然者。"\(^4\)

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Tung also uses **tzu jän** as an expression to indicate a natural state of things without the activity of man. For example, in his discussion of human nature, he says that human nature is the "natural material" (自然之資) received at birth. But that natural material is an unfinished one which must be completed by the activities of man. The stuff of human nature is nothing more than raw potentiality. It can become either good or evil, for it contains in its endowment of life-breath (ch'i 氣) the breaths or forces of both yin and yang. It is likely that Tung conceived the yin and yang forces to operate according to self-so principles, but each operates within boundaries, and heaven restricts the one with the other. Similarly man may restrict the potential for evil within himself and develop the potential for good. Thus Tung uses the concept of **tzu jän** to describe the workings of the heavenly pattern, but such "natural" operation is restricted by a morally responsible heaven.

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38 The **Ch'un ch'iu fan lu** is not really a work of the **Ch'un ch'iu** type. The present work has 82 chapters in 17 chüan. It is probably a remnant of the original 123 chapters in his collected works mentioned in the **Han shu**. The **Sui shu** records only a 17 chüan **Ch'un ch'iu fan lu**. Since only fourteen or fifteen chapters are of the **Ch'un ch'iu** type, it is likely that its title was a title of part of the works of Tung Chung-shu, now taken as a title of the whole work. There are no serious challenges to the authenticity of the text.

39 Tung Chung-shu 董仲舒 **Ch'un ch'iu fan lu 春秋繁露**, Chap. 57, 13:4a. This passage is also translated in E. R. Hughes, **Chinese Philosophy**, p. 282, and in W. T. Chan, **Sourcebook**, p. 285.
Elsewhere Tung repeats the theme of the dominance of human activity. If the triad of heaven, earth, and man were not present, he argues, social chaos would result. Fathers could not command sons, nor rulers servants. None would respect the ruler; they would respect only themselves. This, he concludes, is a "natural punishment" (自然之罰). On the other hand, if the triad of heaven, earth, and man is maintained, then there will be social harmony, and this harmony will be a "natural reward" (自然之賞). In this passage the term tzu jan expresses the fact that within the lawful pattern of the universe, actions have consequences, which arrive predictably and of their own accord. For Tung this use of tzu jan is a positive one, although of only minor significance. It is clearly not used as any standard for action, human or non-human. It by no means conveys any sympathy for free, natural, unhindered action, or for conduct whose principle of organization is within oneself.

THE TRANSITION TO WANG CH'UNG

The next important text in the history of the development of tzu jan is Discussions weighed in the balance, the Lun heng 論衡 of Wang Ch'ung 王充 (A.D. 27-97?). This text is

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41 Ibid. Ch. 19, 6:6a.
42 Ibid. 6:6b
probably written about two centuries later than the Huai nan tzu. Without a doubt Wang Ch'ung was familiar with the Huai nan tzu, and many of his illustrations are drawn from it. Wang Ch'ung recognized this and freely announced himself indebted to the school of the Tao. Wang may be regarded as a somewhat renegade Confucian belonging to a minority party, the Old Text school of classical scholarship. Opposing the Old Text School was the New Text School. Each had their own versions or editions of the classics, and the names of the schools are derived from the Old Text School's claim that their versions in archaic script were more ancient than those of the New Text School, even though the "old texts" were discovered later. The differences extended beyond textual criticism. The Old Text was more rationalistic and pragmatic, whereas the New Text School tended more towards cosmological speculation. In Wang's time the Old Text School was a beleagured minority, but it gained ascendency over the New Text School by the end of the Han dynasty. Wang's sympathy for Taoist ideas may have set him a bit apart in the school, he was in the tradition of Liu Hsiang and Liu Hsin as well as his Confucianist mentors, Yang Hsiung and Huan T'an.

43 Huang Hui 黃暐, Lun heng chiao shih 論衡校釋 (Explanations of the Lun heng), (Taipei: Commercial press, 1965 (first published 1932) Chapter 85, p. 1190. I cite this edition of the Lun heng because of its superior notes and emendations. In the following text I will cite this edition parenthetically as follows: (LH 85, p. 1190). Where I in fact follow a suggested emendation of Huang Hui, I will bracket that emendation, and footnote it when necessary. See also LH 18, pp. 775, 780 for Wang Ch'ung's remarks on Taoism.
Yang Hsiung (53 B.C.-A.D. 18) is the older contemporary of Huan T'an and the more famous of the two. He produced three rather distinct kinds of literature which represent three phases in his development. In his early period he was famous as a composer of the rhapsody, fu. Around 20 B.C. (age 33) he was brought to the capital and given a patronage post for poets. Several times in his career he was asked to compose fu describing imperial activities. He attempted to exercise influence through indirect criticism in these fu, but finally abandoned this practice as useless. About the age of 41, he embarked on a new phase, creating a quasi-philosophical system describing the universe, based vaguely on an analogy to the system of trigrams and hexagrams with commentaries found in the *Classic of Change*, the *I ching*. The result, the *Classic of Great Mystery*, *T'ai hsilan ching*, was produced somewhat later, perhaps around 2 B.C. when Yang was 51 or 52 years old. His last phase is represented by the *Model Sayings*, *Fa yen*, a work patterned after the *Analects* of Confucius and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. In this work he affirmed what were then Confucian values, such as the moral value of education and the authority of the Classics, but also spoke out against immortality cults and the practitioners.

Wang's references to these men are frequent. See LH 39, pp. 606, 608-609 in particular. See also Timotheus Pokora, *Hsin lun* (New treatise) and other writings by Huan T'an (43 B.C. -28 A.D.), (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Chinese studies, 1975) p. xiii.
of magical arts, who had attained favor at the end of the Former
Han dynasty and during the Wang Mang interregnum. 45

To my knowledge, Yang Hsiung uses the term tzu jan at only
one point. In a paragraph in the T'ai hsüan ching on the art
of writing, he says that a good writer must always pay attention
to the substance of his subject and not concentrate on style
and language. Style and language are only the servants of the
substance. He says, "What is esteemed in a writer is his
conformity to and embodiment of the way things are in them­selves." (作貴循而體自然也。) 46

Just as we do not improve our bodies by either adding to them or
cutting from them, so the writer must be careful of the sub­
stance and neither embellish it nor abridge it. "Therefore
the substance lies in the way things are of themselves; adorn­
ment lies in human affairs. How could (the latter) add or

45. This division is made following Hsü Fu-kuan 徐復観.
"Yang Hsiung lun chiu" 楊雄論究 (An essay on Yang Hsiung),
Chung-kuo che-hsüeh ssu-hsiang lun chi 中國哲學思想論集, 
Mou Tsung-san 沐宗三, ed. (Taipei: Mu-t'ung Publishing
Co., 1976) p. 93. See also David R. Knechtges, The Han rhapsody:
a study of the fu of Yang Hsiung (53 B.C.- A.D. 18), (Cambridge:

46. Yang Hsiung 楊雄, T'ai hsüan ching 太玄經 (The
Classic of great mystery), 7.10a. A translation of the first
part of the paragraph which this sentence begins is found in
Fung Yu-lan, History, II, p. 139, and a translation of the
second part is found in David Knechtges, The Han Rhapsody,
p. 93.
subtract from it?" (故質幹在乎自然。華藻在乎人事也。其可捐益與。)\(^{47}\)

The context does not give us much help in evaluating this occurrence of *tzu jan*. I have translated it as "the way things are of themselves", but in fact there is no word for "things" and only the term "self-so" is in the text. Because *tzu jan* stands alone, we might be tempted to think of it as an abstract quality. This however would be a departure from the cases we have seen so far. If this case were such a departure, we would expect Yang Hsiung to make some point in using it. Instead it occurs only in this paragraph without any explanation. Therefore it is likely to be conceived in the framework of the *Huai nan tzu* as a given order of nature, which is contrasted with the artifice of human actions. As in the *Huai nan tzu* this natural, self-so state is superior to and more fundamental than human affairs.

Huan T'an 桓譚 (43 B.C.-AD. 28), like Yang Hsiung, makes no special use of the concept of *tzu jan*. He too is cited very respectfully by Wang Ch'ung and is an important figure in the development of skeptical, critical tradition in the Han dynasty. He was one of the first scholars to challenge the belief commonly accepted from the end of the Former Han dynasty that calamities and unusual natural occurrences were a sign of good or bad human leadership. He publicly opposed the use of prognostication texts with his work *Hsin lun* 新論 (New treatise) which he

\(^{47}\) *T'ai hsüan ching*, 7.10a. I read *kan* 幹 for *kuan* 幹 in accordance with the *Ssu pu ts'ung k'an* 四部叢刊 edition of the *T'ai hsüan ching*, 7.17a.
presented to the emperor, Kuang Wu (r. A.D. 25-57), as a handbook of political science. When he dared to repeat this opposition to the Emperor's face, he was sentenced to execution. The execution was commuted to exile, but the aged scholar died enroute.  

As was Yang Hsiung, Huan T'an was a severe opponent of those who sought immortality. He insisted that one must accept death. Life is like a candle flame. It uses up a certain amount of given material. By careful tending, one might make sure that nothing is wasted and thus extend one's life to a ripe old age, but once the wick is burnt and the oil used up, death will inevitably come. As I will show below, this idea of a given quantity of material which supports life is picked up by Wang Ch'ung and made an important part of his thought.

Huan also followed Yang in his appreciation for the Taoist tradition, although I suspect he was less enthusiastic in this than either Yang Hsiung or Wang Ch'ung. In praising

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48 Timotheus Pokora, *Hsin lun*, p. xii. Huang Hui, *Lun heng chiao shih*, also cites Cheng Hsing and Yin Min as other scholars who denied the relationship between heavenly portents and royal deeds and attacked the prognostication texts. But they did not systematically attack the principle of sympathetic interaction between heaven and man as Wang Ch'ung did. As was Huan T'an, these two men were active during the Wang Mang period and in the early phases of the Latter Han dynasty. See L.H. *tzu hsü*, p. 1. For examples of Huan T'an's attitude see Pokora, *Hsin Lun* paragraphs 51, 33, 210.

49 Pokora, *Hsin Lun* Paragraph 84A, See also 146A, 147.
Yang's *Classic of great mystery*, he identified the mystery with the "way" of Lao tzu and the "origin" of Confucius. He shared with Yang a love of astronomy. One incident suggests that he surpassed Yang in this field. This interest also exemplifies a critical spirit towards heaven and its phenomena, which was continued and extended by Wang Ch'ung.

**WANG CH'UNG**

I would now like to turn to one of the most important figures in the development of the concept *tzu jan* in the Han dynasty, namely, Wang Ch'ung. Wang Ch'ung was born in Chekiang. His father held a minor post received as payment for military service. Wang writes that his father had fallen and had to deal in the buying and selling of goods. Although he is often criticized in Chinese literature for this "unfilial" attitude, there is reason to suspect this was a truthful account. Wang's family may have been descendants from a line of princes of the state of Ch'i and possibly had at one point an affiliation by marriage with the Han royal house. Thus the minor posts that he and his father held were probably a sign of decline. His father died while he was still young, but Wang Ch'ung was a precocious child, showing a great aptitude

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50 Ibid. Paragraphs 163A to 164G.
51 Ibid. Paragraphs 114-115, 134.
for study. He may have even spent some time at the Imperial Academy. The *Hou Han shu* records that his teacher was Pan Piao, the father of the historian Pan Ku, but in fact this is unlikely. Wang never mentions Pan Piao as his teacher, nor was Pan Piao resident at the Academy during the time Wang was supposed to have stayed there.\(^{53}\) When he completed his studies he returned home to work as a teacher, and eventually was given a series of minor posts. It is likely that his critical spirit and satirical bent kept him from enjoying a pleasant rapport with his superiors. Perhaps this hindered his official career, which at any rate was unimpressive. Near the end of his life he held a post as a sub-prefect in Anhwei for about two years (A.D.86-88), but then retired for reasons of health. The *Hou Han shu* also records a recommendation of Wang (to the throne) by a certain Hsieh I-wu, and the subsequent summons by Emperor Chang (r. A.D. 76-88), which Wang had to refuse for reasons of health. This story is also likely to be apocryphal.\(^{54}\)

We have a substantial work of Wang Ch'ung as a source of information, namely, the *Lun heng*. The text which survives is one of 85 chapters in 30 chüan, although of one chapter only the title remains. Wang Ch'ung writes that his own works totalled more than one hundred chapters, but from the time of

\(^{53}\) Hsu Fu-kuan 徐復觀, *Liang Han ssu-hsiang shih* 兩漢思想史 (Intellectual history of the two Han dynasties), (Taipei: Student Book Store, 1976) P. 567.
Ko Hung (A.D. 283-363) only an 85 chapter version remained in circulation.\(^{55}\) Besides the *Lun heng*, Wang Ch'ung mentions the titles of five other works which he wrote. Traditionally, all of these have been assumed lost. But Timotheus Pokora, who over the past two decades has done a great deal of work on the *Lun heng*, argues that the text which we now have in fact contains all six works within it. The fifteen or more lost chapters cannot account for five works missing. Given the relatively good preservation of the *Lun heng*, is it not strange that all the other works vanish without a trace, even in quotations? Pokora suggests that the original "*Lun heng*" is only a part of the present text. It is likely to have been the largest of the six works and was used therefore as the title for the collection.\(^{56}\) The importance of this theory is, as Pokora points out, that we can now be reasonably sure that the present text is representative of all of Wang Ch'ung's thought. Although at some time in the future it may

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\(^{54}\) Ibid. p. 569. For further information see Forke's introduction to his translation of the *Lun heng* (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Co. 1962) and Chapter 85 in the *Lun heng* itself.


\(^{56}\) Pokora, loc. cit. See also Chu Ch'ien-chih 朱謙之, "Wang Ch'ung chu-tso k'ao" 王充著作考 (An investigation of the works of Wang Ch'ung), *Wen shih* 文史 1(1962) 241-254. Pokora and Chu both make guesses about the assignment of chapters to the various works.
be possible to divide Wang Ch'ung's thought by assigning the chapters to different works, this theory is still relatively young and undeveloped, and I shall treat the work as though it represents the mature thought of Wang Ch'ung.

THE CONCEPT OF CH'I

The pivot around which Wang Ch'ung's systematic thought revolves is the concept of ch'i 氣, variously translated as life force, vital fluid, air, breath, or ether, but which I shall usually leave untranslated. According to Wang, ch'i is the fundamental stuff of which the universe is made and on which everything in it depends. When the genesis of the cosmos is discussed, Wang Ch'ung refers to yuan ch'i 元氣, "primal ether", to point out the fundamental character of ch'i and to indicate that it stands at the origin of the cosmos. The term yuan itself was apparently becoming common in Han times. Pokora has pointed out that it first appears in the Ch'un ch'iu 春秋 the Spring and Autumn Annals, which was traditionally supposed to be authored by Confucius. This was noticed by Huan T'an, who compared it to Yang Hsiung's "mystery". Tung Chung-shu 董仲舒 (179? - 104? B.C.) associated yuan with the unity at the beginning of all things, saying that it referred to the greatness of that unity. Finally Wang Ch'ung himself

57 Pokora, Hsin lun, pp. 177-178, n. 9.
58 Ibid. paragraph 163A.
59 Han shu 漢書, "Tung Chung-shu chuan" 董仲舒傳, quoted by Huang Hui, Lun heng chiao shih, p. 1174.
quotes an unknown *I ching* scholar or scholars to the effect that before division, the *yüan ch'i* was an indistinct, muddled unity (LH 31, p. 476). It is clear that for Wang, *yüan ch'i* is nothing other than the *hun tun* , the undifferentiated, primordial unity.

The world comes into being through the splitting of this primordial unity. It differentiates itself into the clear and the muddy, the first becoming heaven, the second, earth. Joseph Needham labels this "centrifugal cosmogony", with the heavier stuff staying at the center, earth, and the lighter, more rarified stuff moving out to heaven. He also notes that, unless chapter one of the *Lieh tzu* is genuinely pre-Han, the earliest development of this theory is in the *Huai nan tzu*, chapter 3.

This theory of cosmic origin by differentiation or divergence is similar to a theory in the *Lao tzu*, Chap 42, where we read: "Tao produced one, one produced two, two produced three, and three produced all creatures." The common understanding of this in the Han dynasty was that the Tao itself is the one, yin and yang are the two, yin and yang plus their union are the three, and that union produced the creatures of the world. Yang is identified primarily with heaven and yin with earth, and one can say then that heaven and earth produced

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60 Huang Hui offers a tentative identification of this quote, but it is not exact. See p. 476.

the creatures. Strictly speaking this is not a theory of divergence, but of production. In divergence the original unity disappears because it splits, whereas in production the original unity remains. Nevertheless, the two theories are similar enough that they could be easily confused. A case in point is Huai nan tzu chapter 3 in which both theories appear.

In common with this theory of interpretation of the Lao tzu, Wang Ch'ung says that the ch'i of heaven and earth combine to form all of the creatures. In chapter 31, which I quoted above, he does not refer to the ch'i of heaven and earth as yin and yang ch'i, although in other parts of his work, he does seem to rely on the yin-yang theory. Nevertheless, of all of his references to ch'i, the ones that are specifically associated with yin and yang are a small minority.

Most Western scholars who touch on this issue seem to assume that Wang understood ch'i as being made up of yin and yang wherever he mentions it. Alfred Forke, for example, while arguing that Wang was a monist, assumes that yin and yang are the divergent products of the yulan ch'i. 63 Derk Bodde in his translation of passages of Wang Ch'ung supplies the adjectives yin and yang for ch'i, even where they are not in the original. 64


63 Alfred Forke, Lun heng, I, p. 13.

64 Fung Yu-lan, History, II, p. 152.
Joseph Needham states bluntly that Wang "fully accepted the fundamental Yin-Yang dualism...." 65

On the other hand, Hsü Fu-kuan argues that Wang, while adopting the ch'i monism common in the Han dynasty, differed from his contemporaries in several respects. One of these was that Wang was careful to avoid the popular view that yang ch'i was good and yin ch'i was evil, but insisted that an excess of yang would itself be detrimental. According to Hsü, Wang substitutes the concept of yuan ch'i for the concept of yin and yang ch'i. This is not to say that he rejected the theory, but that he avoided it. 66 Wang rejects outright the theories of the five phases, wu hsing 五行, and holds himself apart from the yin-yang thinking that was usually associated with five phases theory.

If we understand the use of yin and yang by Forke, Bodde, and Needham in the critical sense that Wang Ch'ung used it, these two positions need not be opposed to one another. Only in Needham is Wang's adherence to yin-yang theories overstated.

As an illustration of Wang's approach, I would like to consider a section of Chapter 13, "Original nature", in which Wang debates with Tung Chung-shu. Tung distinguished two sides to the nature, one of which he called human nature and the other passions. The nature was produced by yang ch'i and was good;

65 Joseph Needham, Science and Civilization, II, p. 368
66 Hsu Fu-kuan, Liang Han ssu-hsiang shih, p. 610.
the passions were produced by yin ch'i and were evil. He said that those who saw nature as evil were seeing only yin forces, whereas those who saw nature as good saw only yang forces. Wang replied that this explanation was inadequate:

The passions and nature are both produced by yin and yang. As for their production by yin-yang, some are thick and some are thin... Since nature and passions are both produced by yin and yang, how could one be purely good?

(LH 13, p. 132)

Wang insists that yin and yang act together; they are complimentary aspects of one ch'i. Secondly he implies by his reference to the density of yin and yang that good and evil finally depend on this thickness and thinness. The characteristic of density cannot be assigned to either yin or yang, but it is a quantitative measure of the combination.

Joseph Needham collected a number of citations from the Lun heng to demonstrate Wang's acceptance of yin and yang. He first notes a number of cases in which yin and yang function in nature as the source of seasonal change and natural calamities. This restricted sense of yin and yang as the movement of hot and cold air may be accepted without believing that yin-yang dualism is the basic division in the universe. Needham himself cites Hsün tzu to show that it may be an explanation of natural
events without intrinsic connection to the sphere of human activity.\(^67\)

He goes on to cite the role of yin and yang in the creation of man as found in *Lun heng*, Chapter 65. In this chapter Wang is concerned to dispel the fear of the activities of ghosts. To do this he uses the concepts of yin and yang to explain sorcerors, dragons, ghosts and apparitions. They are all created through an imbalance of yin and yang. When out of balance, both yin and yang are poisonous to man. Wang concludes this chapter with this yin-yang account of man's structure:

> Therefore, all the so-called good and evil omens, ghosts, and spirits in the world are made by the *ch'i* of the great yang. The *ch'i* of the great yang is the *ch'i* of heaven. Heaven is able to produce man's body, therefore it can make an image resembling his shape. Now that by which man is born are the two *ch'i* of yin and yang. The yin *ch'i* controls the making of the bones and flesh; the yang *ch'i* controls the making of the spirit. At the birth of man, yin and yang *ch'i* come together. Therefore his bones and flesh are firm and his vital force (essential *ch'i*) flourishes. Since his vital force creates his intellect and his bones and flesh make him strong, therefore his spirit produces speech and his body is firmly maintained. The body and spirit are intertwined and interdependent, therefore one can always perceive it and not destroy it. *(LH 65, p. 945)*

故凡世間所謂 妖祥, 所謂鬼神者, 皆太陽之氣為之也。太陽之氣天氣也。天能生人之體, 故能象人之容。夫人之所以生者, 陰陽氣也。陰陽氣主為骨肉, 陽氣主為精神。陰陽氣具, 故骨肉堅精臭盛。精氣為知, 骨肉為強。故精神言

\(^67\)Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization*, II, p. 368
Although this paragraph relies heavily on yin-yang theory, there is still an element which seems not to agree with the usual formulations. Wang says that heaven produces man's body, but also that man's body is a product of yin ch'i. The explanation for this lies in Wang's formulation elsewhere, in which his main thesis is that heaven's ch'i is that which gives form to the creatures. It does not supply the substance from which a thing is formed, but its ch'i fills up the substance supplied by earth. Wang uses the analogy of the rice bag, which is loose and shapeless until rice fills it up. Then it is firm and solid, with a shape which does not change with every push on it (LH 7, p. 60). The terminology Wang normally uses to discuss this relationship is the words ch'i and hsing 形, form or shape. The ch'i of earth, the stuff to which form is given, does not enter his discussions. It seems that earth's ch'i is a material with so few characteristics that it plays no significant role in the determination of things. If earth's ch'i is basically yin ch'i, then it should exhibit definite properties, but Wang never takes up the question in this way. He apparently identifies the muddy, heavy ch'i of earth with yin forces, as we have seen, but does not allow the yin-yang theory to play a significant role in the determination of the characteristics of a thing.
The third kind of case presented by Needham is the comparison of heaven and earth to man and wife. In these comparisons, Wang is not often making a point related to yin and yang. Of the three cases cited by Needham, none refer to yin-yang. In one of them the analogy of heaven and earth to man and wife is made by an opponent (LH 32, p. 492). In another the point is to demonstrate that the union has no intention in it of producing offspring (LH 16, p. 136). Only in the third case is the analogy made to show that heaven is the source that issues ch'i in the union between heaven and earth, just as a male does in human sexual union (LH 15, p. 153). In general such comparisons are common to yin-yang theory, and the third case clearly illustrates a yin-yang theme. Nevertheless, I believe Wang's avoidance of the terms yin and yang indicates that he wished to avoid identification with the prevalent yin-yang theory.

By contrast Wang's position on the theory of the five phases is much clearer. He sharply opposed the five phases theoreticians, primarily because that theory was the intellectual basis for a great deal of what Wang saw as superstition. It also formed the basis for apocryphal literature which flourished in the first century A.D. The five phases

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\[68\] Ibid. n."d".

\[69\] For a discussion of this literature and the important role that the five phases theory played in it, see the unpublished dissertation by Jack Dull, "A historical introduction
Theoreticians conceived of a cosmic changing of the five phases, expressed in wonders and omens, as the basis of dynastic change. In Wang's eyes such political thinking was entirely spurious. Generally speaking, yin-yang and five phases thinking are linked together in Han times although originally they appear to have been two different theories.\(^7\) The five phases theory has a greater range of associations than the theory of yin and yang, making it a more suitable vehicle for speculation. Wang takes pains to reject the five phases as a general theory. He argues that Heaven produces the creatures using only one phase, \(i\) hsing — 行, namely \(ch'i\). Because there is only one phase or element, there is mutual love between the creatures, and not mutual strife (LH 14, pp. 137-138). How could heaven be the source of strife?

Both Needham and Hsiü Fu-kuan suggest that Wang Ch'ung does not deny the existence of the five phases.\(^71\) They imply rather that Wang limited its operations to the human body. Wang did accept the physiology of his contemporaries that there were five major organs in the human body, and this physiology is undoubtedly related to the five phases theory. But, Wang asks rhetorically, if the five organs are really derivative from to the apocryphal (ch'ān wei) texts of the Han dynasty."

University of Washington, 1966.


\(^{71}\)Ibid. p. 368. Hsiü Fu-kuan, *Liang Han ssu-hsiang shih*, p. 615.
the five phases, why do they not mutually harm each other? (LH 32, p. 139) Furthermore, the idea that Wang restricted or limited the five phases theory to man is itself a denial of the five phases theory's claim to universality as a cosmic principle.

CH'I AND THE CONCEPT OF HEAVEN

Since the yüan ch'i is seen by Wang Ch'ung as the basic principle and primal stuff of the universe, he does not view heaven as the source of cosmic order. In general, he regards heaven as the sky and its attendant functions, such as weather, movement of planets and stars, and any other atmospheric phenomenon. His principal concern with respect to heaven is to deny that it is an intelligent being with control over men's lives. Heaven, for all its great size, is a creature. It is even a body, a material being (t'i). Although it is produced by ch'i, it is not itself ch'i, that is, airy clouds or mist, but is ch'i transformed, ch'i congealed. It issues forth its own ch'i, but does not thereby decompose itself. Heaven's ch'i has its own particular character. It is a differentiated form of ch'i. In part, it receives this particularization through the way in the stars move about in heaven. Because ch'i is a life-force, heaven is in some sense alive; it is a great organism which moves and grows (LH 31, p. 476). But even though it is an organism, it has no thought or feelings, nor does the relationship between heaven, earth, and man depend in any way on development or growth on the part
of heaven. The overwhelming impression Wang gives his readers is that he attempts to understand heavenly phenomenon as regular, natural patterns.

Heaven is an agent in the process of the production of the world's creatures. It issues forth its ch'i, and by the condensing or congealing of the ch'i, things come into being. This is a continual process. Heaven not only has no intention of creating things, it also has no capacity even to be aware of the existence of things. When heaven's ch'i produces men, the essences, ching 充, of stars are somehow carried along with the ch'i of heaven and assist in the differentiation of man.

Wang's theory that heaven is a material body is primarily a polemical position. Heaven is the product of rarified ch'i (LH 31, p. 476), and it issues forth ch'i, but is not itself ch'i. For Wang's opponents, the idea that heaven was ch'i and that man was ch'i provided the theoretical basis for their notion of a sympathetic response between heaven and man. Wang rejected the notion of a sympathetic response between heaven and man, but he accepted the notion to a certain degree that ch'i in different places could have some mutual influence (LH 11, p. 106). Therefore, he had to deny that heaven was ch'i in order to prevent any possibility of heaven responding to man's deeds. Therefore, Wang argues,

The scholars say, "Heaven is ch'i. Therefore it is never far from man. When man affirms something as right or wrong,
or secretly acts virtuously or malevolently, heaven always knows this and always responds to it. This is proof that heaven is near man. If we discuss this truthfully, heaven is a material body and not ch'i. Man is born of heaven, so why suspect that heaven is without ch'i? It is only that it has a body above, far from man ... That heaven has a body is not baseless. If one investigates like this, then that it lacks the diffuse and vague is clear.

(LH 31, pp. 485-487) 72

儒者曰「天氣也。故其去人不遠。人有是非，陰為德害，天親知之，又親應之，近人之效也。」如實論之，天體，非氣也。人生於天，何嫌天無氣。獨有體在上，與人相遠。天有形體，所據不虛。猶此考之，則無恍惚明也。

72 Compare Alfred Forke, Lun heng, I, p. 257. I follow Huang Hui's punctuation here, and the emendation of yu to tu. Liu Pan-sui in his Lun-heng chi-chieh 論衡集成 (Collected commentary on the Lun Heng), (Shanghai: Chung-hua Book Co. 1957) p. 221, suggests that the sentence 何嫌天無氣 is mistaken, since it implies that heaven is without ch'i. Huang Hui suggests that hsien should be read te. In his detailed argument on p. 159 that this is the case throughout the Lun heng, he interprets te as "(affairs) coming to this". Although his derivation that hsien sometimes means chien which in turn sometime means te is tenuous, I have no better solution. I believe the point of this sentence must be that Wang is denying that heaven is ch'i, and is not denying that heaven has ch'i.
Wang's insistence that heaven is alive is also used polemically, although it is a fundamental concept for him. He uses it to protest certain forms of divination. If a dead man asks something of a live man, he says, there can be no answer. Heaven and earth move, hence they are alive. One cannot then use milfoil and tortoise shell to divine the intentions of heaven, since these things are dead (LH 71, p. 997).

It seems strange that Wang uses motion as a criterion for life. All inanimate things move, after all, so motion *per se* is no criterion for life. But I think we may guess that Wang does not mean that mere physical movement means something is alive. Rather heaven and earth move of themselves. If heaven could not move of itself, Wang would have to find another agent to cause its movements. This however would conflict with his idea of heaven's cosmic independence and the related idea of heaven's cosmic indifference. That cosmic indifference is compromised if heaven has a need or desire to respond to man's actions or any other agent.

I suggested in my summary at the beginning of this section that heaven is only an agent for the transfer of *ch'i*. Whether it acts alone or in conjunction with the earth as it issues its *ch'i*, it is still only an intermediary. It relays the creative force inherent in *yuan ch'i*. At times, the intermediary of heaven is omitted altogether:

Man is a creature; he is the one among the creatures who has intelligence. He is no different from the creatures in that he
receives his life span from heaven and his ch'i from the primal source (LH 72, 1007-1008).

Thus in spite of the particularization of ch'i as heavenly ch'i, heaven's ch'i is not fundamentally different from the yuan ch'i.

Finally, the ch'i of heaven is completed by the addition of the essence of the stars (LH 6, p. 45). The positions of the stars determine the nature of the essence which is released along with heaven's ch'i. As the ch'i and essence give form to man, the essence is that which determines the wealth and honor which that individual will have. Thus wealth and honor are from heaven and not the result of human activity. With this concept Wang provides a theoretical basis for astrology. Needham notes that "this....paradoxically...may well be the first statement in Chinese literature of individual astrology. The paradox lies in the probability that it was precisely Wang Ch'ung's scientific materialism which pushed him into this theory, as a means of escaping from the arbitrary endowments of local gods and spirits and other 'supernatural' agencies."73

CH'I AND THE PRINCIPLE OF INDIVIDUALITY

The problem of individuality is a central one encountered in any monism. If all things are essentially one or derive from

73 Joseph Needham, Science and Civilization, II, p. 384. See also his remarks on p. 356.
one thing, how does one account for diversity? A principle must be built into the fundamental substance which allows it to appear in different forms. The philosophical difficulty is that something truly one cannot have a principle of differentiation, for the principle must inevitably differ from the nature of the original substance, and it must have an 'eternal' ontic status. In the Han dynasty, as I have stated, the theories of yin and yang and the five phases were the common ways of understanding the differentiation of ch'i. Although Wang adopted the yin-yang theory to a certain extent, at those points where he paid particular attention to the problem of differentiation, the main thrust of his thought went in another direction.

Wang conceived of the actual operation of ch'i in the coming into being of all the creatures as a process of congelation and their ceasing to be as dispersal. He uses the metaphor of water turning to ice:

Water congeals and becomes ice: ch'i accumulates and makes man. Ice lasts at most one winter and dissipates; man completes one-hundred years and he dies. (LH 24, p. 333) 74

The analogy of water and ice illustrates the impermanence of individual existence, but is not able to explain the diversity of forms. It would suffice only if there were qualities in the water itself which would determine different ice configurations. Wang has to examine the process of condensation and rarefaction more closely.

Wang's main concern in this is to distinguish first of all

74 A similar passage can be found in LH 62, p. 870.
why man is different from other beings, and second (and more important) to distinguish why one man differs from another. Distinctions between the kinds of creatures, such as plants and animals, do not arise as a separate question, but only as an argument for or against some position related to man. Man is first of all a creature, a thing. At times this commonality is the basis for an argument (the argument against ghosts, for example LH 62, p. 869), but usually Wang also takes pains to distinguish man from the animals. At the level of man's concrete form, his intelligence is his principle difference from animals. (LH 72, pp. 1007-1008) Although there is a difference in kind, Wang insists that there is no difference in source between man and other creatures. However, the ch'i which he receives from the source seems to have a different nature:

When the nature of ch'i (endowed by heaven) is not equal, then creatures are different in body. The ox lives half as long as a horse, and a horse lives half as long as a man. So the form of the ox and horse are different from man. If you receive the form of an ox or horse, you will naturally live only as long as an ox or a horse. (LH 7, p. 60)

What does Wang mean by "the nature of ch'i"? This paragraph is part of a long argument against the seekers of physical immortality. Wang assumed that to gain such immortality, man would

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75This passage is quoted above, pp. 103-104.
have to metamorphose into a new kind of creature. Examples from the animal world of such metamorphoses took place, he insisted, only when the changes were consistent with their endowed ch'i:

Now the changes of things follow their ch'i. There is that done by the constellations of stars which seems as if it responds to government. But it is not because it is desired by heaven to lengthen life that things change their shape, nor does one transform (himself) by being able to eat divine herbs and precious plants. If a man perseveres in swallowing medicine, he may be able to strengthen his constitution and thereby increase his basic natural strength and lengthen his life. But to suddenly transform is not like the proper ch'i of heaven or the true nature received by man. Heaven and earth do not change; the sun and the moon do not alter; the stars and constellations do not disappear--this is proper. Man receives this proper ch'i, therefore his body does not change. (LH 7, p. 57)

76 I read hsiang as constellation in connection with LH 6, p. 44, where it clearly means the arrangement of the stars and functions in governing things through its inclusion in heaven's ch'i. Huang Hui suggests this is in opposition to the common Han theory of sympathetic response between heaven and man, since the configurations of heaven are in this case prior to the actions of man.

77 Alfred Forke misconstrues this passage by reading sui
In some way man, in contrast to animals who change, receives a different kind of ch'i from heaven. It is qualitatively better than the ch'i given to animals. But nowhere that I know of does Wang further analyze in what way this ch'i is qualitatively different. In the end the "nature of ch'i" is a given whose secret we do not know.

Within each species determined by the nature of ch'i, Wang uses a quantitative criterion. The germ of this idea was present in Huan T'an, but whereas in Huan T'an it was a vague quantity of life, Wang Ch'ung defines it more specifically as the quantitative density of endowed ch'i. This is illustrated most clearly in the case of man. The problem arises in the discussion of how and to what extent man's individual length of life is determined.

The fated life-span of man, ming 命, is a direct result of his given ch'i. I note that the fated life-span may or may not be the actual life-span. But for the moment, I am concerned only with the relation between ch'i and ming. "The endowed destiny ch'i 隨氣 as an adjective-noun combination, "concomitant fluid" (Forke, Lun heng, I, p. 326) rather than as a verb-noun as I have done. His interpretation is based on an analogy with the distinction of three kinds of destiny in which the two terms sui and cheng 正, "proper", occur. However, the idea of "concomitant fluid" occurs nowhere else in the Lun heng. My interpretation is supported by a sentence a little farther in the same section where Wang writes, "The form moves in accordance with the ch'i 形隨氣而動 (LH 7, p. 57).
of long or short life", Wang says, "takes the quantity of ch'i as its ruling nature." (LH 4, p. 28) By quantity Wang means density, thickness or thinness. He continues,

The child of a woman who is remiss in nourishing it may live, and the child of one who gives ample milk may die... Why is this? If one is remiss, but the ch'i is thick, the child will be strong. If one is generous, but the ch'i is thin, the child will be weak. (LH 4, p. 28)

The ch'i here is by nature human ch'i, but its varying density determines different types of men. Further in the same section, Wang argues:

...Those who live long and those who die young have the same single ch'i. The length of their lives greatly differ. How can we know that one who died young before he completed 100 years had a fated life-span of 100 years? By putting his body, according to size and length, together with those of the same class. For a body of a man who lives 100 years does not differ from that of one who died at 50 years. If the bodies do not differ, then the life-forces, blood and ch'i, also do not differ. But birds and beasts have a different form, thus their length of life differs greatly from that of man. (LH 4, p. 29)

Huang Hui suggests that tzu 宗 be read as yün 孕, to nourish or nurture.
Wang's main point here is that form is determined by the nature of ch'i. Hence division of species is determined by this nature. Within a particular form relative size and strength is determined by the amount of ch'i received at birth. (LH 4, p. 26) A person with a small amount has only a small amount of "life-stuff", and he cannot hope to live to full human potential.

Although the concept of ch'i's density occurs most often in connection with the idea of life-span, it also produces other differences among men. A slightly peculiar extension of this concept is the idea that kings and sages are fated to be so from birth. Since they are superior men, they must have superior ch'i. Since this ch'i must manifest itself in form, sage-kings and others of high standing show unusual body characteristics. Almost all of the "Osseus characteristics" chapter (LH 11, pp. 100-114) is devoted to citing cases of great men and their unusual physical marks.

Because great men presumably have higher ethical standards, Wang also adds morality to the effects of one's ch'i. "Are the petty man and the gentleman endowed with natures of a different kind?" he asks. On the contrary "...the good and bad in man are the single primal ch'i. The ch'i comes in large and small quantities, and therefore the natures are worthy or mean." (LH 8, p. 75)

79 Following Huang Hui's emendation of huo to t'ung, according to a Yuan dynasty edition.
Political wisdom, on the model of *wu-wei*, is also an effect of the density of *ch'i*. In response to a question as to why man's nature, which he received from heaven, is contrived action whereas heaven's basic principle is *wu-wei*, Wang replies that he who receives a greater amount of *ch'i* is able to pattern himself on heaven's self-so non-action, but he who receives thin *ch'i* cannot imitate the ways of heaven and earth. (LH 54, p. 781) He thus puts the sage and common man on one spectrum. Wisdom and moral action stem from a difference in degree of one's endowed *ch'i*.

Finally Wang insists that wealth and honor are also determined by one's *ch'i*, although in this case by a non-quantitative quality of *ch'i*. Although a person may work hard and lead an upright life, Wang thinks wealth and honor can have little relation to his deeds. Wealth and honor can no more be controlled than the rising and setting of the sun. (LH 3, pp. 19, 24, and *passim*). The configuration of the stars at one's birth is that which determines wealth and honor. Wang could not rely on *ch'i* 's density for this characteristic, since density determines moral uprightness, and he wished to keep morality separate from wealth and honor.

**FATE**

Wang Ch'ung's idea of fate or destiny, *ming* 𒅊, has received more attention in the secondary literature than any other single philosophical concept of the *Lun heng*. T'ang Chun-i
has set it in a historical line from the cults of heaven and Shang-ti to the end of traditional times.\textsuperscript{80} Joseph Needham and Alfred Forke also give summaries.\textsuperscript{81} I shall not do more here than present a brief outline.

A man's fate\textsuperscript{82} is received at birth as a product or aspect of his \textit{ch'i}. It governs two things in his life, his natural life-expectancy and the wealth and honor to be given him in life. A man who receives the thickest \textit{ch'i} should live, barring accident, for one-hundred years. Similarly, a thinner endowment of \textit{ch'i} reduces his life-expectancy.

Accidental death may shorten one's natural life-expectancy. One category of accidental death occurs when one loses his life in war as the state is lost. This is death through national destiny, \textit{kuo ming} 国命, which overrules a personal destiny. Other accidental deaths which are not a result of the natural weakening of the body are admitted in the form incidental destiny, \textit{ts'ao ming} 遭命. He totally rejects the notion common in his time that there was a concomitant destiny, \textit{sui ming} 随命. Advocates of this destiny proposed that a man

\textsuperscript{80} T'ang Chün-i 唐君毅, "Ch'in Han i-hou T'ien-ming ssu-hsiang chih fa-chan," 萬漢以後天命思想之發展 (The development of the idea of the decree of heaven from the ch'in and Han dynasties) \textit{Hsin Ya hsüeh pao 新亞學報} 6(1964) no. 2, 1-61.


\textsuperscript{82} T'ang Chün-i, \textit{Ch'in Han i-hou T'ien ming}, p.13 notes that Tung Chung-shu was the first not to limit \textit{ming} to the ruler.
extended or shortened his life either through the moral quality of his life or any other practice. This position was the foundation for the seekers of immortality, and Wang takes care to rule out that possibility in his concept of fate.

As I noted previously, wealth and honor are already fixed in the stars. Wang defines destined wealth and honor as one's condition at the end of his destined life-span. A person destined to be poor might be rich most of his life, becoming poor only at the end of his life. If such a person were to die accidentally while he was still rich, he would have never been poor, although he was destined to be so. Thus we can see that for Wang Ch'ung fate is closer to an idea of natural potential rather than an ineradicable personal prescription. Fate sets limits within a natural world established through the workings of heaven and the stars, but the limits are subject to the intervention of circumstances.

Wang sought to keep destiny and human nature strictly separate. Since Wang believed wealth and honor to be unconnected to one's ethical conduct, a good nature (and hence good conduct) could bear no close relationship to one's destiny. Although wealth and honor have a distinct criterion in the essence of the stars, both long life and a good nature are dependent on a thick ch'i. If there is a proper correspondence, then persons who live long should be morally better than those who die young. Wang does not perceive this

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83 Ibid. p. 23.
as a problem. The principal counter-example should have been Yen Hui, the disciple of Confucius who died young, but Wang only notes that his fate was short. (LH 28, pp. 408ff, 419ff.)

THE CONCEPT OF NATURE

Wang's concept of nature is no easy thing to delimit. To do it justice, we should relate it to two broad streams in Chinese religion and thought deriving from the culture religion of Shang Ti and of heaven on the one hand, and on the other hand a massive nature religion expressed in fertility cults and nature gods. The former became systematized in various ways as the principles of social order, while the latter produced the speculative systems centered on the Tao or the primordial unity, as well as the beginnings of speculation on natural cycles and causes.

Wang Ch'ung, following a tradition certainly present since Hsün-tzu, created a synthesis between these two fundamental directions. In his synthesis he gives primacy to the natural conditions of life. As we have seen, the endowment of ch'i determines a great deal of man's ethical and social development. But Wang also allows room for interference with the natural course of events. Indeed in most cases human activity can improve one's natural lot. In Chapter 8, "Leading your nature", Wang argues that as human efforts can improve poor soil, so education can improve a bad nature. (LH 8, p. 68) Then he points out that a man can make money through his cleverness even if he were not destined to do so. Finally he makes a general statement from
these particular cases:

The way of heaven can be real or artful. The real is that which of itself responds to heaven. The artful is that added by the knowledge and skill of men, but it is not different from the real. How shall we prove this?

The "Tribute of Yū" speaks of the gems ch'iu, lin, lang and kan (璀璨琳琅 ). Now ch'iu is a gem, lin is a pearl, the lang and kan are varieties of pearls. These are true gems and pearls produced by the earth. But Taoists have melted the five stones and made gems of five colors. When compared with real gems, their brilliance is not very different. The pearls of oysters and the gems in the "Tribute of Yū" are all real gems and pearls. But the Marquis of Sui made pearls from chemicals which were as brilliant as the real ones. The perfection of the teachings of the Taoist practitioners in this added idea of knowledge and skill. (LH 8, p. 70-71)

天道有真偽。真者固自與天相應，偽者人加知巧，亦與真者無以異也。何以驗之。禹貢曰「璀璨琳琅」——琳琅也。琅玕珠之類也。此則土地所生真玉珠也。然而道人消火煉五石，作五色之玉。此之真玉光不殊別。兼魚蛻之珠與禹貢琳琅皆真玉珠也。然而隨侯以藥作珠，精光耀和真道士之教至，知巧之意加也。

84 Artful, wei 偽 . Since Wang seems to approve of the skill of the Taoists, it cannot be "false" here. Compare Hsün-tzu, Chapters 19, 21-23.


86 Following Huang Hui, 珍玉也。 has been added
Several other examples follow this one. Within the general boundaries set by natural processes, Wang allows the products of culture to imitate nature, even to the extent of making a bad man become a good one through the influence of sagely education. In contrast to a culturalist like Hsiün-tzu for whom the artful is the crown of nature, the completion of and complement of natural structures, Wang Ch'ung makes room for variation in the consequences of one's natural pre-disposition, but does not admit an essentially new reality. Man's artifice is a repetition and imitation of nature; not a creation.

NATURE AND HISTORY

A second way in which culture is seen as subordinate to nature is found in Wang Ch'ung's view of history. Apparently weary of those who found good only in a distant past, he uses his ontology to establish the equality of the ages. He argues thus:

People of the former ages are the same as people of today, for they all receive the same primal ch'i. The primal ch'i is pure and harmonious; in the past and present it is not different...One heaven and one earth together produce the myriad creatures. When the myriad creatures are born, they all receive one ch'i. The thickness and thinness of ch'i is the same in all generations.

(LH 56, p. 804)

上世之民下世之民也。俱禀元氣。元氣純和古今不異。一日一地並生萬物，萬物之生俱得一氣。氣之厚薄苗世若一。

to the text from the T'ai-p'ing yü lan 太平御覽，and the character che 者 has been dropped.
Although the primal ch'i in pre-history gave form to heaven and earth and then the diverse creatures between them, the ch'i which is imbedded in heaven, earth, and all creatures is still at bottom the primal ch'i. Primal ch'i is the source of the genesis of the cosmos, but is also at the base of a timeless structure.

This position supports Wang's claim that there are latter-day sages and provides the theoretical base for Chapter 57, "Praise of the Han" (LH 57, pp. 817 ff.), and its sequel, Chapter 58, "The restoration". (LH 58, pp. 826 ff.)

THE ROLE OF TZU JAN

In Wang Ch'ung the concept of tzu jan has a rather well-defined and fairly consistent position. This is the first time that there is explicit recognition of tzu jan as a distinct philosophical concept.

For Wang tzu jan is a characteristic of the functioning of heaven and forms the basis on which Wang asserts the non-intelligence of heaven and the unintentionality of all its actions. To illustrate this I will analyze a few passages from the chapter on tzu jan.

The assumption with which Wang begins this chapter is that when heaven and earth join their ch'i, the creatures are produced of themselves. The consequence of this is that they bear no purposeful relationship one to another. Men, for example,

...see that the five grains can be eaten, so they take and eat them. They see that silk
and hemp can be worn, so they take and wear them. Some suppose that heaven produced the five grains to feed man and produced silk and hemp to clothe man. This means heaven makes men become a farmer or a silkworm girl. It is not consistent with tzu jan. (LH 54, p. 775)

One may conclude from this that natural phenomena are not sent for or against man. Just as the grains are not sent as a favor to man, so omens are not sent to reprimand him. Thus man need not fear them:

If heaven's omens were intentional, then where is its tzu jan? And where is its wu wei? How do we know that heaven is tzu jan? By the fact that is has no mouth or eyes. (LH 54, p. 775-776)

和天瑞為故，自然為在，為何為何為。何以 [知] 天之自然也。以天無口目也。

Wang goes on to remark that mouth and eyes stand for desires, and the latter are the source of human interference in the world, yu wei 有為.

In these few remarks, it is already clear that tzu jan is a property of heaven, and that it somehow functions in the proof of heaven's non-intentionality. Although we could not construct a very precise definition from this context, Wang nicely supplies at this point a definition of tzu jan and wu wei:
Some say, "All things which move are basically active. They desire, therefore they move. When they move, they act. Now heaven moves and resembles man. How could it be non-active?"

I say that the movement of heaven is to issue forth ch'i. Its body moves, the ch'i comes out, and things are born. It is like when a man moves his ch'i. His body moves, his ch'i (semen) comes out, and a child is born. Now when a man issues his ch'i, it is not that he desires to produce a son. The ch'i is issued and the son is born of himself. When heaven moves, it does not desire to produce things, but things are born of themselves. This is tzu jan. When issuing ch'i, heaven does not desire to make things, but things make themselves. This is wu wei. (LH 54, p. 776)

Now we may quarrel with Wang's analogy. A man may desire to produce children through sexual intercourse, but it is still true that there is something quite independent in the action of the sperm seeking out the egg. Once issued, there is no control over the sperm. All that heaven does is create an environment by its issuing of ch'i. That some of the ch'i accidentally converges and forms things is an entirely separate process. Tzu jan is used to describe that process of the convergence of ch'i, which is nothing other than the self-production of all the creatures. How can it be 'self' production?
The self is in the end nothing but ch'i. Hence the self-production of things is nothing but the natural process of the temporally and spatially local accumulation of ch'i.  

Wu wei is almost identical to tzu jan. The two defining sentences have only two points of difference. The phrase "When heaven moves" in the definition of tzu jan is replaced by "When issuing ch'i" in the definition of wu wei. However, he begins his argument by saying that these two actions, moving and issuing ch'i, are identical. Hence, this difference is insignificant. The other difference in the definitions is that between "produce themselves" or "born of themselves", tzu sheng 自生 , in the first case and "make themselves", tzu wei 自為 , in the second case. One is hard put to find a substantial conceptual difference between them. Logically, it seems that wu wei is predicated of heaven. Since things are self-made, heaven has "no-making". Tzu jan is predicated of the process of self-making. All creatures are self-produced. Tzu jan is not therefore a property exclusively of heaven, but of the more general process of coming into being. Heaven itself is probably tzu jan only with respect to its own origin.

In the remainder of the chapter, Wang seems to confirm this division between wu wei and tzu jan. He continues his narrative by citing several cases of Chinese political leaders.

87 Although I haven't studied this problem, I suspect that the framework of time and space, yii chou 宇宙 , is a given for Wang Ch'ung and operates as a background for the movements of ch'i.
who were said to govern by the principle of *wu wei*. Could heaven be less than these, he implies? (LH 54, p. 778) He accepts the appearance of the River Chart and the Lo Writings, two prognostication charts allegedly found in rivers and thought to be sent by heaven or gods to man, but he argues that they are entirely self-so. "Heaven's way," he says, "is self-so. Therefore the chart and the writings were completed of themselves."

(LH 54, p. 778) I think that it is not accidental that the references are to heaven's way, to the action of heaven, rather than the essence or substance of heaven conceived as a separate entity.

Wang opened this chapter saying that he relies on the *tao chia*, the school of the Tao, for his discussion of this problem. (LH 54, p. 775) He also remarks that the *tao chia* failed to demonstrate the validity of *tzu jan* on the basis of experience. Therefore the theory of *tzu jan* was not in general believed.

(LH 54, p. 781) Who is Wang thinking of when he says *tao chia*? Because of his connections with the Old Text school, it could be that he meant what Liu Hsin meant, namely the *Lao tzu*, or *Tao te ching*, with the explanations of the *Chuang tzu*. However, on the basis of my previous analysis, I suggest that the *tao chia* was seen primarily as the thought of the *Huai nan tzu*. We know that he was very familiar with the *Huai nan tzu*, and we can see that his concept of *tzu jan* has some elements in common with that of the *Huai nan tzu*. In that Wang identifies *tzu jan*
with the manner of being of all creatures, he keeps its application in the same realm as the *Huai nan tzu*, in which it was primarily an attribute of natural, creaturely existence. But in contrast to the *Huai nan tzu* Wang related *tzu jan* specifically to the origin of things, rather than the general functioning of things. Wang asked how a horse came to be a horse, but not whether bits and bridles were in accordance with the self-so nature of the horse.

Only in the case in Chapter 20 of the *Huai nan tzu* is the problem of the relation of creating and *tzu jan* approached. Although the author there expressed a theory of sympathy between heaven and man which Wang vigorously denied, the *Huai nan tzu* does suggest that the relationship of one thing to another is the provision of an environment, but that in essence things are mutually independent. 88

However, in Wang Ch'ung there is a new step in the logic of *tzu jan*'s relationship to production. I refer to the problem of how self-so, as the manner of being, relates to self-production, the fact of being. In other words, *tzu jan* answers the question how a thing is the way it is, whereas *tzu sheng* answers the question how a thing comes to be. Since Wang applies *tzu jan* to the process of coming into being and *tzu sheng* to the things which come into being, the possibility of self-production is

88 See Above, Chapter 2, pp. 71-76.
guaranteed by the self-so nature of that production. Tzu jan functions then to keep all intentional operations of heaven out of the production of the creatures.

Wang also differs significantly from Chapter 20 in the Huainan tzu in another respect. The latter conceived Heaven as the cosmic regulator of the universe. How Heaven accomplished this task is not spelled out. Wang replaces the concept of heaven as the origin with his concept of ch'i. The link between the cosmic origin and the present reality is not a mysterious one but a well-defined and well understood one of the self-divergence and condensation of that origin. Thus tzu jan not only functions to deny the other-production of things (of which heaven is now one), but also to clarify the relation between the cosmos and its origin.

In some respects the distinctions I have made are too fine for Wang Ch'ung himself. I have supposed a certain logical relation of priority between self-so and self-produced. But in this same chapter Wang virtually identifies the two concepts:

In spring, one sees the birth of all creatures, and in the autumn one sees their completion. Did heaven and earth make them? Things are self-so. If we say heaven and earth make them, they must use hands to make them. Where will heaven and earth get the millions of hands which will together make the millions of creatures? (LH 54, p. 780)
Man may through his contrived actions assist the self-so processes. He may cultivate land and plant seed, but he cannot actually force the seed to grow. Hence he cannot actually replace the self-so. (LH 54, p. 782)

Man's primary relationship to the self-so is to pattern himself on it. Wang is following the lead of the Huai nan tzu also in this idea, but as in the former cases, he has his own peculiar understanding of the modelling and reliance:

Someone asked, "Man is born of heaven and earth. Heaven and earth do not act; Man receives a heavenly nature; he ought also not to act, but he still contrives actions. Why is this?" I reply that a man of perfect virtue, pure and thick, receives a lot of heaven's ch'i, so he is able to pattern himself on heaven's tzu jen and wu wei. But if his endowed ch'i is thin and slight, he does not respect the Tao and Te and does not resemble heaven and earth. If he does not resemble heaven and earth, he is not of the same class as sages and worthies, and therefore contrives to act. (LH 54, pp. 781-782)

問曰「人生於天地，天地無為，人稟天性者，亦當無為，而有為。何則？」曰：至德純渥之人稟天氣多。故能則天自然無為。稟天氣薄少，不遵道德，不似天地。...
不似天地，不類聖賢，故有為也。Since one's capacity to model himself on tzu jen and wu wei is limited by his endowment of ch'i, Wang concludes that sages and worthies are the only ones who have even the potential to emulate this way of heaven.

The modelling on heaven, Wang is careful to point out, does not mean that one follows the special commands of heaven.
Rather he follows his own nature which is itself self-so. Wang refers to the Han emperor Kao tsu's killing of a white snake (an act which is said to have pre-figured his becoming an emperor). It was not heaven which caused him to kill it, but his own brave ardour burst forth. His nature was that way of itself. (LH 12, p. 120) Similarly King Wen, a founding king of the Chou dynasty, did not take over the empire on a direct command of heaven:

The king models himself on heaven. He does not oppose it but obeys heaven's principles. He extends his self-so nature and thus joins with heaven. This is what is called "The Great Mandate of King Wen". King Wen himself conceived it and himself carried it out. It was not that heaven sent a vermillion swallow to inform him that he ought to become king and only then did he dare arise. (LH 12, p. 122)

Heaven's issue of ch'i, incorporated by man once and for all at birth, is the only relationship between man's specific conduct and heaven. Therefore, only those who by accident of birth receive a large quantity of ch'i have the potential to become a sage-king. Wang moderates this position somewhat, suggesting

89 Following Huang Hui's suggestion, I translate by transposing tzu 亻 immediately before yi 意 to agree with the following sentence.
that with education even a mean nature can become good, but such a nature as a product of intentional activity does not have the same reliability as a naturally good nature. (LH 8, p. 68)

For Wang, human nature, being defined by *ch'i*, is so of itself, and it is that on which we rely. We have encountered the notion of reliance in the *Huai nan tzu* in a different sense. There it was implied that anyone, by wilfully bending himself to accord with things in their self-so state, could become a sage. Man is enjoined to rely on natural states of affairs, which included oneself as a part of the natural world. For Wang Ch'ung, the reliance is on one's own natural development. There is no notion of a general reliance on natural (*tzu jian*) states of affairs. This does not negate my earlier statement that for Wang nature tends to dominate culture. He is saying that there is a natural explanation for cultural development, but is not denigrating any aspect of culture as such. With respect to this part of his theory, Wang's synthesis seems to lean more toward the Confucian side than to the Taoist side.

Wang's affirmation of the potential for education also places him in a Confucian tradition. He was not in any sense anti-cultural but sought to base culture on the workings of *ch'i*. Although he says he based his notion of *ch'i* and its self-so operation on the *tao chia*, the men he had in mind would probably have been shocked had they known of his wholehearted approval of the Han bureaucratic state. Moreover, his belief that wealth and honor in society were decreed by heaven is rank heresy for
the Taoists. Societal wealth and honor were the worst of human failures for the latter. For Wang relying on one's self-so nature may mean that one has to govern a state. But he does not say that in governing a state, the ruler must allow all things to develop in their own way. For men whose ch'i is thin, natural development isn't really sufficient. Therefore the ruler must have both schools and jails for 'teaching'. (LH 8, p. 73)

So Wang Ch'ung stands in this respect in sharp contrast to the use of tzu jan in the Lao tzu, for example, in those cases in which the ruler is the one who removes the historically developed hindrances of societal institutions and allows the people to be so of themselves.

On the other hand, Wang continues to use tzu jan as a signal for a religious absolute. It is used to show that the metamorphoses of ch'i have no law or determining force outside of the ch'i itself. Although in the process of divergence, imperfection also arises, the final standard and source of the best human life is derived from that process.
INTRODUCTION

We do not know of any students of Wang Ch'ung. His writing must have been known in his home province of K'uai-ch'i, but become generally known only after Ts'ai Yung discovered it late in the second century A.D. He passed it on to his superior, Wang Lang (d. A.D. 228) who brought it back to the capital regions where it circulated among the scholarly community. However, there are a few things which suggest that Wang Ch'ung may have had some influence prior to the general awareness of his writings. Therefore we will briefly examine a few of Wang's contemporaries and thinkers of the second century A.D. who have been associated in some way with Wang. At the same time that we look at some of his contemporaries, we should be alert to the possibility of developments in the idea of *tzu jan* taking place quite independently of Wang Ch'ung's thought.

WANG CH'UNG AND THE POLITICAL CRITICS

The *Hou Han shu* groups Wang Ch'ung's biography together with those of Wang Fu (A.D. 90-165) and Chung-ch'ang T'ung (A.D. 179-219). However, the reason for this is not explicitly given. In what respect they were found to be similar may only be guessed at by looking at the biographies themselves.

Wang Fu was a scholar who failed to achieve great office. He was born in the far west of China, in present-day
Kansu, and thus it is extremely unlikely that he would have had any
direct contact with Wang Ch'ung or his disciples at the opposite
end of the empire. He was known in the highest scholarly circles,
being a friend of both the great classical commentator Ma Jung 馬融 (A.D. 79-166) and the mathematician Chang Heng 張衡 (A.D. 78-139). Wang Fu himself lived much of his life in
retirement and wrote a treatise criticizing the shortcomings
of his age. Since he did not wish to be known (he says), he
called it the "Criticisms of a hidden man", Ch'ien fu lun 習夫論. This work was sharply critical of his social milieu,
focussing on bureaucratic inadequacies, the miscarriage of
justice, and excessive wealth and extravagance.¹

Wang Fu was not a philosophical thinker; his references
to the basic structure of things seem to fall in the tradition
of Tung Chung-shu. He emphasizes the pervasive presence of
ch'i 氣 in all reality and adopts the term yüan ch'i 元氣
to refer to the beginning of things. According to both Tung
and Wang Fu, this ch'i is the basis for the interaction of
heaven and man.² In contrast to Tung, Wang had more sympathy

¹This biographical information is found in the Hou Han
shu, 79:1b. A summary of Wang Fu's biography and thought is also
found in Etienne Balazs, "Political Philosophy and Social Crisis
at the End of the Han Dynasty," Chinese Civilization and
Bureaucracy, pp. 198-205. Also see Kung-chuan Hsiao, A History
of Chinese Political Thought, (Princeton: Princeton University

²Wang Fu 王付, Ch'ien-fu lun 隱夫論 (Discourses
of a Hidden Man), (Taipei: World Book Co., 1975), Chap. 16,
for Taoist thought, seeing the Tao as the fundamental reality. He calls Tao the root, pen 甲, of ch'i, and ch'i the instrument of the Tao. The concept of tzu jan is completely absent from Wang Fu; thus he makes no contribution to the theme which is the topic of this thesis.

Chung-ch'ang T'ung in his youth was a very forthright and outspoken young man. By his candor and wit he acquired the epithet of "madman". The Hou Han shu cites the encounter with Kao Kan, the governor of Ch'ing chou, who was a famous supporter of young intellectuals. In an interview with Kao Kan, Chung-ch'ang T'ung said, "Sir, you have high ambitions, but are lacking in talent. You like scholars, but you do not know how to select men for office. I must therefore give you serious warning: take care!" This interview established his reputation both for frankness and insight, since Kao Kan lost his life shortly thereafter in a rebellion.

Chung-ch'ang T'ung was well acquainted with Taoist literature. As Balazs notes, his essay "Desire for Happiness" abounds in technical terms from the Lao tzu and the I ching. The same may be said of the two poems which appear in his biography. About the year 210 he was taken into employment in Ts'ao Ts'ao's

p. 77. Also see Chap. 9, p. 36 and Chap. 32, pp. 154 ff.

3Ibid. Chap. 32, p. 154


5Balazs, "Political Philosophy and Social Crisis", p. 216.
advisory group of scholars where he remained until his death in 219. It is likely that his main work, Ch'ang yen 長言 "Frank words", is from this period. Of this work only three chapters quoted in his biography and scattered fragments survive.

He subtly praises Ts'ao Ts'ao for having brought order, but insisted that disorder would surely arise again as the power of the royal family decayed. He attacked the landed aristocracy, calling for land re-distribution and a thorough revision, in a more authoritarian direction, of administration procedures. One can see that the concern with social decay and corruption which exasperated Wang Fu led to a deep-seated pessimism in Chung-ch'ang T'ung. His authoritarianism reflects a concern to find pragmatic means of establishing order, but with a pessimistic belief in the ultimate impossibility of permanent order.  

In neither the biography nor collected fragments of Chung-ch'ang T'ung is there anything suggesting a systematic appraisal of Taoist thought. The term tzu jan occurs nowhere in this literature. As with Wang Fu, there seems to be no solid historical connection to Wang Ch'ung, although Wang Ch'ung's works would have been in circulation in the lifetime of Chung-ch'ang T'ung. We can relate Wang Ch'ung and Wang Fu

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6See the summary of Chung-ch'ang T'ung in Balazs, "Political Philosophy and Social Crises," pp. 213-225. A few paragraphs of his work are also translated in Hsiao, Chinese Political Thought, pp. 545-547. Both of these sources are based on the accounts of the Hou Han shu, 79:10b ff.
biographically; both were disappointed in their search for office and wrote their works in seclusion, but this is not true of Chung-ch'ang T'ung. One might say that all three were 'critical', but whereas Wang Ch'ung directed his criticism at custom and superstition while praising the Han government, both Wang Fu and Chung-ch'ang T'ung directed their ire at governments.

Timoteus Pokora suggests that Ts'ui Shih (ca. A.D. 103 - ca. 170) belonged to this group as well. As Balazs's study reveals, Ts'ui Shih ranks as a political critic along with Wang Fu and Chung-ch'ang T'ung, but Pokora gives no reason why Wang Ch'ung should be grouped with them on that basis. Pokora also notes that Hsü Kan (A.D. 170-217) was added to this list by the late Ming scholar, Ho Liang-ch'ün. Kung-chuan Hsiao further expands this list by including Huan T'an and Hsün Yüeh (A.D. 148-209), but leaving out Wang Ch'ung. It may be that of all of these men, Wang Ch'ung was the farthest from political power, and he therefore idealized it. Although Wang Ch'ung is legitimately connected to Huan T'an, he sets off in a direction quite different from that found in this line of political critics.

One possible point of comparison among these men may be the genre of writing employed. With the exception of Chung-ch'ang T'ung all of these men wrote treatises, lun. But Wang

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8Hsiao, Chinese Political Thought, p. 547.
Ch'ung's writing, although its title contains the word lun, is not a treatise, but a criticism of treatises. Lun heng may best be translated as "Treatises weighed in the balance."

In the end, I think we must conclude that the association of Wang Ch'ung with these political critics is a historical anomaly and reflects no historical sequence in the history of ideas.

WANG CH'UNG AND THE TAOISTS

Another direction in which Wang Ch'ung may have had influence is within the Tao chia. The history of the school of the Tao in the Latter Han dynasty is murky at best. We do know of some attention to Taoist texts and ideas among certain literati, although these literati cannot for the most part be called Taoists. The Huai nan tzu, which Wang used so extensively, was first commented on by a contemporary of Wang, Hsü Shen 許慎 (A.D. 30-124). Hsü Shen was the author of China's first dictionary, the Shuo wen chieh tz'u 說文解詁, and like Wang Ch'ung could not himself be called a Taoist. Ma Jung is also credited with a commentary on the Huai nan tzu. Two of his students, Yen Tu and Lu Chih 魯植 (d. A.D. 192) are likely to have written some commentary. Kao Yu 高誘 whose name is attached to the present commentary, probably derived most of his material from Lu Chih.  

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Even a short study of Kao Yu's commentary reveals that he paid very little attention to either Taoist thought in general or to the idea of tzu jan in particular. He seems to analyze things primarily in terms of the common Han dynasty concepts of Yin and Yang, but occasionally uses terms referring to darkness and mystery to explain things. He also quotes the Chuang tzu to illustrate a point. These are signs that he had some familiarity with the discussion of the Lao tzu and the Chuang tzu beginning in his time, but the references are too infrequent to conclude that he himself was very familiar with the texts.

I have found only one place where Kao Yu himself introduces the term tzu jan into the commentary without quoting an occurrence in the main text. In commenting on the text, "Therefore, the sage on the throne embraces the Tao and does not speak," Kao Yu writes:

The sage travels the Way, which is tzu jan and wu-wei.

As for tzu jan and wu-wei, there is no way of discovering whether Kao Yu had any peculiar understanding of these terms. The only significant feature is that the two occur together, a combination which became commonplace only with Wang Ch'ung.

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10 See, for example, Huai nan tzu 2.1b, 8.1b.
11 Ibid. 2.2a
12 Ibid. 6.2b
The Huai nan tzu provided a theoretical basis for this combination, but it was Wang Ch'ung who turned it into a single expression. This is some evidence then, although hardly conclusive, that Wang's ideas of tzu jen were known in scholarly circles.

A more properly "Taoist" case, and a more difficult one, is the Ho Shang Kung commentary to the Lao tzu. Its greater difficulty lies in the problem of dating it. The commentary purports to be written in the time of the Han emperor Wen (r. 179-157 B.C.) and to have been presented at court. However, the Shih chi makes no mention of it, nor is it listed in the Han shu bibliography. The Shih chi does mention an otherwise unknown ho shang chang jen as a teacher, specializing in studies of Huang-lao (that is, studies of the Yellow emperor and of the Lao tzu, a combination which usually implied that they sought techniques to assure immortality). This may be the source of the name, but it is highly unlikely that the commentary itself was written by him. The Han shu mentions three commentaries on the Lao tzu but neglects to mention this one. Although these three commentaries are lost, the Ho shang kung commentary has been considered valuable enough to be re-copied through all these centuries. It seems unlikely therefore that if Liu Hsin and Pan Ku knew of it, that they would intentionally exclude it. This argument from silence, admittedly not the best argument, suggests that

13 See above, Chapter 2, pp. 64-65.
14 Shih chi, chuan 80, p. 2436.
the commentary was composed after the end of the former Han dynasty.

The Ssu-k'u t'i yao 四庫提要 also points out that Ma Jung (A.D. 79-166) was the first commentator to write interlinear commentaries on the classics, that is, producing the text and comments on the same page, but the Ho shang kung commentary was also written that way. It is not impossible that it was written that way in the second century B.C., but it seems unlikely.  

One of the earlier mentions of the Ho shang kung commentary was by Ko Hung (277-357). He assumed it was current at the time of Wang Pi (240), whose commentary he regarded as superior to the Ho shang kung.  

Anna Seidel had cited a reference to it by Hsüeh Tsung 薛綜 (d. 243). Hsüeh comments on the "Fu on the Eastern Capital", Tung ching fu 東京賦 by Chang Heng, to the effect that part of the fu is a quote of the Ho shang kung commentary to Lao tzu, chap. 46. This dates the commentary as being prior to 243. Hsüeh himself must have believed it to be much earlier, since he assumed Chang Heng (A.D. 78-139) quoted from it and not vice-versa. In dating the commentary to the latter half of the

15 Ssu-k'u t'i yao 四庫提要 quoted in Chang Hsin-cheng 張心濤. Wei shu t'ung k'ao 俾書通考 (Examination of dubious books), (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1939) pp. 744-745.

16 Ibid. p. 744.

Latter Han dynasty, Seidel follows the tradition of Jao Tsung-i 饒宗頤 whose study of the Hsiang-erh 想爾 commentary included an essay comparing it with the Ho shang kung 讀疆公kng commentary. He concludes that although the Hsiang-erh differs substantially from the Ho shang kung, it appears to have certain elements borrowed from the latter. Jao is of the opinion that Chang Lu 張魯, the third Taoist Heavenly Master and probable author of the Hsiang-erh commentary, had a copy of the Ho shang kung when he composed the Hsiang-erh.\textsuperscript{18} Obuchi Ninji 大淵忍爾 and Yoshioka Yoshitoyo 吉岡義豊 have both concurred in Jao's opinion and added further evidence of their own.\textsuperscript{19} In recent times only Kusuyama Haruki 楠山春樹 has offered a serious alternative. He argues that although there may have been an older version of the Ho shang kung, the extant edition is a revised edition which dates only to the sixth century A.D. He also points out that the Hsieh Tsung commentary on Chang Heng contains several interpolations and therefore it may not be a reliable source.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{18} Jao Tsung-i 饒宗頤, Lao tzu Hsiang-erh chu chiao chien 老子想爾注校箋 (The Lao tzu with the Hsiang-erh commentary, edited), (Hongkong: Tong Nam, 1956) pp. 87-92.
  \item \textsuperscript{19} Yoshioka Yoshitoyo 吉岡義豊, "Rōshi Ka jō kō hon to Dōkyō 老子河上公本と道教 (The Ho shang kung commentary to the Lao tzu and Taoism), Dōkyō Sōgōteki kenkyū 道教総合的研究 (Tokyo: National Book Publ. Co., 1977), pp. 321, 325.
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Kusuyama Haruki 楠山春樹, "Rōshi Ka jō kō
\end{itemize}
Although I have not studied the Ho shang kung commentary carefully enough to fully evaluate Kusuyama's arguments, I shall tentatively follow the larger number of scholars who place it in the Latter Han dynasty. The few concepts which I discuss below seem to be typically Han dynasty concepts. Through that discussion, I demonstrate that the claims of the preface that the work is from the second century B.C. are unlikely, but those claims are not seriously accepted by any modern scholars that I am aware of.

One fairly clear indication that the commentary is later than Tung Chung-shu is its reference to yuan ch'i 元氣. Tung Chung-shu is generally supposed to have been the first to use this term. Tung makes a point of arguing why the term yuan was a good one to use. This suggests that he was aware that he was setting a precedent. By contrast the Ho shang kung commentary seems to invoke it as a generally known term, identifying it with the Tao. To the phrase "(The Tao) produces but does not possess (生而不有)", the commentary notes,

The yuan ch'i produces the creatures but does not possess them.

元氣生萬物而不有。  

The commentary also describes ch'i in terms which I have seen nowhere else but in the Lun heng. To the phrase "Mystery chū no seiritsu" 老子河上公生の成立, Waseda Daigaku bungaku kenkyūka kijō 早稲田大学文学研究科紀要 (Dec. 1972). See especially p. 25.

21 See above, Chap. 2, p. 59.
of mysteries" (玄之又玄），the commentary adds.

...the endowed ch'i has thickness and thinness.

No definite conclusions may be drawn from this, but if the commentary were as old as it claims, then this peculiar expression would occur in only two works which are two hundred years apart. If, however, the works are relatively close in time, the expression could reflect a common parlance of the period.

A second connection with the thought of Wang Ch'ung is the commentary's emphasis on the self-production of the creatures. The commentary remarks,

Between heaven and earth is a void, and the blended ch'i flow about. Therefore, the myriad creatures are self-produced.

The Tao is pure and silent; it does not speak. When it darkly moves its essences (ching ch'i), the creatures are completed of themselves.

Both the idea of the creatures self-producing in the environment of the mingled ch'i and the idea that when the ch'i is moved,

22Cheng Ch'eng-hai, Lao tzu Ho shang kung chu chiao li, P. 15-16 (Lao tzu, chap. 2). See also p. 272 (Lao tzu, chap. 42).
23Ibid. p. 10 (Lao tzu, chap. 1).
24Ibid. p. 36 (Lao tzu, chap. 5).
25Ibid. p. 171 (Lao tzu, chap. 25).
the creatures are self-completed are similar to concepts found in Wang Ch'ung. Wang, however, uses "heaven" in place of the commentary's "Tao".

These two similarities between the Lun heng and the Ho shang kung commentary do not tell us which was prior. However, Wang Ch'ung was not secretive about his sources and freely admits intellectual indebtedness. If he, in fact, had access to this commentary, it is strange that he neglected to mention it. The Ho shang kung commentary on the other hand is cryptic and mentions no previous sources, as far as I know. For the commentary not to acknowledge indebtedness is not unusual. Hence it is more likely that the commentary's ideas are taken from the Lun heng, directly or indirectly, than vice-versa. Admittedly this is another argument from silence and has the weaknesses of all such arguments.

The commentary differs from the Wang Ch'ung at a crucial point, namely that it affirms a sympathetic response of heaven to man's actions, a doctrine that was anathema to Wang. As with the concept of yuan ch'i this theory received its formulation by Tung Chung-shu and had become a commonplace notion by the time of the Latter Han dynasty.

The cumulative effect of these concepts makes it reasonably certain that the commentary was not written in the time of Emperor Wen. This, combined with the lack of any reference to it prior to the very end of the second century, makes it likely

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26Ibid. p. 292 (Lao tzu, chap. 47).
to have been written in the second century A.D., when the expression which the commentator uses in common with Wang Ch'ung may have been current.

The Ho shang kung commentary uses the term *tzu jan* rather often. The majority of cases fall into the category of a sense found in the *Lao tzu* itself, namely the way things are of themselves as opposed to the way they are when manipulated by rulers or men. The commentator only once borrows the idea of relying on *tzu jan* found in the *Huai nan tzu*. At only one point does he associate it directly with the Tao. He remarks that the Tao referred to in the main text is the way of *tzu jan*, *tzu jan chih tao* 自然之道. If one follows this way, his desires and his cultural adornments will daily lessen. Following this way means that he will exert no effort. Presumably one lets things go their own way (*tzu jan*) without interfering with them. *Tzu jan* must mean "natural" here, just as it does in the other occurrences in the commentary. Although this occurrence might be interpreted as a reference to an absolute, "self-so" Tao, such an interpretation would isolate this occurrence from the others in the commentary.

All in all, I must conclude that there is nothing very remarkable in the Ho shang kung commentary. On the question of *tzu jan*, it only repeats patterns of thought found earlier.

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27 Ibid. p. 239 (*Lao tzu*, chap. 38).

If its dates were certain, it might show that certain of Wang Ch'ung's ideas were known before his writings became generally circulated, but if its date is as late as A.D. 200, Wang Ch'ung's writings would have been in circulation in any case.

The Hsiang-ehr commentary, which was probably written by Chang Lu, the third Taoist Heavenly Master of the Five Pecks of Rice sect, may also be worth consideration. It dates to sometime around the end of the second century. Although the text in subsequent centuries received attention primarily within the ranks of institutionalized Taoism, there is no reason to suppose it was always isolated from the view of Confucian literati. After all, its probable author Chang Lu, was not a total stranger to the bureaucracy. He did hold office under Ts'ao Ts'ao, albeit on account of his military prowess and not on account of scholarship, and thus had a certain degree of respectability.

The commentary is interesting because at points it treats tzu jan as equivalent to the Tao. Chang Lu comments that the occurrence of tzu jan in Lao tzu, Chapter 23 (赤言自然) is a reference to the Tao, and he adds that if one joins with tzu jan, he can lengthen his days. A similar case occurs in the comments on Chapter 10, in which Lao tzu is identified as a divinity who is the incarnation of the primal unity of reality. This unity is the Tao and is beyond heaven and earth. Then

29 Jao Tsung-i, Lao-tzu Hsiang-ehr chu chiao chien, p. 32.
he makes the following peculiar note:

Whether we call it the void, or tzu jan, or the nameless, these are all the same as this unity.

或言虚無,或言自然,或言無名,皆同一耳。30

And finally in a remarkable comment on Chapter 25 (道法自然), Chang Lu writes,

Tzu jan is named together with the Tao, but it has a different essence. It causes mutual imitation and all together imitate the Tao. Heaven and earth are vast and great. They constantly imitate the Tao in order to live. How could man not respect the Tao?

自然者與道同號異體。令吏相法,皆共法道也。天地廣大,常法道以生。況人可不敬道乎。31

Therefore, tzu jan is not an absolute equivalent to Tao. It is a term which can be used by itself to indicate the Tao, but we may not suppose it to be the same as Tao. It refers to Tao in the same manner that the terms void and nameless do. They suggest some aspect or viewpoint of the Tao but do not capture the essence of the Tao. From the occurrence in Chapter 23, it seems that as an aspect of Tao tzu jan contains power, for one may lengthen his life by joining with it. Chang may be saying only that following the natural course of things leads to long life. One should not wear out his spirit through ambition, nor get himself killed prematurely through entanglements in politics. But more likely he is thinking of Tao as the

31 Ibid. p. 35.
primordial unity before heaven and earth. Thus joining with tzu jan may imply some more mystical process of attaining to the primordial unity.

The same community which produced the Hsiang erh commentary apparently also valued highly a work now known as the T'ai p'ing ching 太平經 (The Classic of Great Peace). Unfortunately the history of this text before the sixth century A.D. is obscure. We know of two works from the Han dynasties with T'ai p'ing in their titles. The two may have been related, the later being a development of the earlier. The later of these two was a text entitled T'ai-p'ing ch'ing-ling shu 太平清領書 in 170 chapters (chüan 卷), which was presented at the court during the reign of Emperor Ling (r. A.D. 136-144). There is also a third work, a T'ai-p'ing tung-chi shu 太平洞極書, and a fourth, a Cheng-i meng-wei ching 正一盟威經, both of which are lost. The former claimed to be revealed to a celestial master and the latter a work purportedly revealed to Chang Tao-ling, the founder of the Five Pecks of Rice sect and the first historical Celestial Master. The extant text of the T'ai-p'ing ching is a work of 57 chapters which dates to the sixth century A.D. Max Kaltenmark suggests that it is almost impossible to establish the historical relationship of the extant T'ai-p'ing ching to these three latter texts. Nevertheless, he argues that some fragments of the T'ai-p'ing ching clearly predate the Taoist Sectarian movement, i.e. before ca. A.D. 180, and that the ideology in general is a reflection of pre-sectarian attitudes closer to classical
ideas than to later Taoism.\(^{32}\)

The Han dynasty 170 chapter version was divided into ten books of seventeen chapters each. There is a ninth century document which appears to be an abridgement of this work, called *T'ai p'ing ching ch'ao 太平聖寳.* This abridgement has ten chapters, whose titles purport to correspond to the ten books of the Han work. Although Wang Ming suggests that the first chapter of this abridgement is a fabrication, the remaining chapters he feels are based on a version of the *T'ai p'ing ching* more complete than the 57 chapter version of the sixth century. Since entire books of the Han work are missing from the 57 chapter version, this abridged version supplies important information.\(^{33}\) Although both extant editions are relatively late and are perhaps only marginally reliable, they offer some interesting material which tends to agree with the concepts found in the *Hsiang erh* commentary.

The second chapter of the abridged edition contains a very explicit conception of *tzu jan* as a separate entity.


According to this conception a triad is formed by yuan ch'i (primordial breath), tzu jan, and heaven. All three receive the Tao and thereby perform their respective tasks. When tzu jan is activated by the Tao, all creatures receive their respective places. Tzu jan thus retains its association with the manner of being of things, but is abstractly conceived as a separate power in the universe. In the same chapter it is also recorded that the yuan ch'i and tzu jan together form the nature of heaven and earth, that is, the world. Kaltenmark observes that in the T'ai-p'ing ching, yuan ch'i is a primordial breath in man which had to be re-discovered in order for man to return to the Tao and thereby attain the Great Peace. We have seen that yuan ch'i was a fundamental concept for many Han thinkers. For the T'ai-p'ing ching to place tzu jan on a level with yuan ch'i is an indication that tzu jan had a fundamental role in its ontology. It functions as a principle of differentiation at a point equal in importance to that of yin and yang or the five phases in other Han dynasty thought.

It is fair to ask how this conception of tzu jan as one of the primordial forces relates to what we have found to be a typically Han association of tzu jan with natural processes.

34 Ibid. p. 21. According to Wang Ming's marginal notes, this is found in the T'ai p'ing ching ch'ao, sec. I 乙, pp. 9-10.


Might this conception be a kind of absolutization of natural processes, in which nature is elevated to a primordial principle? There are many occurrences of *tzu jan* in the *T'ai p'ing ching* in phrases such as "natural technique", *tzu jan chih shu* 自然之術, or "natural laws", *tzu jan chih fa* 自然之法. These seem to refer to only natural processes and natural laws, but not to an operation of a primordial principle. In these cases *tzu jan* probably indicates that the techniques and laws referred to are independent of outside influences, in particular, the influence of human activity. This concept of *tzu jan* is related to the concept of *tzu jan* as a primordial power in that the primordial power is related to the manner of being of all the creatures of the world. In so far as creatures are an expression of the primordial workings of *tzu jan*, their fundamental natures have a relative independence which may be called a natural process of development.

A third use of *tzu jan* occurs in the context of a search for immortality. According to this concept, those who preserve or swallow the *ch'i* of *tzu jan* neither hunger nor thirst. They find their life and do not depart from their roots. This kind of use of *tzu jan* testifies to the power which *tzu jan* was thought to have. It tells us little about the place and nature of *tzu jan*, but only conveys that it was important and

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37 See for examples Ibid. pp. 34, 112, 150, 151, 174.

38 Ibid. pp. 43, 47. Also in *T'ai p'ing ching*, 36.1b-2a and 36.4a.
dependable, a key to the universe and of the restoration of human life to its original good state.

It is somewhat difficult to assess this source. In addition to the problem of dating these materials, it is also difficult to gauge the effect that the writings of this community might have on the elite mainstream of Chinese thought. Nevertheless it appears to be a most remarkable point in the development of the concept of *tzu jan*. When we consider that this community was also the source of other significant developments in the history of Chinese religions, we need not reject the possibility that this development occurred in the Han dynasty. Its significance for the development of Chinese philosophy remains to be seen.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE LUN HENG AND THE CHING-CHOU SCHOOL

The discovery of the *Lun heng* is documented by Ko Hung in his *Pao p'u tzu*. There, two different but not conflicting accounts, tell how Ts'ai Yung (A.D. 133-191) and Wang Lang (d. A.D. 228) discovered the text and brought it into general circulation:

Ts'ai Yung entered Wu (in modern Chekiang province) and first obtained (the *Lun heng*). He secretly toyed with it as an aid in conversation. Later Wang Lang obtained it, and everyone thought his talents increased. Someone said, We are not seeing a different person; he must have obtained a different book*. They asked him about it, and as a result the *Lun heng* flourished.

When the *Lun heng* of Wang Ch'ung had not yet been obtained in the northern regions
(the capital area), Ts'ai Po-chieh (Ts'ai Yung) went to the area east of the river and obtained it. He sighed at its fine writing; it surpassed all the philosophers. Upon his returning to the central kingdom, the literati became aware that his discourses had become even higher, and they suspected that he had obtained a new book. Someone sought it out in a hidden place and obtained the Lun heng. He took several rolls of it along with him, but Ts'ai Yung said to him, "Let's keep this between you and me and not spread it abroad."

A third account in the Hou Han shu mentions that Wang Lang was governor of K'uai-chi when he obtained the Lun heng. He appears to have been awarded this post for his part in keeping order during the Yellow Turban rebellion of 184, and he held the post for about four years. Thus we can say that the Lun heng was brought to the capital sometime between 184 and 188.

Both Ts'ai Yung and Wang Lang have direct connections with Wang Pi (A.D. 226-249), the first great figure of the movement called Mystery Learning, hsilan hsüeh 學 . Ts'ai Yung's library, which the San Kuo chih 三國志 records as being more than 10,000 volumes, was

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39 Both quotes were assembled by Huang Hui, Lun heng chiao shih, Appendix III, pp. 1236-1237. The first was found in the encyclopedia Ku-chin shih-wen lei chü, pieh chi erh 古今事文類聚, 集二 . I have not seen the original reference. The second can be found in the T'ai p'ing yü lan 太平御覽, 602. This source gives no chapter reference for the Pao-p'u tsu.

40 See the commentary to Wang Ch'ung's biography in the Hou Han shu 79. This is translated by Alfred Forke, Lun heng, I, p. 5.
given in part to Wang Ts'an 王粲 (A.D. 177-217), who was a great-uncle of Wang Pi. Wang Ts'an's sons were executed because of a rebellion, and the property of Wang Ts'an passed on to Wang Yeh 王業, the father of Wang Pi. Thus Wang Pi had access to a good number of books of Ts'ai Yung's library. Through Wang Ts'an, who must have been a good friend of Ts'ai Yung, Wang Pi had the opportunity to learn of the scholarship of the Ching-chou group. Wang Ts'an was probably the best scholar of his family before Wang Pi. Although his works do not survive, we know that he valued the Hsi-tz'u 魏書 commentary to the I ching, which is the commentary taken as the basis for metaphysical speculations on the I ching. He also had high regard for both the Lao tzu and the Chuang tzu. He had a reputation for being a good debater. Originally he had ten chüan of writings, and it is probable that Wang Pi had access to them.

41 Ch'en Shou 陳壽, San Kuo chih 三國志, Wei chih 魏志 (Records of the Three Kingdoms: the Records of Wei), 13.12a-b.

42 Ibid. 28.30a-31a. The biography of Wang Pi, written by Ho Shao, in which this information appears, is appended as commentary to the few sentences about Wang Pi in the main text of the biography of his friend, Chung Hui 鍾會. It is translated in Paul J. Lin, A Translation of Lao tzu's Tao te ching and Wang Pi's Commentary, pp. 151-153.

43 See Mou Jun-sun 沐潤孫, Lun Wei Chin i-lai chih ch'ung-shang t'an-p'ien chi ch'i ying-hsiang 論魏晉以來
T'ang Yung-t'ung 吳用彤 was the first to analyze in detail Wang Pi's relationship to the latter Han dynasty, and in particular to the scholars at Ching-chou. In an article written in 1943, T'ang argues that Wang Pi received the interpretation of the I ching from Wang Su 王qui, who studied the T'ai hsüan ching with Sung Chung 宋 宸, one of the scholars at Ching-chou.44 Wang Su was the son of Wang Lang, who had brought Wang Ch'ung's writings to the capital, and he was already a scholar in his own right before meeting Sung Chung.

At Ching-chou the governor, Liu Piao 劉 表, provided a refuge for scholars in the hope that he might be able to sponsor definitive commentaries on the classics. Ching-chou was one of the few places which were not ravaged by war at the end of the Han dynasty, and more than 300 scholars gathered under Liu Piao's sponsorship. They did in fact publish commentaries on the

five classics, although these do not survive. Sung Chung was one of those in charge of that project. He was also an expert in Yang Hsiung's T'ai hsüan ching. Interest in this work was probably a by-product of interest in the I ching near the end of the Han dynasty. Interest in the latter continued, while T'ai hsüan studies declined after the Han fell.

For the connection between Wang Su and Wang Pi, T'ang refers to Chang Hui-yen 張惠言 (d. 1802) an expert in I ching studies, who said that Wang Pi handed down the teachings of Wang Su on the I ching. Apart from Chang Hui-yen's comment however, no other close connection between Wang Pi and Wang Su has been found. T'ang further assumes that since Wang Su studied the T'ai hsüan ching with Sung Chung, Wang Su's approach to the I ching was probably influenced by Sung Chung as well.

Of scholars who have discussed this problem since T'ang Yung-t'ung's article, only Mou Jun-sun 毛潤孫 has offered serious objections to his thesis.


He takes note of the fact that the link between Sung Chung and Wang Pi is tenuous, whereas the link to Wang Ts'an is clear. He cites several fragments of Wang Ts'an showing that he was interested in the thought of the Lao tzu and the Chuang tzu, and that he had an idea of hidden principles in the I ching. Thus it is likely that Wang Pi continued a tradition within his own family and not one going to Sung Chung. Wang Pi and his contemporaries rejected commentaries of the chang chü type common in the Han. Why would they respect the final redaction of these by Sung Chung? Mou Jun-sun does not, however, explain how Wang Pi arrived at his method of arranging the comments on the I ching, a method which T'ang Yung-t'ung claimed derived from Wang Su. Still, Wang Pi's general principle of relying on the "tradition", the ten wings or commentaries, was a widely held position of the Old Text school, dating back to the I ching edition of Pi Chih in the Former Han dynasty. Pi Chih's approach to the I ching was given wide circulation by both Ma Jung and Cheng Hsüan. Both Wang Su and Wang Pi relied on it. The weakness of T'ang's argument lies not so much with the Wang Pi-Wang Su connection as with that

Between the Han and Chin Dynasties), Hsin Ya hsüeh pao 新亚 学报 , 4, no. 1 (1959). And see Mou Tsung-san Wei Chin hsüan-hsüeh (Mystery Learning in the Wei-Chin period), (Taichung: Tunghai University, 1962).

47 Mou Jun-sun, Lun Wei Chin i-lai chih ch'ung-shang t'an-p'ien chi ch'i ying-hsiang, pp. 11-12.
48 Ibid. pp. 18-19.
between Wang Su and Sung Chung. Wang Su's position on the *I ching* might also be traced back to Cheng Hsüan. Although Wang Su considered himself an opponent of Cheng Hsüan, they both worked with the Old Text versions of the classics, and both trace their lines back to Ma Jung. Although I shall not go into further details of the transmission of ideas, it is reasonably clear that Wang Pi owed a great deal to the Ching chou group.

Along with the transmission of certain views of the classics and a new appreciation of the *Lao tzu* and *Chuang tzu*, the art of skilled conversation is also recognized as beginning in this late Han group of scholars. This art, known as "pure talk", *ch'ing t'an* 清談, and practiced throughout the Wei and Chin dynasties, stems from the rise of the consciousness of the individual in the Latter Han dynasty's waning years. Yü Ying-shih 余英時 suggests that in such a sphere in which the sharp tongue and quick wit were highly valued, the writings of Wang Ch'ung must have been held in esteem. His logic and skepticism, his ingenious turning of commonplace notions on their head, his readiness to follow what his mind dictated over against ritual and tradition, should have found a sympathetic hearing among the late Han scholars. Did not Ts'ai Yung?
and Wang Lang both attempt to conceal the book and use it secretly?\textsuperscript{51}

The writings of Wang Ch'ung continued to be circulated in the third century. We know that Yu Fan, in the early part of the century still had a long version of the Lun heng in more than 100 chapters. We also know that Ko Hung at the end of the century had an 85 chapter version which he studied carefully. However, the Lun heng itself receives no direct notice from the scholars whom I will discuss in the remainder of the thesis. Any influence that Wang Ch'ung had on their thinking was indirect. The fact that his writings were admired and discussed in scholarly circles a few generations before Wang Pi provides the basis for the possibility of that indirect influence. It remains to be proved that the concepts of those thinkers bear some relationship to Wang Ch'ung.

WANG PI, JUAN CHI, AND HSIANG HSIU

To close this chapter and to lead us up to the end point of the thesis, namely the thought of Kuo Hsiang, I would like to discuss briefly several thinkers of the Wei and Eastern Chin dynasties who used the idea of tzu jan. I will not attempt to analyze thoroughly the thought of any of them, but I will restrict myself to examining the use they make of tzu jan.

Of Wang Pi's writings, only in the commentary on the Lao tzu is the term tzu jan an important one. It appears nowhere

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid. pp. 59-60.
in his essay on the *I ching*, the *Chou I lüeh li* 周易略例, and I know of only two references in his commentary on the *I ching*. But in the commentary on the *Lao tzu* it appears quite often and with a fairly consistent meaning.

At this point in history *tzu jan* is well established as an expression meaning "natural", but Wang Pi remained very conscious of its original meaning, so-by-self, and did not use *tzu jan* lightly as a synonym for nature. In the majority of occurrences it refers to the functioning of things and conduct of man as they are in themselves without outside interference. Wang Pi also implies that the way things function of themselves is the most reliable. In this, of course, he depends on the position developed in the *Huai nan tzu*. The correlation between *wu wei* and *tzu jan* which this position implies is also found. If things are best when they are left to themselves, no interference from either heaven or the sage will be allowed.

Yet Wang Pi's idea of *tzu jan* extends beyond the conception of the *Huai nan tzu*. Following the lead of the text of the *Lao tzu* itself, he connects *tzu jan* with the Tao. His most lengthy discussion of this connection is his comment on the difficult passage in Chapter 25 which I have analyzed in detail already. On the difficult phrase, "The Tao models itself on

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52 For examples see *Lao tzu* 5, 20, 27, 28, 29, 37, 42, 45. See especially Chapters 27, 29, 37, and 45.

53 *Lao tzu* 5, 29, 37.

54 See above, Chapter one, pp.15-21.
tzu jan," Wang Pi comments in part:

The Tao does not go against tzu jan and thus obtains its nature. "To imitate tzu jan" means that in squares (it) imitates the square and in circles (it) imitates the circle. There is nothing in the self-so which (the Tao) opposes. Tzu jan is a word which does not name and is an expression which exhausts the ultimate (of reality).

Wang Pi here understands tzu jan to be a property of things. For square things the Tao imitates their squareness, that is, the natural condition of the things. Throughout this paragraph tzu jan can only mean "the way things are of themselves." He obviously does not read tzu jan as applying to the Tao itself, but understands that it is the nature of the Tao to accord with the way things are of themselves. Thus Wang alters what I understand to be the original meaning of the text by reading it with what is essentially a Han dynasty perspective. Ch'ien Mu agrees that the original meaning of Chapter 25 was that there is nothing higher than Tao, but he also says that Wang Pi's interpretation isolates tzu jan as a separate entity. He suggests that for Wang Pi there is a sphere or way of tzu jan, (tzu jan chih tao 自然之道) which is greater than and encompasses the way of heaven, earth, Lao tzu, 25.
Chien Mu also asserts that Wang Pi uses **tzu jan** as a new term for the void, *wu* 句, but this assertion must be more closely examined.

We might suppose that "the way things are of themselves" is even superior to the Tao, for the Tao must acquiesce in the squareness and roundness of things. However, there is another possible way of conceiving the relationship, which is suggested in the concluding sentence of the paragraph quoted above. There Wang Pi assigns a special value to **tzu jan**, namely ineffability. He is suggesting that the word **tzu jan** points to something which is too great to be grasped by human knowledge. Since in the text of the *Lao tzu* itself it is the Tao which is ineffable, we might conclude that Tao and **tzu jan** mean the same thing for Wang Pi, but it would be preferable to find some conception of **tzu jan** which could also include the other occurrences of **tzu jan** in the commentary. I suggest that one way of doing this is to conceive of **tzu jan** as the principal characteristic of the manifested Tao, that is, this reality, *yu* 禹, with its concrete objects. So conceived, **Tzu jan** is the evidence in reality of the workings of the hidden Tao. The individual, concrete uniqueness of each thing in the cosmos existing the way it does by virtue of its own self is that uniqueness which cannot be grasped by

thought or word. The fact that we use tzu jan as a collective term to refer symbolically to that multiplicity of unique manifestations of Tao means in the final analysis that the word has no specific referent. Unity is found in Tao, whereas tzu jan is a single term for a multiplicity. One might say that it has no real content, because it has no power to predict how a certain thing will function but refers to the fact that in whatever way a thing functions, insofar as it is the natural expression of the Tao, it will function that way of itself. Therefore, tzu jan is a "word which does not name", yet is "an expression which exhausts the ultimate (of reality)".

A problem with this explanation still remains, however. How does Wang Pi use the word "ultimate", chi 處, ? It is identified with wu 無, the unchanging base or root of reality, or does it belong to yu 甬, the manifested reality? I suggest that he reserves "ultimate" for the most important point in reality, and calls non-being, wu, the super-ultimate or supreme ultimate. This distinction is illustrated in the following passage. At a certain point in discussing the numbers of heaven and earth, he notes that although 50 is the number of heaven and earth, only 49 numbers are used. One is the basis of the other numbers. Then he makes the following distinction:

Thus this (oneness) constitutes the super-ultimate of the process of change; 49 constitutes the ultimate of numbers. Non-being cannot be manifest through non-being; this must be done by means of being. Therefore, it is always through the ultimate of existing things that the origin from which these things come (i.e. oneness or non-being) must be made manifest.
This makes it very clear that one should not identify non-being with the ultimate, which may also be thought of as the limit, but only with the super-ultimate, ta chi 太極, or supreme ultimate, t'ai chi 太極 of the I-ching itself. Hence it is very consistent to ascribe tzu jan to the manifestation of the Tao and not identify it either with wu or the Tao itself. On the other hand, Wang Pi is not as consistent as I would like him to be. He also identifies wu with the ultimate, chi 極. However, I tend to rely on the language of the passage above in which Wang's attention is focussed on the contrast between chi and ta chi rather than on passages in which chi is mentioned in passing. Of course, the phrase in which tzu jan is described as an "expression which exhausts the ultimate" is just such a passing mention. Nevertheless, I relate this sense of "ultimate" to the above quote because it enables us to arrive at a general concept of tzu jan which includes most of its occurrences.

57 Chou i Wang Han chu 周易王韓注 (Wang Pi and Han Po's commentary on the I-ching), (Ssu-pu pei yao ed.) 7.6b. The translation here is that of Derk Bodde, modified, in Fung Yu-lan, History, II, p. 182.

58 See Lao tzu, 6. However, another example in which chi 極 and tzu jan are loosely connected in the world of existing things appears in Wang Pi's commentary on the I-ching, 1.6a.
Wang's discussion of the ultimate also illuminates very clearly the importance of 
tzu jan as a means of knowledge of the Tao, for it is through the ultimate of existing things that the Tao can be made known. Tzu jan as the epistemological intermediary between man and the Tao was already present in the Huai nan tzu, but only in the general sense that it could be relied on for knowledge. Here a very specific position in the hierarchy of being is assigned to tzu jan, which gives particular philosophical expression to what began as a religious affirmation of reliability.

The stage for this particular philosophical expression was set, I believe, by Wang Ch'ung. Since ch'i was the basic stuff of reality for Wang Ch'ung, tzu jan was a key element in understanding the processes of reality. For Wang Pi, there is a basis beyond this world of existing things, but within this world of existing things, tzu jan is that which points beyond to the super-ultimate. Although Wang Pi does not seem to be specifically aware of Wang Ch'ung's position, his thought reflects the place given to tzu jan.

This interpretation also throws light on other passages in which tzu jan seems to be applied directly to the Tao. In Chapter 23 Wang writes that the words which describe the Tao have no flavor and cannot be seen or heard. He concludes that,

...flavorless words, not worth listening to, are the perfect words, so of themselves.

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Lao tzu, 23.
If we read *tzu jan* as Wang uses it in Chapter 25, above, there is no difficulty of interpretation, even though, read in isolation, this sentence virtually equates *tzu jan* with the Tao. If *tzu jan* is the key to understanding the Tao, the "perfect words" are words which stand at the boundary of reality and point to the Tao. The words referring to the Tao are not themselves the Tao, but by virtue of being *tzu jan* are able to refer to the Tao and thus provide that epistemological link between existent reality and the Tao.

There are three cases in which the phrase *tzu jan chih tao* occurs. In all three of these cases it is best to understand *tzu jan* as a collective term for natural objects, including man, and read the phrase as "the way of natural things" or "the way of nature". In none of these cases can the term *tao* be read as the eternal, unchanging Tao.

Ch'ien Mu also draws our attention to the relation of principle, *li*, and *tzu jan* in Wang Pi's writings. He suggests that Wang Pi considers the perfect principle to be *tzu jan*. The only close linking of these two concepts occurs in *Lao tzu*, Chapter 42. There Wang Pi says:

I (the sage) do not force people to follow something, but I use the way something is of itself in order to point out its true principle. Following it will surely bring fortune and going against it will surely bring misfortune.

60 *Lao tzu*, 15, 17 and 22.
Clearly, *tzu jan* is not equivalent to the perfect principle but is something used to point out the principle. It is a means of gaining knowledge about true principle but not necessarily the true principle itself. *Tzu jan* may not be conceived too abstractly here. It stands somewhat in opposition to forcing the situation, *shih*, although not exactly in parallel construction. The sage is not taking advantage of some realm of abstract principle but of the natural course of events in order to uncover the true principle of the situation. 63

A contemporary of Wang Pi, Hsia-hou Hsüan 虢俛 (A.D. 209-253) may have gone further than Wang Pi in the process of making *tzu jan* a separate realm or entity. A fragment of his writing is preserved in Chang Chan's 張湛 commentary on the Lieh tzu 列子:

Heaven and earth rotate according to *tzu jan*.  
The sage functions according to *tzu jan*.  
*Tzu jan* is the Tao.  

天地以自然運, 僑人以自然用。  
自然者道也。  

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61 Ch'ien Mu, "Kuo Hsiang Chuang tzu chu chung chih tzu-jan i", p. 390.  
62 Lao tzu, 42.  
63 For a discussion of the concept of *li*, also see Ch'ien Mu, "Wang Pi Kuo Hsiang chu I Lao Chuang yung li tzu tiao-lu" 王弼 郭象注易老莊用理字條錄, Chuang Lao t'ung p'ien, 141-178, and Wing-tsit Ch'an, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept *li* as Principle," *Ch'ing hua hsüeh pao* 清華學報 (Tsing-hua Journal of Chinese Studies) n.s. 4, no. 2 (1964) 123-149.
Because of the fragmentary nature of this quote, we cannot discern precisely what Hsia-hou Hsüan understood by the word *tzu jan*. The obvious interpretation is to assume that he thinks *tzu jan* is an abstract principle equivalent to the Tao. Heaven, earth, and the sage have some kind of access to this principle, and they function in accordance with it. It is in fact, then, nothing but another name for the Tao. However, such an interpretation represents a sharp break with the traditional use of *tzu jan*. The only precedent seems to be that of the Hsiang erh commentary. Not even Wang Pi's understanding that *tzu jan* is the ultimate point of being referring to the Tao can be grafted onto this bald statement that the Tao and *tzu jan* are in some sense the same. However, Hsia-hou Hsüan's concept is found in an elaborated form in the thought of his contemporary, Juan Chi (A.D. 210-263).

Juan Chi uses *tzu jan* in a way that suggests it is an abstract power. In a short essay titled 'On understanding Chuang tzu', he raises *tzu jan* to the place of cosmic origin:

64 *Lieh tzu chu 列子注* (The *Lieh tzu* with commentary) 4.5a-b.

Heaven and earth were produced by tzu jan; the ten thousand things were produced by heaven and earth. Tzu jan has nothing outside it and therefore heaven and earth took their names from it. Heaven and earth have something within them; therefore the ten thousand beings can be produced there. Facing the limitlessness of the one (that is, tzu jan), who could say there were differences in it? Facing the content of the other (that is, heaven and earth), who could say there were dissimilarities in it?

It is quite impossible to read tzu jan in this paragraph as being anything other than a separate entity. It is clearly a power beyond heaven and earth which produces them. Juan Chi characterizes it by an idea similar to that found in the Chuang tzu, the idea of being without limit. In this case Juan Chi uses the expression wu-wai 無外, having nothing outside it. The same connection re-occurs a little later in the essay, when he compares the ideas of Chuang tzu and the six classics. The former discusses the highest ideas, while the latter have only teaching about allotted social positions. Referring to the ideas of Chuang tzu, he says,

66Juan Chi, T'a chuang lun, in Mou Tsung-san, Ts'ai hsing yu hsüan li, p. 298. The translation here is that of Holzman, Poetry and Politics, p. 104, slightly modified. Holzman notes that the expression wu wai 無外 is that of Hui Shih 許 師, as recorded in the Chuang tzu, Chapter 33.

67See above, Chapter 1, pp. 13, 45.
When one approaches something great, then he may go as far as possible and find nothing beyond it... He who follows zuo jan and assimilates his nature to that of heaven and earth talks about the distant and vast.

大而臨之,則至極無外。循自然,性天地者,寥廓之談也。

Still Juan Chi retains most of the historical sense of the expression zuo jan. The way of zuo jan and the principle of zuo jan are contrasted to man's self-adornment, his artificial distinction of right and wrong, his fear of death and love of life. Tzu jan is associated with the calm mountain and the depths of the valleys, the sun and moon in their courses, and even the mutual relations of father and son, ruler and subject. Juan Chi thus retains the common meaning of zuo jan, namely, the course or patterns of things left to themselves without interference by man, and he retains the ideas of following and relying on zuo jan.

Juan Chi is the first to describe zuo jan as limitless. But it may be best to say that neither he nor Hsia-hou Hsüan truly identified zuo jan with the Tao as such. Although it may replace the Tao in their conception as the reliable basis of reality, it is not, as Donald Holzman has already pointed out, simply a new term for Tao. It is not a term for the absolute

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69 Donald Holzman, Poetry and Politics, p. 100.
unity at the foundation of the relative multiplicity of this world. The previous development of the term implied an affirmation of the multiplicity of the world as having some value in itself. Thus, to exalt tzu jan is some way or other always meant an acceptance of the "natural" side of factual reality. Therefore after the opening definition of tzu jan, quoted above, Juan Chi continues by describing the interaction of various parts of the cosmos, with a unity running through them all. He does not reduce them to a unity, but says they are "of themselves one body" (自然一体). The whole process is "the rise and fall of a single vital breath, transformed but not harmed" (一气之盛衰，变化而不伤) 70. The unity is not something in which differences are dissolved, but is a pervasive thread through reality in which multiplicity is preserved. Holzman suggests this is explicit in the phrase "one body".71

Whether Juan Chi was in any way influenced by the thinking of the popular Taoist movements is difficult to say. For Chang Lu, the author of the Hsiang erh commentary, tzu jan was in some way an alternate name for the Tao, but one which suggested only a facet of the Tao. If Juan Chi is to be thought of as continuing that tradition, then he is a skeptic, for he seems to doubt that there is anything beyond the facet itself. For Chang Lu knowing tzu jan is a way to know the Tao, but for Juan

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Chi knowing *tzu jan* is an end in itself.

Juan Chi also extends the theme of the reliability of *tzu jan* one step further by making it ultimately reliable. As we saw, Wang Pi came quite close to this concept, and at that point in history it was not a great leap of thought to take. The concept of *tzu jan* in the Han dynasty had been sufficiently elevated so that it could function as a basic principle in systematic thought. For these post-Han thinkers, the search for a new source of order easily moved in that direction. As a final principle of natural processes, *tzu jan* became a key to the order of universe and the conduct of men's lives.

Finally, I would like to single out Hsiang Hsiu 向秀 (ca. 225-ca. 300) a younger contemporary of Juan Chi. Hsiang Hsiu is famous as one of the seven worthies of the bamboo grove, and is known particularly as a friend of Hsi K'ang 稽康 (223-262). Hsiang wrote a commentary on the *Chuang tzu*, one which Kuo Hsiang is accused of heavily plagiarizing. The accusation of plagiarism was first made in the *Shih shuo hsin yü* 世説新語, and repeated in the *Chin shu* 聖書. It is said that Kuo Hsiang saw Hsiang Hsiu's commentary and incorporated most of it in the commentary under his own name. Later a copy in the possession of Hsiang Hsiu's son came to light and was published, thus supposedly proving the plagiarism.

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of Kuo Hsiang. These reports were not seriously challenged until modern times, although there was always enough doubt about it that Kuo Hsiang's name remained attached to the commentary. Only fragments of the Hsiang Hsiu commentary survive, found quoted in the commentary of Chang Chan on the Lieh tzu, written sometime in the mid-fourth century and in Lu Tse-ming's Chung tien shih wen 經典釋文 written in 583. Several collations of the Hsiang Hsiu fragments have been made and compared with similar or identical passages in Kuo Hsiang's Commentary. Most modern scholars are agreed that although Kuo Hsiang had access to some notes and possibly a rough commentary of Hsiang Hsiu, Kuo still exhibited a great deal of his own thought. The differences between the two are generally thought to be too great to call Kuo's use of Hsiang Hsiu an outright plagiarism.  

Ch'ien Mu asserts that the fragments of Hsiang Hsiu's commentary show that his idea of tzu jan was markedly different.

73 For a summary of the scholarship on this question see Huang Chin-hung 黃錦鈞, "Kuan-yü Chuang tzu Hsiang Hsiu chu yü Kuo Hsiang chu," 關於莊子胡注與郭象注 (On the Chuang tzu commentaries of Hsiang Hsiu and Kuo Hsiang), Tan-chiang hsüeh-pao 淡江學報 9 (Nov. 1970) 17-32. Huang himself argues that the traditional assessment was correct and that Kuo Hsiang contributed nothing new. A second summary with greater emphasis on Japanese scholarship may be found in Shin Un Chol, Kuo Hsiang 郭象, a Rational Taoist (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1976).
from that of Kuo Hsiang. He groups Hsiang Hsiu together with Wang Pi, Ho Yen, and Hsia-hou Hsüan in that he believes all understood tzu jan as a realm in itself which produces all the creatures of reality. We have already seen that in Wang Pi's case this assertion is unfounded. For Hsia-hou Hsüan, Ch'ien Mu based his assertion on the fragment of text I quoted above. We have also found a similar position however in Juan Chi, whom Ch'ien Mu does not mention. Shin Un Chol in a recent dissertation dealing with the thought of Kuo Hsiang follows Ch'ien Mu's interpretation. 74

This interpretation rests essentially on two passages, both of which are fragments quoted in Chang Chan's commentary. The more important one occurs in the T'ien tuan chapter of the Lieh tzu. The main text says that that which gives life to things and changes things is neither living nor changing. This position is basically that of Wang Pi and Ho Yen in which Being, yu, is thought to be produced by Non-being, wu. In the conclusion of the argument, the Lieh tzu says,

Therefore that which gives birth to things is not alive and that which changes things does not change.

故生物者不生，化物者不化。 75

75 Lieh tzu, 1.2b.
Chang Chan remarks first that this sentence also appears in the *Chuang tzu*. It is not in the extant text, which is Kuo Hsiang's edition, but apparently it was in Hsiang Hsiu's text. Chang Chan then quotes the comment of Hsiang Hsiu at that point as follows:

> If my life is not produced by something, then life merely produces itself. How could that which produces life be a thing? (There is no such thing) and therefore it is not alive.
> If my changing is not changed by something then the changing merely changes itself. How could that which causes the changing be a thing? There is no such thing, and therefore it does not change. If that which gives life to things is also alive, and that which changes things also changes, then it must change right along with things. Then how is it different from things? This makes it clear that only something neither alive nor changeable is able to be the root of life and change.

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76 It is similar to *Chuang tzu*, Chap. 6, 3.7b. "That which ends life is not dead; that which produces life is not alive."

77 *Lieh tzu*, 1.2b. There appear to be a few textual problems in this paragraph. Wang Shu-min 王叔岷 in his *Lieh tzu pu cheng 列子補正* (The *Lieh tzu*, amplified and corrected), (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1948) suggests that the three characters *wu wu yeh 無物也* be added before the phrase
As I try to follow the logic of Hsiang Hsiu's comment, I think the first problem arises with the phrase, "then life merely produces itself" (則 生 自 生 耳). On the face of things, this seems to conflict with his references to "that which produces things" (生物者). If things are produced of themselves, is there still some producer or not? Hsiang Hsiu seems to imply there is, for he sets down necessary conditions for such a producer. It cannot be a thing, nor can it be alive or change. The question then seems to be--does he in fact assert that there is such a producer or does he lay down conditions for such a producer which make it impossible for it to exist? The main text of the Lieh tzu asserts the existence of such a producer, and Hsiang's comment does not explicitly contradict it. Although Hsiang was commenting on a

ku pu sheng yeh 故 不 生 也 in order to be parallel with the sentence below, namely 無 物 也 故 不 化 矣. Since these characters answer a rhetorical question, their addition merely smooths out the reading. Also on the grounds of parallelism, I suggest that the phrase fei wu chih so sheng 非 吾 之所 生 be read as fei wu chih so sheng 非 物 之所 生. In addition to the fact that this substitute is parallel to the phrase fei wu chih so hua 非 物 之所 化, the logic of the argument is better satisfied with this substitution, since the conclusion is that there is no thing which produces life. Further references to "my producing my own life" do not occur. Unfortunately, I have found no previous commentator who supports me on this point. Shin Un Chol misread the last sentence, substituting the character t'ien 天 for the character fu 夫, and thereby draws the erroneous conclusion that Hsiang Hsiu regards Nature or
different text at a point where we do not know the context, it still seems impossible to escape the conclusion that Hsiang Hsiu also affirmed the existence of the producer of life. Indeed it would be quite radical if he were to deny it. Besides the theory of his contemporaries about wu producing yu, the *Chuang tzu* itself speaks of the creator, tsao wu che 造物者.

But when Hsiang introduces the idea of self-production, he introduces a contradiction. I suggest that the conflict between self-production and the Great Producer must be allowed to stand, to be resolved only in the thought of Kuo Hsiang. As I will show in the following chapter, Kuo Hsiang relates the problem of self-production to *tzu jan*, while denying the existence of a producer. In the extant Hsiang Hsiu fragments there is only this inchoate expression of an idea which becomes a major theme in Kuo Hsiang.

The affirmation of a non-living, non-changing absolute at the base of reality is coupled by Ch'ien Mu with a second passage. There Hsiang Hsiu is recorded as saying,

Things merely having form and shape like this are not good enough to be taken as prior beings. Only *tzu jan* may be taken as that which is prior.

Heaven as that non-living and unchanging entity which is the root of life and change. See Shin, *Kuo Hsiang* p. 17 and Chap. I n. 32.

*Chuang tzu*, Chap. 6, 3.8b, et. al.
Both Ch'ien Mu and Shin Un Chol take this as evidence that tzu jan constituted some realm of being prior to the world of things, and that it probably produced them, as was asserted, for example, by Juan Chi. Kuo Hsiang has a comment identical with the first sentence, but significantly omits the second sentence. We will see that in Kuo Hsiang this idea that no thing can precede another thing is closely related to his idea of self-production. It is likely that production and temporal priority are also connected in Hsiang Hsiu's thought. Ch'ien Mu's conclusion that Hsiang Hsiu is here making tzu jan the creator of things may be correct. However, I think this is an undeveloped concept in Hsiang Hsiu, perhaps uncritically borrowed from Juan Chi or others dependent on Juan Chi. This use of tzu jan is inconsistent with his use of tzu jan elsewhere.

In his only surviving essay, "Objections to (Hsi K'ang's) "Nurturing Life" Nan yang sheng lun 難養生論", Hsiang Hsiu uses tzu jan five times. Donald Holzman interprets all of these cases as "natural". I believe he is correct, but it must be emphasized that "natural" is a powerful idea.

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79 See my earlier remarks on this problem in Chapter 2, pp. 121-123.
80 Lieh tzu, 2.5b.
In each of these five occurrences it is the end of the argument. If something is natural, who can argue with it? Hsiang Hsiu describes human feelings, the good effects of eating grain, and eating when hungry as *tzu jan*, and even refers to the natural order of heaven, *t'ien li tzu jan* 天理自然. This last case in particular shows that *tzu jan* is connected to a principle of order in reality; it is above human activity. Hsiang notes that even the three great kings could not change it. But although this concept of *tzu jan* is a lofty one, there is no reason to assume that *tzu jan* constitutes an independent entity. It is the principles of heaven which are unchangeable; *tzu jan* characterizes these and provides the assurance that the principles are reliable.

The remnants of Hsiang Hsiu's writing all show a high value placed on the concept of *tzu jan*, but also contained contradictory elements. It is likely that his thought stimulated the thought of Kuo Hsiang but also presented him with difficulties which had to be resolved. How successful Kuo was will be discussed in the following chapter.
CHAPTER IV. KUO HSIANG

BIOGRAPHY AND METHOD

We are told in his biography that Kuo Hsiang displayed talent already as a youth, and he was fond of Lao-Chuang studies. He was known in high social circles, although he did not take a high post, preferring to spend his time with literature. He did, however, serve as a palace attendant and as a Grand Tutor to Prince Yüeh of Tung-hai, that is, Ssu-ma Yüeh 司馬越 (d. 311).\(^{1}\) Kuo died in A.D. 312.\(^{2}\) The biography of Hsiang Hsiu tells us that Kuo Hsiang's revision and expansion of Hsiang Hsiu's commentary took place in the reign of Emperor Hui 懷, 290-306.\(^{3}\)

I have several times in the course of this thesis made the assumption that one can isolate the thought of a commentary from that of the text on which it comments. I do not think this assumption needs to be vigorously defended. Naturally, one must be alert for cases in which the commentator merely re-phrases the principal text without actually articulating concepts of his own. Much of Kuo Hsiang's commentary does precisely that. He saw himself, after all, as an explainer of Chuang tzu. His is the earliest extant commentary on the Chuang tzu and is still valuable for its assistance in understanding the Chuang tzu. But the commentary also has been

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\(^{1}\) Ssu-ma Yüeh eventually became the power behind the throne in 303 and in 306 emerged victorious in the war of the eight princes. See his biographical sketch in A New Account of Tales of the World, Richard Mather, tr., (Minneapolis: University of
recognized as a system of thought in itself. It contains long discussions relevant only to its own internal system. He even proceeds somewhat from topic to topic as he works through the Chuang tzu, so that references to a certain concept tend to be grouped together in a few chapters.

Kuo Hsiang has received a fair amount of scholarly attention, although a definitive study has not yet been written. The article by Ch'ien Mu and the dissertation by Shin Un Chol, to which I have already referred, focus on the thought of Kuo Hsiang and cover to some degree the problem of tzu jan. Feng Yu-lan translated a few fragments of the Kuo Hsiang commentary in his translation of the Chuang tzu and then devoted an entire chapter to the commentary in A History of Chinese Philosophy. Hou Wai-lu, after re-asserting the authorship of Hsiang Hsiu, devotes considerable space in his history to "Hsiang Hsiu's commentary". T'ang Yung-t'ung, Jung Chao-tsu, and Mou Tsung-san have also included it in their studies. On the Japanese side, Nakajima Ryūzō has more recently published a general study, while a very good study was done earlier by Seki Masao. Fragments of

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2 Chin shu 輿部, 50.5a.
3 Chin shu, 49.9a-b.
5 Hou Wai-lu 侯外 京 , et. al. Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang
the commentary are translated in the two sources by Fung Yu-lan and in Wing-tsit Ch'an's *A Sourcebook of Chinese Philosophy*.\(^8\) A complete translation and grammatical study of Chapter One was made by Birthe Arendrup.\(^9\)

Kuo Hsiang has several concepts which I have not discussed previously, and he has his own peculiar understanding of some well-known ideas. I shall try to assemble the key passages for each of several major concepts. Since several of these passages are relevant to more than one topic, I will number them according to the order in which I cite them, so that I may refer back to my translation of a passage by that number.\(^10\)

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\(^8\) Wing-tsit Chan, *Sourcebook*, pp. 326-335.
The concepts which I am about to discuss are related in the following manner. The first two ideas, allotment and limit, refer to Kuo's concept of a natural place or potential for each creature in the world. The order of these natural places is guaranteed by the principles or patterns inherent in each of them. In the diversity of natural places, there is a unity or harmony. Knowledge of this unity is found through ming, the dark joining achieved by the sage. The effect of that achievement by the sage is a harmonious human community as an external manifestation or trace of the sage. Finally Kuo probes for the nature of the basic unity. He examines the concepts of being and non-being, but finally he rejects both and confines himself to accepting the factual self-identity of things, tzu jan, as the highest principle which can be known.

ALLOTMENT, FEN, AND ULTIMATE, CHI

A concise description of fen in the Kuo Hsiang commentary is given by E. Zürcher in The Buddhist Conquest of China.\(^9\)


\(^10\) I will cite the Ssu-pu pei-yao edition of the commentary, noting if and when I cite variants. I will not footnote each citation separately, but I will insert the chapter number, and the chüan and page number of the SPPY edition in the main body of my text. Photo reprints of the Chinese texts may be found in Appendix I.

\(^11\) Erik Zürcher, Buddhist Conquest, pp. 90-92.
Hou Wai-lu has also given special attention to this concept. Paul Demieville wrote a short report on the concept of fen in Chinese philosophy. Demieville noted that in pre-Han times it was a Confucian and Legalist concept connected with social order, rectification of names, and law. He suggests that its revival in the third century A.D. was part of a desire for order in society.

According to Kuo Hsiang, one's allotment or share in life is what each person or thing is given. This allotment is the capacities which are built into his nature. Thus some men are born to be poor and others rich, some ignorant and some wise, some rulers and some subjects. Although Kuo does not say clearly how one's fen is obtained, it is closely connected to one's nature which is received from heaven.

(1) In the heavenly nature which one receives, each has his basic allotment. None can escape it, and none can add to it.

天性所受各有分。不可逃亦不可加。

(Ch. 3, 2.3b)

Kuo Hsiang uses fen to explain the Chuang tzu passages on the relativity of things. Where the Chuang tzu uses the very great in order to show insignificance of the small, Kuo argues that it is not small or great that is important. There is no virtue in being either small or great, for that is one's lot. What one must do is know his place and his limits and then let his conduct perfectly match those limits, neither falling short nor exceeding them:

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12HOu Wai-lu, Chung kuo ssu-hsiang, III, pp. 244-247
Although the small and the large are different, yet if they are placed in positions where they can fulfill themselves, then things follow their natures; their tasks match their ability and each is suited to his lot. In being free and happy they are one. How could superiority and inferiority be allowed in their midst?

夫小大雖殊而放於自得之場。則物任其性，事稱其能，各當其分，逍遥一也。豈容勝負於其閒哉。

(Ch. 1, 1.1a)

Now the great bird travels a half-year to the celestial lake and then rests. The small bird flies half the morning hastily alighting on elms and sapanwood. In comparing their abilities there is a difference, but in adapting to their natures they are the same.

夫大鳥一去半歲至天池而息。小鳥一飛半朝，搶榆枋而止。此彼此所能則有別矣。其於適性一也。

(Ch. 1, 1.1b-2a)

Now if one compares forms, then Mt. T'ai is greater than an autumn hair. If each relies on their allotted nature and things darkly join their limit, then a large thing will have no excess and a small thing will not be insufficient...If one regards the sufficiency of form as great, then none of the sufficiencies of the world surpass that of the autumn hair.

夫以形相對則大山大於秋豪也。若各據其性分，物冥其極，則形大未為有餘，形小亦為不足。○○○若以形足為大，則天下之足未有過於秋豪也。

(Ch. 2, 1.18b)


14 Comments (2), (3), and (4) are all translated by B. Arendrup, "Guo Xiang's Commentary", pp. 313, 319 and 327.
Thus to Chuang tzu's imaginative attempt to relativize the human scale of life by recounting tales of the super-large, Kuo Hsiang seems to ask, "What virtue is there in being large? The P'eng bird cannot land in your garden. He too is limited by his size in that he needs large areas for his habitat."

Happiness for Kuo Hsiang then is satisfaction with one's lot in life, with one's natural place. This does not mean that one accepts the status quo, but rather that one must fulfil his capacity, do the best that his natural abilities will allow. Kuo identified the freedom of man, the "free and easy wandering" of the Chuang tzu, as the matching of one's actions to his capacity to act. In addition to the remarks found on this in comment (1) above, Kuo notes:

(5) If, when lifting something heavy or carrying something light, one's spirit and breath are natural, this is within the limits of his strength. But he who esteems fame and loves victory is not satisfied though he repeatedly breaks his back (with the effort). The cause of this is that knowledge has no limit. Therefore the term 'knowledge' arises from losing sight of the suitable, and it is destroyed in darkly joining with the limit. He who darkly joins his limit (or ultimate) fulfils his perfect allotment and cannot increase it by a single fraction of an ounce. Therefore, though he carries several tons, if it is equal to his ability, he (suddenly) is unaware of the weight on his body. Though

respectively. Comment (4) is also translated in Chan, Sourcebook, p. 329 no. 15, and in Fung Yu-lan, History II, pp. 228-229. I have used certain phrases from these translations but have not quoted them in toto. A passage on fen similar to comment (4) may be found in Ch. 1, 1.2b.
he responds to all matters, he will be blissfully unaware that the affairs lie on him. This is "the principle of nurturing life". (Chapter title)\(^{15}\)

失舉重攜 輕而神氣自若，此力之所限也。而尚名好勝者雖復絕跡猶未足以懶。其願此知之無涯也。故知之為名生於失當而滅於冥極。冥極者任其至分無毫鉬之加。是故雖負萬鈞苟當其所能則忽然不知重之在身。雖應當極泯然不覺事之在己。此養生之主也。

(Ch. 3, 2.1a)

Thus in addition to physical characteristics, fen also governs action, particularly human action.\(^{16}\) Kuo here provides a theoretical base for the personal characterization that was an integral part of selection of officials as instituted by Ts'ao Ts'ao, in which individuals were assigned to one of nine classes on the basis of their abilities. The idea of evaluating individual capacities was also prevalent among scholars, both in works such as Liu Shao's 前後紀 (fl. ca. 224) Jen wu chih 人物志 (Record of Personalities) and in "pure talk" circles generally.\(^{17}\)

Closely related to fen is the term chi 材。Chi is a two-edged sword for Kuo Hsiang since it means both "ultimate"

\(^{15}\)This is also translated in Chan, Sourcebook, p. 331, no. 21 and Fung, History, II, p. 221. A related passage may be found in Ch. 4, 2.15b, which is translated in Fung, History, II, p. 223.

\(^{16}\)See also Ch. 6, 3.1a.

\(^{17}\)See Erik Zürcher, Buddhist Conquest, pp. 44, 93.
and "limit" at the same time. The concept may be used as an incentive to attain a truly high point, but it always implies that there is a definite boundary beyond which one cannot go. Thus in comments (4) and (5), I translated the phrase ming 

chi 畼極 as "darkly joining (one's) limit", but it may equally well be translated as Wing-tsit Ch'an does, "silently harmonizing with (one's) ultimate capacity". Derk Bodde translates it more freely as "fully accept one's limitations". In the sense "limit", Kuo means to say that each must stay in his (her, its) place. If one tries to go beyond his limit, disorder will arise. But the sense "ultimate" implies that this limit is also the perfection of the creatures of the world. If each thing reaches its individual ultimate, there will be a perfect and harmonious world. Moreover, there is power in reaching one's limit. When one achieves this state, it is not possible for mere things to control him. On the phrase in the Chuang tzu "...how can things stop him?", Kuo comments:

(6) He who reaches his limit is not something things can control.

夫至極者非物所制。

(Ch. 19, 7.2a)

Both fen and chi are associated with principles, li 理, as well as with things. Although I will discuss li in more detail later, I quote here two passages illustrating this

Chi becomes a more important concept in Sung Neo-Confucianism. Joseph Needham argues that chi is not any limit but a focal point on a boundary. For the Neo-Confucians, it is an organizational center. See Science and Civilization, II,
association. The first is found in the discussion of the great and small which we have already mentioned:

(7) ...Therefore, principles have their perfect divisions and things have fixed limits. Each is sufficient to perform its task, and their contribution is one.19

故理有至分，物有定極。各足稱事，莫濟一也。
(Ch. 1, 1.2a)

The second passage illustrates Kuo's idea of the harmony of a proper inner stance and free outer action:

(8) Now principles have perfect limits and outer and inner darkly join. There is no one who exhausts the limits of wandering on the outside without darkly joining that to the inside. There is no one able to darkly join (with things) on the inside who does not wander on the outside. Therefore, the sage is always roaming on the outside to broaden the inside; he is without deliberation in order to accord with existence. Therefore, although to the end of his days he moves his body, his spirit does not change. All around him he looks on all affairs and is indifferently self-so.20

夫理有至極，外內相冥。未有極遊外之致而不冥於內者也。未有能冥於內而不遊於外者也。故聖人常遊外以弘內，無心從順有。故雖終日揮形而神氣無變。俯仰萬機而淡然自若。
(Ch. 6, 3.10b)

Kuo Hsiang is not concerned with establishing some kind of theory of limitations on li 理 , but with following the logical consequences of principles to their utmost. It is not that Kuo is


19 See Birthe Arendrup, "Guo Ziang's Commentary", p. 322.

20 This is partially translated in Fung, History, II, p. 236.
saying that there are things greater than *li*, which is limited, but that principles have a central focus, a pole, a point about which they are unified. To reach their "limit" is to expose this unity and the nature of the organization around it. Thus, principle is a word for the underlying order of reality. In this case a perfect and consistent application of principle means that the inner wisdom of the sage is always balanced by outer action in the world.

When applied to individual creatures, *fen* refers to order and division, to the fact that reality has a structured character so that parts function to make a harmonious whole. When applied to the concept of principle, *fen* does not have the same social sense found earlier, but still has the general sense of a definite order which must be accepted.

*MING*, THE SAGE, AND TRACES, CHI

We have already encountered the idea of *ming* in comments (4), (5), and (8) and the idea of the sage in comment (8). Kuo understood that allotment and limit, although they explain the diversity of functions of things, also display the basic unity and harmony of the world. Now *ming* is essentially an epistemological concept in Kuo's thought, the means by which this basic unity can be known. I group these three concepts together because *ming* represents a certain ideal action which is realized only by the sage.

The basic meaning of *ming* is "dark", but it also means "deep", "distant", or "silent". In the school of Dark Learning
it was sometimes used as a synonym for heaven, thought of as a dark and mysterious place. Extending the meaning of "dark", it can mean "not understanding". But extending its meaning of "silent", ming can mean "tacit understanding". Given such a range of meaning, Kuo's use of ming will have to be decided by its context.

Kuo occasionally uses ming in its ordinary sense of "dark" or "darkly", for example, ming jan 冥然, but his more frequent and more philosophically important use is a verbal form, as in the instances already cited. Kuo Hsiang's most extensive discussion of ming occurs in the passages in the context of comment (8). The Chuang tzu records a conversation between Confucius and his disciple Tzu-kung. Tzu-kung had attended a funeral at which the two friends of the dead man were laughing and singing. Confucius explained this by saying,

Such men as they wander beyond the realm; men like me wander within it.22

(Ch. 6, 3.10b)

At this point Kuo inserts comment (8), which I translated above only in part, in which he argues that a true sage unites both

21 See, for example, Ch. 6, 3.8a. "The 'mysterious dark' (of the Chuang tzu text) is that by which one names non-being but is not itself non-being. (玄冥者所以名無而非無).

22 This translation of the Chuang tzu text and those below through comment (11) are taken from Burton Watson, Chuang tzu, pp. 86-87.
inner and outer, and that the *Chuang tzu*'s explanation was that which the world could apprehend. But, Kuo insists, one could not deny that Confucius was a true sage. The *Chuang tzu* continues,

> Beyond and within can never meet...Even now they (the two "mourners") have joined with the creator as men to wander in the single breath of heaven and earth.

> 外內不相及...彼方且與造物者為人而遊乎天地之一氣。

(Ch. 6, 3.10b-11a)

Kuo comments,

(9) They are all in silent union with it; therefore, they are not two (breaths).

> 皆冥之故無二。

(Ch. 6, 3.11a)

It is from a phrase like this that one gets the impression that *ming* involves some kind of union. It is not clear, however, who is the subject of *ming*. Kuo might be referring only to the fact that heaven and earth are of one breath, but it is more likely that he includes the sages along with heaven and earth. These have a unity because they *ming*. There is some kind of active relationship between them. This unity is beyond the level of conventional knowledge, for Kuo does not challenge the *Chuang tzu*'s remark that "Beyond and within do not meet." However *ming* is a relationship between the beyond and the within, for in comment (8) we saw that "outer and inner mutually *ming*" (外內相冥). For a true sage, outer and inner could not exist alone. *Ming* thus implies a relation-
ship between them established by the sage. At this point we might think that the sense of ming as "tacit understanding" could explain this relationship, but it is difficult to see how outer action could be capable of "understanding". A bit farther on, the Chuang tzu says,

Idly they roam beyond the dust and dirt; they wander free and easy in the realm of inaction.

(Ch. 6, 3.11b)

Kuo comments,

(10) This "realm of inaction" is not folding one's hands silently and nothing else. "Beyond dust and dirt" does not mean hiding in the mountains and forests.

(Ch. 6, 3.11b)

The Chuang tzu continues,

Why should they fret and fuss about the ceremonies of the vulgar world and make a display for the eyes and ears of the common herd?

(Ch. 6, 3.11b)

Kuo comments,

(11) Those things by which they make a display to the common herd are all merely their dust and dirt, and they are not the dark understanding of things, which comes from beyond this realm.
Here Kuo tries to place the sage between the hermit and the ritualist. The sage who wanders in the beyond is not a hermit, but the rituals of the common herd are dust and dirt for him. It is Kuo's holding in tension in the sage man's inner freedom and an outer orderliness.

The sage's wandering in the beyond or the outside is conditioned by the phrase *ming wu* 聞物. Although *ming wu* might mean "to understand things", the understanding is such that it is either harmonizing with things or in some way joining with them. This is also shown by Kuo's frequent use of the phrase "*ming with things*" *yǔ wū ming* 聞物, as, for example, in the following passage. On a *Chuang tzu* passage which berates the Yellow Emperor for using benevolence and righteousness Kuo comments,

(12) The Yellow Emperor did not intend to be benevolent and righteous. When he directly harmonized with things, then the traces of benevolence and righteousness appeared of themselves. When the traces appeared of themselves, the hearts of later ages, necessarily sacrificed themselves for them. This also means that the traces of the Yellow Emperor cause things to be disturbed.

夫黃帝非為仁義也。直與物冥, 則仁義之迹自見。迹自見, 則後世之心必自殉之。是亦黃帝之迹, 使物櫟也。
(Ch. 14, 4.16b)

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23 Hou Wai-lu has a list of several places where the phrase *yǔ wū ming* 聞物 occurs. See Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang, III, p. 233.
Benevolence and righteousness are by-products of a direct harmonizing with things; they are epiphenomena and should not be mistaken for that dark experience which lies behind them. Ming is a deep understanding which is mysterious because it cannot be seen; only traces of it are visible.

That Kuo uses ming in the context of the true reality at the foundation of all things may be seen in the chapter titled "Knowledge Wanders North". The Chuang tzu text remarks that the maker of things is not limited by things. Kuo comments,

(13) This shows that that which makes things "things" is no thing, but things make themselves "things" and that is all. Things make themselves "things", therefore they are dark...Things have limits, therefore none is able to mysteriously understand another. Thus they are truly what is called limited.

"明物無物而物自物。物自物而, 故冥也...物有際, 故相與不能冥。然真所謂際者也。"

(Ch. 22, 7)

Just how things become things cannot be known in an ordinary sense. It is dark and therefore hidden to ordinary knowledge. It is available only to the one who can darkly join with that darkness. A similar distinction between knowledge and some super-knowledge is also present in the Chuang tzu itself, when the text speaks of obtaining the Tao. In such a context, Kuo has also introduced the concept of ming:
(14) All obtaining of it (the Tao) not through knowledge is ming.

凡得之不由於 知乃冥也。

(Ch. 22, 7.28a)

Thus Kuo uses ming to indicate the mysterious knowing or apprehension of the Tao. It is a grasping of the Tao through some means other than conventional knowledge.

When Kuo discusses ming, the sage, and the traces of the sage, the same distinction between ming and knowledge appears. In discussing the legendary emperor Yao, for example, Kuo explains why Yao was both a true sage and ruler. He suggests that these were two Yaos, the true Yao and the one whose actions are perceived by the people:

(15) ...Yao is not the same as Yao. Yao truly darkly apprehended. His traces are Yao. Looking at the darkness from the traces, it is not surprising that the outer and inner become different regions. People of the world see Yao's being Yao. How could they recognize his darkness?

24 See translation by Birthe Arendrup, p. 361.
Here ming is the dark mystery in which true reality is comprehended. It is both that by which the sage's actions are made manifest and the place or faculty by which true apprehension, or unconditioned knowledge can be gained. In *Chuang tzu* ch. 5, Kuo makes his clearest statement on how this true apprehension leads to right action, but that it cannot be directly perceived in the actions. Lao Tan in the *Chuang tzu* text remarks that Confucius should be freed of his chains and fetters and see that life and death are one. Kuo comments by using the concept of ming to justify the sage character of Confucius:

(16) He (Lao Tan) desires to take immediate principles to mysteriously understand it (the awareness of life and death being one) and he longs for its tracklessness...

Now Confucius was not unappreending. According to natural principles, when one moves, the shadow follows; when one speaks, the echo follows. If one accords with things, his fame and traces are established. But the according with things is not for the sake of fame. Since it is not for sake of fame, it is perfect. Still, in the end he did not avoid fame. Then who is able to free himself from it? Therefore fame is a shadow and an echo. The shadow and the echo are the chains and fetters of shapes and sounds. When this principle is understood, then fame and traces can be abandoned. When fame and traces are abandoned, then esteem for others can be cut off. When esteem for others is cut off, then one's nature and destiny can be completed.

欲以真理冥之冀其無迹...今仲尼非不冥也。顧自然之理，行則影従，言則響隨。夫順物則名迹斯立而順物者非為名也。非為名則至矣，而移不免乎名。則孰能解之哉。故名者影響也。影響者形聲之桎梏也。
Reputation is a natural consequence of true understanding. But it is impossible for that reputation to indicate the true understanding because of the condition of the perceived. He is bound by his position, indeed his fated allotment, to be able to perceive only the traces of the sage. Nevertheless, although he cannot see the true understanding, the ordinary man can at least realize that traces of the sage are not his true nature, and that he need not idealize those dead remnants of the sage's work. When one cuts off the exaggerated esteem for the works of others, then one can concentrate on fulfilling the potential of his own allotted nature, doing the best possible with one's own capacities and not merely emulating the sages.

A great deal of Fung Yu-lan's analysis of Kuo Hsiang concerns the sage and his characteristics. I will therefore do no more than summarize a few main points. The word sage is used in two senses in the commentary, as it is in the *Chuang Tzu* itself. There is the true sage, and there is the one who has only the trappings of the sage. This latter "sage" merely emulates the traces of the true sage. Moreover, the true sage has a split personality, his true reality on the inside and the traces of that reality on the outside. True

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sagehood is cloaked in darkness and mystery. Even when a certain person is remembered as a sage, the memory is not that of the true sage. Yet these historical sages still possess a oneness of nature:

...therefore the sage is one, but there are the differences of Yao, Shun, T'ang, and Wu. That which makes this difference clear is that they are merely the names from different periods. They are not sufficient to name the reality of the sage.26

故聖人一也。而有堯舜湯武之異。明斯異者時世之名耳。未足以名聖人之實也。

(Ch. 11, 4.16b)

This oneness of the sage through time is not a transcendant oneness or an achievement of supra-mundane sphere through ecstatic activity. But it is a mystical unity. The character of true sagehood is not affected by history, because historical and cultural manifestations of sagehood are always partial, and therefore distorted, expressions of reality. The sage's fundamental way of relating to the world is to accord with the nature of things, and the nature of things is the same in all times. The sage's perception of this nature is ineffable, it is dark, and it is not accessible from the standpoint of discursive knowledge. By following the nature of things, the sage imposes no distinctions of his own, but he allows things to take their

26 A similar passage asserting the oneness of the sage may be found in Ch. 12, 5.10b.
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i n t h e c a s e o f men and e v e n t s o f t o d a y ,
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B u r t o n Watson, Chuang t z u , p.

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In general Kuo is in accord with the point of the *Chuang tzu* that the concreteness and individuality of everyday experience is prior to reflection on it. However, he adds the ontological concept of the true nature as the heart or center of that concrete experience.

Another passage which relates the concept of "traces" to human nature occurs in Chapter 9:

(19) The term "the sage" (as used in the *Chuang tzu* text) is merely the traces of the fact that people realize their natures (under this rule). It is not that by which the traces were made. When his passage says "Then comes the sage", it is saying "then come his traces"... Now since the sage's traces are a manifestation, benevolence and righteousness are not true and rites and music depart from one's nature. With them, one merely obtains an external form and that is all. Wherever there is a sage, there is this corruption. What can we do about it?

The key idea in this passage is the idea of "realizing one's nature", *te hsing* 得性. For a person to realize his nature undoubtedly means attaining the limit of his allotment. Such attainments lead to an orderly, harmonious society. By attributing the source of that order to the particular techniques of the ruler of that time, his rites
and music, etc., people mistake these for sage wisdom. However, since such a mistaken tendency is in the very structure of human life, Kuo ends in perplexity over what can be done about it.

A third term which relates to these two is the concept of being without traces, *wu chi* 無迹. We have encountered this term before in comment (16), where it seemed to refer to an apprehension of the oneness of life and death. However, according to Kuo's conclusion in comment (19), traces cannot be avoided. Kuo explains this contradiction by saying that the true sage does not himself make the traces, but the traces appear of themselves in the form of an ordered human community (see also comment (12)). Therefore, it seems that the traces of the sage do not really belong to the sage.

In another comment on bogus sages, Kuo draws that distinction:

(20) Now the matter of Mr. Yu-yü and Mr. T'ai is entirely the traces of the world's affairs, and is not that by which the traces are made. That by which the traces are made has no traces. Who in the world can name it? Not being even once named, how can there be the victory and defeat (of T'ai over Yu-yü)? Yet he who has no traces rides the myriad changes and walks in all ages. The world has its levels and hills, and therefore there are places paths do not reach.

夫有虞氏之與泰氏皆世事之迹耳。非所以述也。所以述者無迹也。世孰名之哉。未之嘗名何勝負之有邪。然無迹者乘羣變履萬世。世有危險，故迹有不及也。

(Ch. 7, 3.15a)
Here Kuo's analogy makes plain that the "shoes" go everywhere, but that paths by their nature are limited and do not go everywhere in the world. The sage may have walked where the paths are, but undoubtedly he had no intention of making paths. The actions of the sage's walking seems to trigger some kind of response so that the paths arise of themselves. In this way the logical contradiction that there are no traces of that by which traces are made is partially explained.

Wu chi, being without traces, is truly achieved by using the principle of tzu-jan. The sage accords both with his own natural course and that of other things:

(21) The king is able to follow his acting of his own accord. Therefore he is without traces.

(Ch. 12, 5.9b)  

Acting of one's own accord, tzu-hsing 自行, is merely a variation on tzu-jan. The sage-king must act according to the dictates of his own nature; only then is he without traces. However, the sage's conduct allows others to operate out of their selves. On the lament of the Chuang tzu that the times did not recognize former sages, who could have walked about the world restoring unity without leaving

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any trace, Kuo comments,

(22) (They) would return to following the nature of things and things of themselves would be unified. Hence there would be no trace of them.29

反任物性而物自一，故無迹。
(Ch. 16, 6.5a)

Being without traces is therefore a result of the non-contrivance of the sage. This is Kuo Hsiang's extension of the idea in the Lao tzu in which the sage king acts in such a way that the people imagine they accomplish everything themselves. Of course, the non-recognition of sages is a cause for concern in the Chuang tzu passage, but Kuo makes it a matter of the structure of things. In so doing he actually contradicts the Chuang tzu text at this point. Kuo argues that it is not the problem of the age that the sage is not known. Rather it is the very nature of sagehood that the sage cannot be known.30

Hou Wai-lu further suggests that Kuo Hsiang distinguished between "traces" and "traces which can be esteemed", k'o shang chih chi 可尚之跡.31 The first traces of the sage are legitimate evidences of his action in the world.

29 See also Ch. 22, 7.24b-25a.

30 The unknowability of true sagehood should not be identified either with the hidden sage found in certain parts of the Chuang tzu. It is only the inner sage and not the outer sage who is hidden, according to Kuo Hsiang.

But when the sage matches with the principle of things, then the traces disappear (Ch. 1, 1.4b). But if the former traces are separated from their source and made something in themselves, they truly become harmful:

(23) From before the three dynasties, there have truly been traces of non-action. The traces of non-action are also that which contrived action rests on esteems. When one esteems them, he loses their natural simplicity.

自三代以上，實有無為之迹。無為之迹，本有為者之所上也。尚之則失其自然之素。
(Ch. 9, 4.4a)

Corruption of the natural simplicity of the traces arises when they are esteemed, when followers of a sage try to preserve him by writing his words down (see comment (19)). Such disciples or the bogus sages (see comment (20)) leave traces which can be esteemed and this is the nature of their fault:

(24) Their faults all stem from the fact that their traces could be esteemed.

其過皆由乎迹之可尚也。
(Ch. 9, 4.8b)

I think Kuo must have considered these indirect traces also as traces of the sage. He still regarded the six classics as traces, although they clearly fall into the category of estimable traces. Nevertheless, such estimable traces are one step removed from the actions of the sage and are derivative from the natural, legitimate trace, the outer manifestation or expression, of those actions. Therefore, the distinction of traces and estimable traces illustrates
that the traces themselves are not bad. In fact as a natural phenomenon, they are good, but they may not be valued in themselves.

Although traces are natural aspects of the past which may not be valued in the present, they are also not utterly worthless in the present. Kuo seems to regard them as a stepping stone to higher knowledge:

(25) He who models himself on the sage merely imitates the sage's traces. Traces are things which are already past; they are not means of responding to changes. How can they be worth esteeming and holding onto? But grasp the completed traces in order to ride on the Directionless. When the Directionless is attained, the traces will be obstructed.

Building on the metaphor of paths through the hills and valleys, Kuo suggests that the paths at least acquaint one with the landscape before one begins to wander freely. If one reaches the state such that any direction is possible and such that he can respond to the unlimited changes of reality without being limited to set courses of action, then he leaves the paths behind. Although they were once a tool for him, he abandons them when their time of usefulness is over. As a stage of learning, the traces are also positively beneficial. Later Kuo comments that when the sage reaches the stage of apprehending the limits of things,
then,

(26) his traces are the traces which benefit things.

其迹利物之迹也。

(Ch. 10, 4.11b)

Kuo is probably making a case here for learning and education as a stage of attaining wisdom. Thus the concept of traces may be seen as analogous to Wang Pi's notion of words, images, and ideas. According to Wang, after one comes to know the image, the word which brought him to that point is discarded. Traces are like words. They serve for a time, but may not be isolated from that service. If one isolates traces from their function, then that which appears good in its place becomes an evil.

THE QUESTION OF BEING AND PRINCIPLES, WU/YU 无有 AND LI 理

I have already mentioned that Wang Pi, following the Lao tzu and the Chuang tzu, spoke of Tao in terms of non-being, wu 无 , which was regarded as the source of all being, yu 有 . Wang Pi did not think of wu as the absolute non-existence of anything, but as an unchanging root, standing over against the changing reality of man's everyday experience. However, he seems to have been aware of the limitations of the term "non-being", namely that it implied that literally nothing was there.

On Lao tzu, Chapter 14, he remarks,

> We may wish to say it is non-being, but things are completed by it. We may wish to say it is being, but we see no form.

欲言無邪而物由以成。欲言有邪而不見其形。

However, in spite of these objections against the use of either wu or yu to describe the Tao, most of Wang's writings imply that wu is the supreme origin of all things.

Kuo Hsiang attacks Wang Pi and those who agreed with him at exactly this point—that wu means "nothing", and thus it cannot be the origin of existing things. Kuo did identify wu with the Tao, but what he challenges is the idea that wu is the origin of yu. His position on this is clear. Wu cannot be the origin of things, because it is nothing. Things, which collectively constitute existence, have no origin outside of themselves. It is not only that non-being does not give rise to being, but being also cannot become non-being. "Existence" cannot ever cease to be, and hence the collective existence of things has always been. The conclusion would seem to be that Tao and the reality of this world would stand as eternal opposites. As for the production of things, not even yu, the abstract collective existence of all things, produces things, but things are produced

33 Lao tzu, Wang Pi chu, Chapter 14.
of themselves. There is no external origin of things.\textsuperscript{34}

Although Kuo denies a causal production of the cosmos, he does have a temporal order. There is a beginning of things in the realm of being, although just beyond the limits of rational analysis:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(27)] The one is that which is perfectly subtle at the beginning of existence. Because it is perfectly subtle it does not yet have the forms of things and principles. Now the arising of the one is an arising from the perfect unity and is not an arising from non-being. So why is it that Chuang tzu repeatedly says that non-being is at the beginning? The very first thing is not born and then it achieves birth. It achieves this difficult thing of being born, and yet above it does not rely on non-being and below it does not wait for knowledge, but it suddenly of itself obtains this birth. Why should one base birth on that already born, thereby losing its self-production?

\begin{quote}
一者有之初至妙者也。至妙故未有物理之形耳。夫-之所起於至，非起於無也。然莊子之屬稱無於初者何哉。初未生而得生。得生之難而猶上不賅於無，下不待於知，突然而自得此生矣。又何營生於已生以失其自生哉。
(Ch. 12, 5.5a)
\end{quote}

The perfect unity is the primordial unity, the unity which is not even "one" and which is not yet the object of knowledge. It relies on nothing, neither non-being nor knowledge, but is a perfectly subtle, mysterious, self-created entity.

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{34}The relevant passages supporting my general description can be found in Fung, \textit{History}, II, pp. 208-210.
\end{quote}
It is difficult to find further elaboration of the relationship between "wu" and "yu" in the commentary. While Kuo Hsiang never spells out the relationship, he does suggest that there is some relationship closer than that of eternal opposites. For example, he agrees with Wang Pi that there are words which indirectly lead one to a realm of non-being beyond this world. In the Chuang tzu the Lord of the North Sea says that there must be some form before one can speak of coarseness and fineness, the gross and the subtle. Things are what can be spoken of and conceived, and what cannot be spoken of or conceived does not relate to coarseness or fineness. Kuo comments,

(28) It is merely nothing (wu) and no more. How could it be a coarse or fine thing? Now speech and concepts are existent, but that which is spoken of and conceived are not existent. Therefore one seeks it in the outward manifestation of speech and concepts and enters the realm which has no speech or concepts. Thereafter he is perfect "arrives there (at non-being).

Words and concepts are guideposts or markers which send one in a direction. In the end the guidepost must be abandoned in order for man to reach this realm of non-being.

A similar passage in Chapter 6 has the same basic
point. After describing how one finds the way, Woman Crookback (as Burton Watson translates her name) lists a chain of persons through whom this knowledge came to her. Kuo understands this list as a series of progressive stages on the path to knowledge. He takes the seventh step, the Mysterious Dark, hsüan ming 玄冥, as the turning from the named to the unnamed, which he calls wu:

(29) The Mysterious Dark is used to name non-being but is not non-being itself... Now he who relies on names to arrive at non-being must find non-being through manifestation of names. Therefore, although the Mysterious Dark is not yet the ultimate, it sends one into Participation in Mystery (the eighth stage). This too is the "mystery of mysteries"35... Now he who accumulates and completes self-so principles relies on the near to attain the distant and investigates the coarse to attain the fine. Therefore at the seventh stage one attains to the name of non-being. At the ninth stage, one suspects there is not this beginning.

From this passage it is clear that one can move from knowledge of being to knowledge of non-being. It is almost the same concept as that of Wang Pi in different

35"Mystery of mysteries" is a quote from Lao tzu, Chapter 1.
terminology. For Kuo the Mysterious Dark is not yet non-being, but it names non-being. The Mysterious Dark is a point in the realm of being which points to non-being. It "pushes and sends", t'ui chi 推寄, one into the realm of non-being, which is the mystery of mysteries.

For Wang Pi, however, such a connection was possible because of a real, ontic relationship; wu produced yu. Kuo rigorously denies this. Since Kuo implies a connection, we must return to the question of on what basis this connection is possible. Kuo seems to be suggesting something in his obscure description of the ninth stage. In this stage one suspects there is not this beginning. Does this phrase possibly imply a dialectical movement from being to non-being and then to a point from which the division can be reconciled? If this ninth stage does represent some kind of transcendant point dialectically achieved, there must be some ontic ground which guarantees the possibility of this transcendant knowledge.

In addressing this problem Seki Masao suggests four possible ways in which the connection between wu and yu might be imagined. He concludes that Kuo Hsiang does not give enough information to decide between the alternatives. Since two of Seki's alternatives involve the concept of principle, li 理, I shall first examine the concept of principle in Kuo's thought before taking up Seki's arguments.
For Kuo, principles are not things, but a different kind of reality. They appear in things, but they also appear in the realm of the unlimited. It is not yet clear whether the unlimited is to be identified with Tao and wu, and I have found no direct statement that the realm of non-being itself has principles. However, for the moment, we can see that only the sage can perceive that there are principles in both the realms of the limited and unlimited, and it is part of his wisdom that he does not try to join them. On the sentence of the Chuang tzu which reads, "As for what is beyond the Universe, the sage admits their existence but does not discuss it," Kuo comments,

(30) Now "what is beyond the Universe" means just that which is outside of the allotted natures of all the creatures. Although there may be principles beyond the nature of things, if these do not fall within the allotted natures, then they never stimulate the sage. Therefore the sage has never discussed them. If he were to discuss them, he would cause things to try and learn what they cannot. So he does not discuss what is beyond them and all within the eight boundaries (the world) are the same in their self-realization.

夫六合之外謂萬物性分之表耳。夫物之性雖有理存焉而非性分之内，則未嘗　從感聖人也。故聖人未嘗論之。若論之則是引萬物使學其所不能也。故不論其外而八畔同於自得也。

(Ch. 2, 1.19a)

36 Translation by Burton Watson, Chuang tzu, p. 44, modified.
This passage shows further that sage wisdom will not be something which will bring \( \text{wu} \) and \( \text{yu} \) together. If in fact the sage transcends the division (and this is not yet clear), he also sees the impossibility of communicating that transcendant knowledge to creatures in the realm of being. At any rate, the concept of the sage's knowledge only drives us back to the question of the ontic basis of this knowledge. Although principles exist beyond the creatures, it is not yet clear whether they provide some kind of connection between the realms of \( \text{wu} \) and \( \text{yu} \).

In things principles are seen by Kuo from several viewpoints. They represent order among the creatures of the world; they are the pattern which penetrates everywhere. Principles are manifold. Kuo does not see the principles of things as the differentiation of one great, primordial principle. As we have seen in comments (7) and (8), principles are associated with the natures of individual things. As individual natures are limited, so also principles have a specific character which limits them. As I have suggested above, Kuo is not so much concerned with the origins and limits of principles as he is with the consequential, logical following and carrying out of the principle to its very end. To carry out the consequences of the principle of a thing is nearly the same thing as maximizing one's allotment. In Chapter 17, Kuo remarks,

\[(31) \quad \text{If one's travels and deeds go beyond his allotment, and driving and walking lose}\]
their integrity, then heaven's principles are destroyed.

若乃走作過分，驅步失節，天理滅矣。

(Ch. 17, 6.11b)

Another aspect of fen, in addition to its limiting character, was its prescriptive character. Fen is what one is supposed to become. Similarly, principles are not merely a pattern, but prescribe a pattern. One must carry out the consequences of principle if one wishes to enjoy the full benefits of his nature. Thus Kuo identifies principle as a necessity. It is not an inescapable necessity; it is at least possible to violate principles, but principles remain as the compelling "ought" of human conduct. For example, when Confucius advises Yen Hui to make oneness his home and live with what cannot be otherwise (一宅而寓不得巳。), Kuo remarks,

(32) That it "cannot be otherwise" is that principles are necessarily so. Embody the dwelling of the perfect unity and match the tally of what is necessary.

不得已者理之必然者也。體至一之宅，

會乎必然之符也。

(Ch. 4, 2.7b)

In addition to the idea of necessity, comment (32) also introduces something related to how one knows li. The concept that one somehow "matches", hui 會, with principles is also introduced through Kuo's comment on the Chuang tzu's marvelous story of Cook Ting cutting up the ox without ever
dulling his blade:

(33) (He) merely lodges the principles of the Tao in his skill. That which he loves is not the skill. (When he began cutting up oxen, he) was not yet able to see the li and the spaces. (After three years, he) merely saw its li and the spaces, (but now he) darkly matches with the principles (li).

直窮道理於技耳。所好者非技也。
未能見其理開。但見其理開此。闥興理會

(Ch. 3, 2.1b-2a)

The term li originally meant veins or grain in wood, lines running through something and this meaning is still present here. From this meaning developed the idea of a structure or pattern within the thing. One may be tempted to understand this pattern as a rational order. For Kuo I do not think this is the case. Although there is that in the pattern or structure of things which can be logically seen, true knowledge of principle is this "dark matching". I take this to be an integral, intuitive grasp of principles whose harmonious wholeness is beyond the limits of ordinary knowledge.

In general in Wei-Chin dark learning, principles are thought to be the patterns of the Tao or Heaven. One might suppose that if the principles of the Tao are principles in things, then principle may be the basis on which the wu/yu division is transcended. Indeed, Seki Masao offers this as two of his four alternatives. But if the principle of the Tao is present in the realm of being, this presence must be thought of in terms of a causal agency of non-being
in the realm of being. Having already rejected wu as the origin of yu, Kuo probably could not conceive of causation in terms others than "giving birth to". Therefore, he is very careful to insist that principles are so of themselves, that is, they are independent of an outside agency. Kuo remarks that principles are perfected when the ruler is non-active in ruling, but active in employing ministers. Then,

(34) ...the principles of heaven are so of themselves and they are not contrived.

(Ch. 13, 5.13b)

In another chapter on the phrase "none gets (knows) its principle" (莫得其論), Kuo comments,

(35) Principle is so of itself; therefore no one gets it.

(Ch. 27, 9.7b)

Later in the same chapter, when the Chuang tzu expresses the unknowability of one's fate or of the existence of spirits, Kuo remarks,

(36) Principles must have responses as if there were spirits which cause them...Principles respond mutually of themselves. This response does not follow any cause. Therefore, although there is mutual response, there are no spirits.

(Ch. 27, 9.9a)
Thus although there is a regularity and even a compulsion in the workings of principle, Kuo does not admit any outside cause which would be deeper than principle itself.

Now I would like to turn briefly to Seki Masao's treatment of the problem of the relationship of being and non-being. He suggests four possible ways in which *wu* and *yu* might be connected. They may be summarized as follows:

1. When Tao and *li*, conceived as *wu*, begin their influence in the formless being, then that being becomes perceivable.
2. Tao and *li*, being in the formless being, become things when they reach the stage of being perceived as conforming to the true substance of that thing.
3. Things are those limited beings which perceptual knowledge can grasp, whereas non-being is that reality grasped by conceptual knowledge.
4. The one whose knowledge surpasses all distinctions has his knowledge joined with the evolution of primordial being, which is the *wu* of Tao. But in the process of evolution, this knowledge is separated from

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its object which it thinks of as "other." Then things become known as things.

Although Seki is of the opinion the Kuo Hsiang does not provide sufficient material to decide between these alternatives, some of them are much less plausible than others. The third alternative is easiest to reject, since we have just seen that conceptual knowledge is limited knowledge for Kuo Hsiang. We should not identify conceptual knowledge with the intuitive, integral knowledge of Kuo's sage. Hence this division of knowledge into perceptual and conceptual is inappropriate.

As for the first alternative, the real problem is not to know when things are perceivable, but to know what is the nature of the influence of Tao and li on the formless being. In a sense, Seki is begging the question. He is assuming that there is some primordial unity prior to any wu/yu division. However, Kuo does not have a simple inclusion of wu in the primordial being. In comment (27) he denies that the formless perfect unity arises from non-being, yet in comment (28) there is the suggestion that gaining knowledge of the formless led one to non-being.

The same problem exists in the case of Seki's fourth alternative. I think Seki is correct in assuming that for Kuo the sage's knowledge transcends all distinctions and that the evolution of knowledge involved a separation of the sagely subject from the object of his knowledge. But
what is the object of that original knowledge? Is it indeed a primordial unity which somehow encompasses both being and non-being? Or is Seki saying that wu is a concept which is nothing more than a by-product of the separation of the subject and object? A careful reading of comment (27) indicates that this interpretation may be possible. It says only that non-being is not the source, but does not say that the source is therefore being. The wu/yu distinction could be conceived as arising after the differentiation of the one. But Kuo also points out that the differentiation of the one does not wait upon knowledge, and therefore wu cannot merely be an epistemological construct.

Seki’s second alternative depends on what is meant by li "conforming to the true substance", jisshitsu to shokusuru. If he means some kind of direct identity of li with the true substance of things, then this alternative is also inadequate. Substance is a word with many shades of meaning, but all seem to imply some kind of material reality at the base of things. Seki describes li as substance when he discusses the limited aspect of principles. However, as I have argued above, li is not matter or stuff, but the organization, the patterns of things. On the other hand if he supposes that this "conformity" is harmonious agreement with the material basis of things, so that organizing principles only agree with the nature of the
substance, then his argument may be more plausible. It may be analogous to saying, for example, that clay may be shaped into a pot, but not into a broom. When that joining of principle and substance takes place, then the principles become perceivable. However, this analogy breaks down when examined further. Li represents the order and structure of things. Then there cannot be different kinds of material apart from li. There is already a structural difference between the materials of clay and straw, for example. Logically, one is driven back to the position that the substance must be totally formless. All form must originate with the action of principles. Then what content can be put into the concept of conforming to the true substance? In English, at least, the very word "conform" implies that some form is previously present.

The puzzle of what conforming may mean might find an answer in Kuo's concept of zuo yan. As we have seen to some extent already, Kuo thinks that one must always rely on the way things are in themselves. The idea of conformity might be expressed as allowing natural, that is, uncaused, processes to develop without interference. In the evolution of the ineffable, primordial unity, principles, as self-operating entities, never interfere with the self-development or self-production of the original unity.

In his fourth alternative, Seki implied that the wu/yu
division is an evolution from the primordial unity. Although I think Kuo rejects the epistemological slant of Seki's argument, it is worth investigating whether or not this evolution occurs as part of naturally harmonious whole which unfolds according to its own natural essence. Could *tzu jan*, the principle of self-operation, be Kuo's court of last resort, the common element between *wu* and *yu*?

**TZU JAN**

Kuo Hsiang uses *tzu jan* more frequently than any thinker we have examined thus far. As synonyms he uses *tzu jo* and *tzu erh* 自若, 自爾. Another word with nearly the same meaning as *tzu jan* is *tu hua* 獨化, "to singly transform" or "self-transformation", which implies that things change without outside causes. I shall divide my discussion of *tzu jan* and these related words into two broad categories, first, the relationship of man (and other things) to *tzu jan*, and second, the relation of Heaven, Tao, and related concepts such as *li* to *tzu jan*.

Each man, according to Kuo, is endowed with a nature which has a very specific capacity. As we have seen, one attains perfection, or full self-realization (自得) through following one's nature, that is, the way one is in himself. Kuo brings these concepts together as he offers a definition of *tzu jan* and describes it as a standard
"Heaven and earth" is the general name for all creatures. Heaven and earth take the creatures as their body, and all the creatures take tzu jan as their standard. Tzu jan means not acting but being naturally so. Therefore the great P'eng bird's ability to go high and the quail's ability to stay low, the Ch'un tree's ability to live long, and the morning mushroom's ability to live a short time are all natural capacities, and not the capacities of contrived action. That they do not contrive these things but are able to do them of themselves is how they become correct. Therefore to "mount the standard of Heaven and earth" means to follow the nature of things. To "ride the regulation of the six breaths" is to wander on the road of change. Travelling in this way, where can one go and reach a limit?

Kuo continues by saying that a man who follows both the natures of things and all changes is truly independent. But since he follows other creatures, he is dependent on them. He gains independence through dependence, and thus there is no real distinction between independence and dependence. The dependence of things is their allotment, and their perfection, of course, lies in remaining dependent.  

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A translation of the full paragraph may be found in
Tzu jan is connected with a number of things in this paragraph. The basic contrast seems to be that of natural (tzu jan) action to contrived action. Non-action or non-contrivance is for Kuo not merely a task of the ruler, as in pre-Han thinkers, nor even an attribute of heaven, as in the case of Wang Ch'ung. The sage who transcends all differences, of course, must act without contrivance, but so must every other creature in some degree. The Huai nan tzu already advocated following the self-so nature and conceived of wu-wei as relying on tzu jan. It also implied that man in general had to act without contrivance, although its main injunction was directed at rulers. Kuo Hsiang puts responsibility on each individual thing to fulfil his capacity through the means of non-contrivance and following of tzu jan. Only man among the creatures is able to contrive action, and the responsibility therefore rests on him to take the non-human things as his model. At the same time, no individual man can achieve his maximum capacity merely on his own strength, but requires an enlightened ruler. (See Ch. 7, 3.17a)

"Following nature" in comment (37) means to accord with the natures of all things, but Kuo is also concerned that each individual must accord with his own nature in particular:


See Chapter 2, pp. 61-62.
Now following one's nature and immediately proceeding is natural. It is also natural that one might in his going harm his nature, but having harmed his nature be able to correct himself.

夫率性直往者自然也。往而傷性，
性傷而能改者亦自然也。

(Ch. 6, 3.14a)

Kuo is here commenting on an exchange between Yi Erh-tzu and Hsit Yu. Hsit Yu says that Yi Erh-tzu has damaged his nature, so he cannot expect free wandering. Yi Erh-tzu replies that Hsit Yu cannot know whether the Creator might change him again. Kuo substitutes *tzu jan* for Chuang tzu's "Creator". Kuo does not mean to say that *tzu jan* is an entity which creates things, but that in fact there is no creator, that things as they are in themselves is the deepest level of existence. Here Kuo is saying that this deepest level of existence is not only present when one perfectly follows his nature, but also can operate in imperfect situations as a corrective. Kuo thus conceives the world as essentially good, so good that it has built into its structure the possibility of redemption, if one only returns to creation's first principle. Naturally one who in fact achieves accord with his nature gets beyond a limited existence and wanders where there are no traces (Ch. 22, 7.24b).

Since Kuo did not believe in a Creator, the idea of self-production is an important correlate of the concept of

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tzu jan. We have already seem the question of self-production in comment (27). In denying that either being or non-being gives birth to things, Kuo insists that things merely appear. This is stated most clearly in his comments in Chapter 2 on the piping of Heaven, where, after the denial that yu and wu produce things, Kuo says,

(39) ...then what is that which produces living things? Clod-like, they are merely self-produced. They are merely self-produced; it is not that an Ego produces them. An Ego does not produce things, and things cannot produce the Ego, therefore I am so of myself. It is from myself only that I am so, thus it is said (I am) made that way by Heaven. Being that way from Heaven means that things were not intentionally created, therefore (Chuang tzu) uses the word Heaven to speak of them. Using "Heaven" to speak of them is that by which he makes clear that they are so of themselves. How could he be referring to the azure sky? ...Therefore all things are self-produced and there is nothing that they came from. This is the way of heaven.

Kuo says that the fact that everything acts in some kind of order makes it appear that there is a creator of things or

41Ibid. p. 37.
42Also translated in Chan, Sourcebook, p. 328, no. 11, and in Fung, History, II, p. 209.
a true lord. But in fact there is no such thing (see Ch. 2, 1.12b and 1.25a). Kuo does not deny that things re-produce according to genus and species. Things produce one another according to their forms, but these are still all natural processes. Therefore, he says, that things with wombs or eggs cannot alter their basic type means that some spiritual force cannot alter them either (Ch. 22, 7.24b). No matter which point of view one takes, it is impossible for man to answer the question why things are as they are; they are that way of themselves and one cannot find a deeper cause (Ch. 1, 1.3a and Ch. 2, 1.25a).

Wang Ch'ung was the first to explore the question of self-production. Wang placed ch'i as his ultimate material from which all things evolved under the operating principle of tzu jan. For Wang the self-production of things was only the manifest side of the self-evolution of ch'i. Kuo refers to ch'i occasionally and it is possible that he might consider it an explanation for differences among the creatures. The only passage I have found which suggests this are Kuo's comments on a reference to a life-span in the Chuang tzu. When the Chuang tzu says that,

43 Also translated in Chan, Sourcebook, p. 329, no. 12.
45 See Chapter 2, pp. 121-123.
of those who receive their life-span from earth, the pine and cypress stand alone--Summer and Winter they are green.

Kuo remarks,

(40) The pine and cypress are specially endowed with natural, heavy ch'i. Therefore they are able to be extraordinary among all the trees. It is not that they are able to contrive something and thereby obtain it (long life).

夫松柏特禀自然之靈氣。故能為眾木之傑耳。非能為而得之也。

(Ch. 5, 2.17a)

The *Chuang tzu* goes on to say that the sage-king Shun stood out among those who receive their life-span from heaven.

Kuo comments,

(41) This says that he who specially receives the natural, correct ch'i is extremely rare. Below there is only the cypress and pine; above there is only the sage. Therefore all those who are not correct come to seek the correct. If...men would each correct themselves, then they would not envy the great sage and chase after him.

言特受自然之正氣者至希也。下首則唯為松柏，上首則唯有聖人。故凡不正者皆來求正耳。若...人各自正則無羡於大聖而趨之。

(Ch. 5, 2.17a-b)

Kuo seems to have accepted a theory of ch'i in connection with life-span, but he also remarks that one must correct

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46 The *Ssu-pu pei-yao* edition reads *che* in place of *shou*. I follow the Sung Blockprint cited above in note 26, p. 112 and the *Chuang tzu pu-cheng*, 2c;4b. There is no difference in meaning.
himself. One can only correct himself by maximizing his allotment, so clearly allotment or capacity must be something other than endowed ch'i. What was a fated, natural process for Wang Ch'ung has been reduced to a starting point for Kuo Hsiang. Of course, Wang allowed that through education one might alter his situation, but such cases were exceptional. For Kuo the initial ch'i is complete or correct in only a few cases, and most men must correct themselves. Moreover, for Wang Ch'ung, heavy and light ch'i acted as an instrument of individuation. It appears to function somewhat that way for Kuo as well. The pine and cypress are individuated by their heavy ch'i, but in the case of man, the allotment of ch'i is only a factor at the starting point, and is thereafter modified by man's intentional, voluntary activity. Man is not fated by his endowment of ch'i but by his allotment.

Wang Ch'ung never asked where ch'i came from. The concept of self-production was limited wholly to describing the evolution of ch'i. But Kuo says that if being self-so means a thing is self-produced, then the realm of being itself is self-produced. Furthermore, the self-production of being is somehow eternal. Kuo says in comment (27) that the perfect unity at the beginning of things came suddenly into existence. This is re-inforced in the following important passage:

(42) What is there that is prior to things? I might suppose that yin and yang are prior, but yin and yang are just what we call things. What further might there be before
yin and yang? I might suppose that tzu jan is before it, but tzu jan is just the way things are of themselves. I might suppose the perfect Tao to be before it, but the perfect Tao is ultimate nothingness, which is nothing, so how could it be prior? Then what is it that is prior? Yet there are still things without end. This makes clear that things are so of themselves. It is not that they are caused to be so.47

Kuo is here not concerned first of all with asking what was the first thing but with asking what kind of reality might there be from which things could arise. He considers yin-yang, the Tao, and tzu jan, but rejects them all. It is interesting that he does not propose the perfect unity to which he referred in comment (27). It leads one to think that Kuo regards the primordial unity as a thing. Although this is an argument from silence, its omission here casts some doubt on Seki's suggestion that wu and yu are differentiations of the primordial unity. Kuo's conclusion, after eliminating all things that might be prior to things, is that this makes clear that things must be self-so. What his argument

47 Also translated in Fung, History, II, p. 208.
actually makes clear is that things are self-produced, and thus Kuo identifies the concept of tzu sheng, self-production, with the concept of tzu jan.

In the process of asking whether tzu jan is prior to things, Kuo says that it is an attribute of things, albeit their most fundamental one. From comment (42) at least, it appears to stand in contrast to the perfect Tao. However, in a number of passages Kuo appears to connect or identify tzu jan with Heaven or the Tao. Many of these passages are of the same type as comment (39). They occur when Kuo Hsiang translates the terminology of the Chuang tzu into his own terminology. Several times, when the Chuang tzu uses heaven to account for the order and nature of things, Kuo remarks that by "heaven", the Chuang tzu really means tzu jan (For example, see Ch. 6, 3.1a-b).

In a few cases, Kuo seems to rely on heaven as a source of order:

(43) He who follows tzu jan and forgets (distinctions of) right and wrong embodies and uniquely follows the truth of heaven and nothing more.

夫任自然而忘是非者, 其體中獨任天真而已。

(Ch. 2, 1.10a)

The "truth of heaven" is probably a reference to human nature. Although it is implied that heaven is the source of one's nature, it is likely that this is an isolated use of a commonplace notion. The vast majority of Kuo's writing
places the source of order in the concepts of principle and tzu jan. Thus when the Chuang tzu says that there is something superior to heaven, Kuo says this is self-transformation, tu hua 獨化:

(44) By "superior" he is talking about self-transformation. The achievements of mutual dependence are never as good as the perfection of self-transformation. Therefore that which man relies on is heaven. Those things that heaven produces are self-transforming... Self-transformation is perfected in the realm of dark mystery.

For the Chuang tzu the word heaven is often a synonym for Tao. Kuo makes no such identification. He sees heaven as an important, but not universal, element in natural processes, whose workings are subordinate to the principle of tzu jan.

Kuo holds the Tao and tzu jan strictly apart. Tzu jan is an attribute of the functioning of things, and the perfect Tao is divorced from things. This divorce forces Kuo to disagree with the text at some points and to misinterpret it at others. For example, when Lao Tan is explaining the perfect Tao to Confucius, he says the follower of the Way

48 I read che 者 for erh 父 following the Sung blockprint edition.
responds to all things. He then says,

Heaven cannot help but be high, earth cannot help but be broad, the sun and moon cannot help but revolve, and the creatures cannot help but flourish. Is this not the Way?49

The closing sentence reads tz'u ch'i tao yu 此其道與。

The ch'i here should be read as a modal interrogative, and the sentence should be a rhetorical question requiring a positive answer. Therefore the translation should read, "Is this not the Tao?" or "Surely, this is the Tao."

Kuo comments,

(45) This says that all these (natural processes) must be the way they are, and they are that way of themselves. It is not that the Tao is able to cause them to be so.

言此皆不得不然而自然耳。非道能使之然也。

(Ch. 22, 7.25a)

Thus Kuo expands the Chuang tzu text by noting that the Tao does not cause things to be so. Kuo is correct about the lack of causation in the intent of the Chuang tzu text, but one wonders whether he does not hold the natural state of things and the Tao separate, rather than identifying them as the Chuang tzu does.

In another passage dealing with the Tao, Kuo apparently substitutes tzu jan for the Tao. When a man called Knowledge and the Yellow Emperor discuss how one gets to know the Way, the Yellow Emperor concludes that they do not come near to the way because they know it. Kuo remarks,

49The translation is that of Burton Watson, Chuang
This makes it clear that *tzu jan* is not obtainable by words or knowledge. Therefore it faces the darkness in the land without words.

(Ch. 22, 7.23a)

Since the question of the paragraph is how one comes to know the Tao, Kuo's comment implies that one comes to know it through the knowledge of *tzu jan*. We cannot conclude that he identifies the two, but at least it is clear that the knowledge one does have of *tzu jan* does not have the character of discursive knowledge.

If one's knowing of *tzu jan* is then not discursive knowledge, what sort of knowledge is it then? I think we must return to concepts already introduced in my discussion of Wang Pi. For Kuo as well as Wang, *tzu jan* is a general term for the concrete uniqueness of each individual thing. Its uniqueness can be grasped only in the concrete experience of the thing and is not attainable through abstract theoretical knowledge. When one struggles to realize the self-existence of the totality of things, Kuo believes one never finds any further answer beyond the bare fact of their self-existence. As knowledge probes to this boundary, it faces only darkness; there is nothing beyond. The sage who has finally gone to the edge of darkness turns and sees all of reality in harmony

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_Tzu_, p. 239.
when he realizes the bare fact of its self-existence.

Before concluding this section, I would like to turn once more to Seki Masao. He divides the characteristics of **tzu jan** into three aspects: (1) the unknowability of the basis of subjective existence; (2) the baseless, uncaused, and accidental nature of being, and (3) an unlimited, necessary causal chain, which finally extends back to the ultimate origin. 50

The first aspect is in fact reducible to the second one. Knowledge of the basis of subjective, factual existence is impossible because a basis does not exist. Seki is perfectly correct in asserting that for Kuo the nature of being is baseless and uncaused. When we consider being as a whole, then we must consider that Kuo says there was no being and then "suddenly" it was.

Seki's third point is more difficult to deal with. He is clearly referring to the function of the principle of **tzu jan** among individual creatures of the world. I agree that the concept of **tzu jan** assumes that the creatures of the world are connected with the ultimate origin. There is also a certain causality in that connection, a chain to the ultimate origin. However, its necessity is not a rigid, mechanical necessity. Kuo Hsiang's world is not the world of Leibniz, in which every monad has built into it a

pre-established harmony so that its self-motivated action is in harmony with the action of all other beings. Rather, I believe we must think of Kuo's concept of necessity as an organic one. Certain needs are built into the body. The body is strong when they are fully met and becomes weaker as the needs are met less well. If one wishes a healthy body, then it is necessary to meet the needs of the body. Kuo says that if one wishes the world to be harmonious, all creatures must be allowed to follow their own natures, and to accord with the way things are of themselves.

Kuo's unspoken assumption that harmony between creatures is a natural state can be found explicit in the Huai nan tzu, which argued that things are both self-so and mutually so. Four centuries later, Kuo assumes that when things are self-so, there will be no conflict. In the Huai nan tzu this assumption was guaranteed by the workings of the Tao. Kuo rejects the workings of the Tao in the realm of being, and he really provides no substitute. Principles possess a morally good order, but they too are governed by the principle of tzu jan.

Although Kuo does not say this explicitly, I venture to guess that the harmony between creatures is guaranteed by the fact of their evolution from the perfect one. As long as the evolution proceeds without interference, there

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51 See Chapter 2, pp. 62-63.
52 For illustrations of this concept, see Seki Masao, "Ko Sō no Shōshi", p. 52
can be no disharmony. It was perfect in the beginning and thus would have no source from which disharmony could result. When one compares the realms of non-being and being, then *tzu jan* itself is the guarantee of harmony. Since the natures of the two realms are radically separate, disharmony between them could only result from some kind of interaction. Since each pursues its own course, this is impossible.

THE CONCEPT OF NATURE

It is not immediately obvious that Kuo Hsiang's view of *tzu jan* is a view of nature as such. *Tzu jan* surely means "natural" at many points in his commentary. At the same time *tzu jan* carries all the weight of an ultimate principle. Kuo has no other point of reference for the concept of *tzu jan*, except that other, less basic, concepts point to it. Previously we noted that *tzu jan* could function as a signal of a religious absolute in that it implied the absence of all outside forces and thus implied ultimate independence and reliability. But in Kuo *tzu jan* itself, conceived as the fact of collective self-production and self-determination of all things, has these characteristics. As Kuo becomes skeptical about conceiving non-being as the origin of being, *tzu jan* becomes the most fundamental reality known to man. I do not mean to say that Kuo viewed *tzu jan* as a thing or basic substance. He has not quite come to the point of replacing the Tao with *tzu jan*. He has
placed the limits of human knowledge at the knowledge of *tzu jan*. He is skeptical about knowledge of the Origin of all things, and will only say that the self-identity of things and the eternal self-production of things is all one can know. Because he has no concept of a great Origin, we have had difficulty in finding what is the guarantee of harmony for Kuo. Still, the assumption of harmony is so strong that Kuo never sees it as a problem.

Is nature or the natural a model or law for human action? Kuo would deny that the world of nature, that is, animals, plants, and mineral or physical things, is truly a standard for the world of man and his culture. Some of Kuo's examples, of course, are taken from natural objects which produce a model of unfettered *tzu jan*, but *tzu jan* runs equally across all strata of reality. Each thing, event, or situation has its own natural outcome within its own sphere of operation (*fen 分*). Even cultural activity has its own natural cause, through completing that which by nature seeks completion. The all-pervasiveness of the principle of *tzu jan* makes an appeal to the world of nature almost unnecessary. Rather, Kuo's attention is directed to the natural gifts of the sage and to the total social harmony which will result when the sage and all other beings under his rule, subject to his silent, harmonious understanding, fulfil their own natural capacity. In such an ideal society, each individual obtains the Taoist ideal of free and easy wandering through life.
KUO HSIANG'S INFLUENCE

Kuo Hsiang's commentary became the standard commentary on the *Chuang tzu*. In general, Kuo has not been recognized as one of the great figures in the history of Chinese philosophy. The very authorship of his work has been the subject of controversy, and he always seems to suffer by comparison with the youthful prodigy, Wang Pi. In many ways his thought was also eclipsed by the entrance of Buddhism into Chinese philosophical thought in the fourth century. The next significant interpreter of the *Chuang tzu* after Kuo was Chih Tun (314-366), whose interpretation of the *Chuang tzu* in terms of Buddhist concepts moved in a direction which was not anticipated by Kuo Hsiang. Nevertheless, Kuo's commentary continues to be read and valued up to the present.

I have made no general study of the influence of Kuo's thought. Indeed there is a certain historical backwardness in attempting to find such influences, but I would like to offer as an isolated example a story found at Tun Huang and translated by Arthur Waley. The story is entitled "The Swallow and the Sparrow" and is a long poem about a dispute over a house which the sparrow steals from the swallow. The swallow brings the dispute to the court of the Phoenix where it is resolved. The sparrow and swallow return home as friends, only to be upbraided by a busy-body heron for disputing over such a trifling matter. The swallow and sparrow
demand that he explain himself. The heron replies,

The heron's heart has long been set on things far away,
Concerning which the Swallow and Sparrow are quite uninformed.
In one morning he can sail far above the blue clouds;
In three years he flies and sings just at this time.

This, of course, is a reference to the story of the great P'eng bird in Chapter 1 of the Chuang tzu. The swallow and the sparrow reply, however, with Kuo Hsiang's interpretation to close the discussion.

The great rukh sets out on its journey to the south
While the little wren nests on its one bough.
Yet each finds contentment in its own haunts;
So why question the knowledge of us two creatures. 1

KUO HSIANG'S DEPENDENCE ON THE HAN DYNASTY

The two major pre-Han uses of tzu jian do persist in Kuo Hsiang's thought, although what was once two rather separate themes, namely tzu jian as a signal of religious reliability and tzu jian as a description of a natural state of affairs, were joined together. This linking of two themes was accomplished by developments in the Han dynasty on which Kuo's thought depended. We may divide these developments into three main areas, namely, the reliability of tzu jian, the concept of self-production, and the association of tzu jian with a multiple reality, the "ten-thousand things".

It was in the *Huai nan tzu* that the two themes of pre-Han literature were first joined. The natural world was itself reliable, because it was *tzu jan*. The function of *tzu jan* as a signal of a religious absolute was transferred to the function of *tzu jan* as an indication of a natural, unfettered state. The natural state which was formerly seen as the result of wisdom and as a result of following the Tao, was made a precondition for wisdom and a vehicle by which to gain knowledge of the Tao. This dependence on *tzu jan* for wisdom is a basic element in Kuo Hsiang's thought, although he modified the Taoist point of view of the *Huai nan tzu* by making *tzu jan* a property of cultural as well as natural development. In extending *tzu jan* to cultural development, Kuo is also broadening the very concept of nature. The entire world is regulated according to natural principles, a lawful order imbedded in reality itself. Whereas in the *Huai nan tzu*, culture copied nature, for Kuo Hsiang the very boundary between culture and nature is made subordinate to this more universal, lawful order.

The connection of *tzu jan* with self-production was first made by Wang Ch'ung. Wang realized that to produce something or give life to it could not be done without also giving form to the product. It is impossible merely to produce the existence of a thing without also determining how it exists. Therefore when Wang asserted that all creatures of the world are self-so, he also took the step of asserting that the creatures are self-produced. This was important for Wang because it guaranteed that no intentionality
on the part of heaven was possible, nor could he be accused of having ch'i replace heaven as the consciously ruling force of the universe.

In addition to the logic of tzu jan which compelled Wang to take this step, Wang also lived in a time in which there was focus on the idea of the creation of the world. The Huai nan tzu, on which Wang depended heavily, was the first work to describe creation out of chaos, even mentioning the beginning of the Tao in the setting of the great Vacuity. Although Wang Ch'ung does not ask where ch'i comes from, his concern with how things came to be is probably a response to discussions of his time. Kuo Hsiang took this theme of self-production a step further and dealt with the problem of the self-production of the universe. Like Wang Ch'ung, Kuo is compelled to say that if existent things, or the abstraction thereof--"Being", is tzu jan, then it must also be self-produced and cannot be the product of the Tao or the Void.

The third way in which Kuo is indebted to Han dynasty developments is the limitation of the application of tzu jan to creaturely reality. Certainly, this limitation was present in the Huai nan tzu, in Wang Ch'ung, and in the Wei-Chin scholars, Wang Pi and Juan Chi. On the other hand, some works followed the example of the Lao tzu. In both the Hsiang-erh commentary and the T'ai

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p'ing ching, the Tao is represented as having tzu jan as a principal characteristic. However this opposition can be reconciled to some extent. I believe the conception of the Tao in pre-Han literature was such that the Tao was intimately involved in the structures of manifested reality. By contrast, there is a more abstract conception of the Tao in the Wei-Chin period. The division conceived between being and non-being and the theoretical struggles to describe the link between them are indicative of this abstract conception of the Tao, conceived as non-being. I suspect the lyrical passages of the Chuang tzu on the role of the Tao in the world were somewhat puzzling to Wei-Chin literati. Kuo Hsiang's disagreements with the Chuang tzu text reflects this puzzlement. It is as if the Tao were removed from the position of immanence in the world, which it held in pre-Han literature, to a position of transcendance among the Wei-Chin scholars. Once that removal had taken place, it was thought no longer appropriate to apply the characteristic tzu jan to the Tao.

BASIC PATTERNS IN KUO HSIAH

SKEPTICISM

At first glance Kuo Hsiang does not seem to be a likely candidate for the epithet "skeptic". He is a champion of social order and is generally viewed a synthesizer of Confucian and Taoist traditions. He also never announces that he is a skeptic, never openly drawing the conclusion which I believe must be drawn. It is in the context of the major philosophical problem
of the Mystery Learning movement, that of being and non-being, that Kuo is skeptical. He does not openly doubt the reality of non-being, but he can find no content in the expression "non-being". He doubts first that man can know anything about non-being, and second that non-being has any influence whatever in the realm of being. Wang Pi, with whom Kuo is primarily arguing, asserted that tzu jan points beyond itself into the workings of the Tao, which is non-being. Although Kuo does not pick up the terminology of ultimate and super-ultimate which Wang Pi employed, he does take Wang Pi's position that tzu jan is the heart or pinnacle of the realm of being, or reality. Then he questions whether tzu jan points beyond itself to the realm of the Tao. Kuo cannot find in the concept of tzu jan any compelling reason why it would refer beyond itself. Kuo does not say that the concept of non-being is worthless and should be done away with, but only that nothing can be said about it. There are, as well, a few ambiguous points in which Kuo's sage seems to have a vision of the darkness at the edge of reality. The sage refrains, indeed cannot but refrain, from speaking of this experience. Kuo hesitates to call this darkness non-being. It is for this hesitation, the doubt, the reluctance to speak of non-being, and the rejection of every avenue which might connect being and non-being, that I call Kuo a skeptic. Although Kuo did at one point appear to admit that the sage was aware of the name of non-being (see Comment (29)), he has no ontic ground which makes such knowledge possible. In most
other respects, that mystical knowledge of the sage is confined to the apprehension of the self-production and self-identity of creaturely existence.

MYSTICISM

A second classification which may be applied to Kuo's thought is that of mysticism. Indeed the whole Mystery Learning movement is usually thought of as being mystical in some sense. However, we must distinguish some typical patterns in mysticism before it can be a useful concept. Mysticism is a very rich concept. There is in the literature on mysticism a wide variety of description of mystical experiences along with philosophical, psychological, and sociological analyses of those experiences. One can also seek to analyze the mystical experience in terms of its structural relation to other forms of religious experience, as Robert S. Ellwood has done recently in his work *Mysticism and Religion*. Kuo Hsiang relates no such experiences to us. We do not know whether he himself had any mystical experiences. What can be discussed however is whether he lays down ontological conditions such that mystical experience is not only possible but necessary in order to know truth. Thus in applying the term mysticism to Kuo, I am primarily interested in a philosophical analysis of mysticism. Ellwood points out, with some justice, that this kind of analysis is analysis of the ideology of mysticism and not of the primary mystical experience itself.\(^3\) However, I

believe that he underestimates the importance of such analysis. A person must be classified as a mystical thinker if he conceives the primary avenue to truth to be through mystical experience. Such an ontological framework predisposes one to seek and find mystical experiences.  

There are two pairs of philosophical concepts in which mysticism functions. The first pair is that of transcendant and non-transcendant realms in an ontological dualism. In a mystical dualism, the gap between the two realms must be breached in a mystical way. The other pair of concepts is that of unity and diversity. In a mystical formulation, the unity is somehow hidden in the diversity, or separated from the diversity, and must be mystically apprehended. A mystical anthropology can also be formed in two ways. Man can be conceived to be entirely in the realm of non-transcendence or diversity, and thus literally have to step outside of himself (ekstasis) in order to find truth either in transcendance or unity. Man may also be conceived to be partially in each realm, and thus have to find the principle of order by an inner mystical experience.

As an example of how this framework might be applied, one might argue that in Wang Pi there was a distinction of transcendant and non-transcendant realms. Both unity and diversity were present in the non-transcendant (being). The mystical knowledge involved the leap from the ultimate of the realm of being to the super-

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4 Although the following discussion of mysticism is my own, that discussion is at least informed by R. C. Zaehner, *Mysticism:*
ultimate. Man himself was in the realm of the non-transcendant, and thus knowledge of non-being was in some way ecstatic, going beyond oneself. For Kuo Hsiang on the other hand, the true sage has a mystical knowledge of the basic unity of things in which the distinctions between things are forgotten. I suggest that this is an example of mystical monism in which the basic unity is hidden in the diversity. Kuo's sage also has a glimpse of non-being, but as we saw in our struggle with this concept in Chapter IV, that glimpse is never spoken of in the realm of being. For Kuo, mystical knowledge is necessary for the sage at the pinnacle of his social hierarchy. For all others acceptance and fulfillment of their allotment leads to the free and easy life, Kuo never suggests in these latter cases that that fulfillment is possible only through mystical knowledge of the Tao. Thus in his general anthropology, Kuo is decidedly unmystical. Without the sage, however, no one's allotment can be realized fully, and thus Kuo requires at least one mystic in order to close off the hierarchy and complete its functioning.

THE A PRIORI

Finally, I think Kuo's conception can be fruitfully compared with the notion of the a priori in European thought. Kuo's use of tzu jän as the fundamental ordering principle of reality implies that the law which determines the structure of reality derives from some point within each creature. In such a position, Sacred and Profane (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).

^See Wing-tsit Chan, "The Evolution of the Neo-Confucian Concept li as Principle," Ch'ing hua hsüeh-pao 4, no. 2 (Feb., 1964) p. 130.
the concept of tzu jan leaves something to be desired. There is something unfinished in Kuo. He has broken away from seeing the Tao as the source of creaturely existence and is left with the self-identity of creatures as his highest principle. But tzu jan is not a rich enough concept of explain the manifold structure of creaturely reality. It counsels one to accept one's allotment, but it provides no reason why one allotment differs from another. However, the concept reduces the importance of this uncertainty since happiness can be found in every allotment. He thereby affirms the fundamentally good nature of the structures of reality, but because he has not found another source of order to replace the Tao, he can only describe the workings, the operation of that order.

The most general characteristic of the theme of the a priori in European thought is that there is in man's mind a Reason, the law by which creatures function. Truth is to be found within man himself. The discovery by man of his rational essence is also the discovery of the basic principles governing reality. Since this is a theme which runs from the early Church Fathers right up to the twentieth century, I hesitate to try and discuss it more specifically. I believe even this brief description, however, contrasts significantly with Kuo's concept of tzu jan.

Formally, the concept of tzu jan resembles that of the a priori in that the internal principles of things must be allowed to work their way out, and thereby the world will be well-ordered. Kuo's conception differs from the theme of the a priori in Europe
in two ways. First, I think Kuo's conception is that development is essentially natural and organic rather than rational. Secondly, Kuo's conception is directed more at solving the question of place and status rather than solving the question of what is rational truth. The alternatives here are not mutually exclusive, but I suggest that Kuo has certain emphases which distinguish his conception.

Kuo's conception of the order of the universe is not rationalistic. I do not mean that he is irrationalistic, for there is surely logic in the patterns of creaturely structures and functions. Kuo's world is not, however, the necessary working of a universal Reason, nor is the development of things done on a model of strictly logical order. The world's order is achieved by the fulfillment of potentialities or capacities, whose structures have an internal principle of harmony. Kuo never tries to analyze the nature of the harmony. Therefore, it may be just as speculative to call it organistic as to call it rationalistic. However, I believe Kuo leans towards an organistic model through the notion of differentiation of place and function. It is like the differentiation between members of one body; the arm and the leg have their own job to do, and when each does it well, the whole functions properly. Kuo is, of course, not an organistic thinker in the mold of Oswald Spengler. Kuo's conception does not involve ideas of growth, decline, and rebirth of the world. Rather it is organistic because inter-relationships between creatures are
perfected when each develops its own internal capacities, thus contributing to the well-being of the whole body.

The non-rationalism of Kuo can also be seen in aspects of his thought which are dialectical. According to Kuo, creatures become independent by harmonizing with other creatures, that is, through a dependence on others. True independence is achieved only through mutuality. Therefore independence and dependence are not really different. Since thought is a process of abstracting and breaking down of reality, rationalism leads to a concept of reality which is finally a collection of separate entities. In non-dialectical rationalism, creatures cannot be both dependent and independent. Therefore, Kuo's recognition of the inter-relatedness of creatures is an implicit denial of rationalism.

From the concept of the organic model, it follows quite readily that for Kuo the main problem confronted in life is to find one's own place. By contrast, the theme of the a priori developed in Europe as an answer to the question, what is the source of order, or where is the law through which order comes. For Kuo, however, only the sage has the capacity to know the source of things; the vast majority of creatures cannot know it. Even for the sage, the capacity to know the course of order is not guaranteed by the presence of some fragment of the source within him, an a priori law known to him before any experience of the world. To the question what is law, Kuo gives the counsel to find the answer in experience. Following the
principle of tzu jan, let each fulfill his internal capacity and thus find the true happiness of the free and easy wandering.

SUMMARY REMARKS

In conclusion, I would like to offer a few generalizations on the topic of this thesis, namely, the concept of nature. As I stated earlier, the Western concept of nature is one of our most fundamental concepts. It contains both concepts of origin and law, and from these is derived its meaning as the cosmic system as a whole. In many ways the Chinese concept of hsing, (human) nature, seems to be a rough equivalent. It certainly is etymologically related to "birth", sheng, and serves as a standard for individual development.

The concept tzu jan begins rather innocuously by comparison with hsing. Although it had semantic potential, it certainly was not a point of high debate in pre-Han China. It was only in the Han dynasty that tzu jan first took on the character of law. Through the notion of relying on natural or spontaneous action, it became a general standard. Wang Ch'ung linked tzu jan to the concept of origins, by making it an aspect of the process of cosmogenesis and of the generic self-production of things. The rising importance of tzu jan in the Han dynasty is also attested by the cosmic significance given to it in the Hsiang-erh commentary and the T'ai p'ing ching. In Kuo Hsiang, tzu jan finally receives the position of the source of cosmic law and order. It designated the permanent normative conditions under

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6 See above, pp. 6-9.
which the universe should function both in natural and cultural spheres.

The similarity in content then between *tzu jan* and the *physis* is striking. All that remains is to discover how *tzu jan 大自然* became the modern term for "natural world", a development which did not occur in the period covered by this study. However, in spite of the similarities with the concept *physis*, the course of development of the concept *tzu jan* shows clearly that we are not merely bringing a Western concept to Chinese philosophy and searching for its counterpart, nor is the interest in the problem of *tzu jan* merely that of a Westerner seeking to solve his own problems. The interest in *tzu jan* is germaine to the Chinese texts themselves. The similarities one finds give testimony not to a Western myopia but to the universal conditions for all human existence.
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APPENDIX I. The Kuo Hsiang Texts

The following are the texts quoted as the numbered commentaries in Chapter IV. They are arranged in order as they appear in the *Chuang tzu*, and the quotations may be located by the comment number appearing above the column in which the comment begins.

1.1a
六月息者也，飛二三千里者也。至若夏月之時，風雨潘樹聚散，時或一日或二日，此則為風雨之息者也。吹也者，此皆風息之所致也。

野馬也塵埃也生物之以息相吹也。天之高遠而無所至極者也。其於風也，無所不至。故其於生物，亦無所不至也。是故風息之為生物，其在於天，猶在於地也。故曰：惟天之高遠，而無所至極，其於生物，亦無所不至也。
御六氣之辯以遊無窮者，彼且惡乎待哉？若夫乘天地之正而御六氣之辯者也，彼且何故乎？去遊若此之者，何也？且夫天地之間，物生於太虛，理寓於萬物。故曰：『天地之大端也，人功之至也，所貴於聲色者也。』

……（部分文字）
m 75 JbE 4 Warn of
2.3b 4 S m Ml
2.3a 2.1b-2a
2.17a-b

(41) (40)

唯桑獨也正
唯桑柏獨也正

夏青青

上説曰

古書反流

之則不受

命於地

松柏獨也在

冬

夏青青

上説曰

古書反流

之則不受

命於天

之則不受

命於地

松柏獨也在

冬
物者之不息我疑而補我斿使我成以隨先生邪
大率性直者自然也行而傷性直者而能改者亦
自然也庸讵知邪而欲殺之之道以隨夫于邪而欲
許由日噫未可知也我為

世俗之禮以觀衆人之耳目哉其所以觀於衆
在於非方也外之冥物也○懷古非反於文書非
事之依見其所以依者不依而不世
子何方之依見其所以依者不依而不世

(11)  (10)

(38)
黃帝始以仁義攫人之心。物窮則仁義之迹自見。則必言之，又言之，於其迹也。自見則後世之心必自於此。故聖人之迹，亦黃帝之迹，於是乎有以見之。}

也則利之所在，利在於聖人之不輕故曰魚不可得而淵也。聖人者天下之利器也。故聖人之利器，人不可示人。則為聖人，則為聖人之利器。彼利物之器，於日用也，非所以明天下也。則所以明天下也，是所明於天下者也。
(31) 極知雖落天地事難接萬物而常不失其反是謂人北海若曰牛馬四足是謂天落馬首穿牛鼻
 giorno 人之生也可不服牛乘馬乎？服牛乘馬乎？
 人事而本在乎天也，故曰無以人滅天也，若乃走
 作過分驅步失無以故滅命之者，命其安在乎？

(6) 物焉得而止焉，制物者非物也。所彼將處乎不淫之度，於所而藏乎無端之紀，受之形化日新，變游乎萬物之
 所終始，物之極、壹其性、純則養其氣，使之不以合其德，物
 以通乎物之所造。於自爾，夫若是者其天

之造乎不形而止乎無所化，常游夫得是而窮之者
可以散此吾所以知道之数也泰清以之言也問乎
無始曰若是則無窮之弗知與無為之知孰是而孰
非乎無始曰不知深矣之弗知與內矣之知孰是而孰
吾知之知凡則之不慈乎無為之知大而弗知
今是泰清中而數曰弗知乃知乎知乃不知乎孰
為乎是無始曰無窮之弗知與無為之知孰是而孰
道不可聞聞而非也道不可見見而非也道不可言
言而無也故默成乎不聞不聞不知形形之一形乎形耳
APPENDIX II. The Lun heng Texts

The following are the texts from Huang Hui's Lun heng chiao shih. The texts are for the indented quotations of Wang Ch'ung in Chapter II. They are arranged in the order in which appear in the Lun heng.

P. 28
論 衛 校 譯 卷 三

所受之異性也。天地不變，月不易，星辰不没，正也。人受正氣故體不變時。
不可變更年不可減何則形氣非天也。冥一宋人形為春氣爲夏人以氣爲骨形隨氣而動氣性不均則於體不同。壽不馬馬壽不自然則牛馬之形與人異矣。故牛馬之形當自得牛馬之壽牛馬之不變久則年壽亦短於人世稽高宗之徒不言其身形變異而徒言其增延年壽故有信矣。有一篇作形之□血氣也猶囊之貯粟米也。一石囊之高大亦過一石；相得益彰亦增減其壽亦常增減其身形安得如此如以人形與囊異氣與粟異殊更以苞瓜類之。胞之為苞瓜之汁猶人之血也其肌猶肉也試令一人損益苞瓜之汁令其形如故耐為之乎？「耐」□不能一人不耐損益苞瓜之汁天安耐增減人之年年不可增減高宗之徒誰益之者而云増加如言高宗之徒形
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論 韋校 釋
卷三
按近代論宋元未作一義 王建本誤作一義
字同毛傳一宅也 一陳象曰 一宅居一宅居之 居同
字地之義 王自譯成度周書 祭公賦曰 一言天時
不調守 一唐 李時發校考輯曰 一言天時為向
與此可同 王無頭面顧覩 如何人有顧視也
蓋三家詩遠說也 與此同義 天無源而顧覩 如何
人有顧視也
命文王 一春顧之義 實天不命何以顧之夫
大人與天地合其德 與日月合其明 與四時合
其序 與鬼之性 與天合同 是則所謂 一大命
文王 一也 自文王意 上與下句 一律
云常為王 乃敢起也 然則文王 亦曹 也 赤雀
及武王 白魚 非天之命 昌姬 祖也
仲氏以初興之聖為
王
天有形體，所操不虛，徧此考之，一也通。則無恍惚，明矣。何以致之？夜交於天，也氣亦晦，故夜火者光不滅焉。夜之陰，北方之陰也，陰之氣，故不見。故一月有十日，日有六曜，自然賦形，所見不一。故三日乃得其數。此以三日為一月，故三日乃得其數。此以三日為一月，故三日乃得其數。此以三日為一月，故三日乃得其數。此以三日為一月，故三日乃得其數。
論衡校釋卷第十八

自然篇

天合氣，萬物生，猶夫婦合氣，子自生。此義亦見萬物之生，合血之類，知食知寒見五穀可食，取而食之，見絲麻可衣，取而衣之。或說以為天生五穀以食，人生絲麻以衣。人此謂天為人作農夫桑女之徒，亦合自然故其義疑未可從也。試依道家論之。天者萬物之氣，萬物之中，穀食而絲麻。故人食穀，衣絲麻，也夫天之不故生五穀，絲麻，以衣食人，由其有異變不欲以譏咎人也。由謂作物自生，而人衣食之氣自變，而人驚懼之，以若說論之。其人咸於人心矣。原合。如天瑞為故自然然在無何，何以何以知天之自然。天之自然，何以。何以一下當疑一字。劉先各。
而迎之。忽不復見，當非自然之數。方士巧術之術，故一見恍惚，消散滅亡。有為之化，其不可久行，猶王夫

人形不可久見也。道家論自然，不知引物事以驗其言，宋未作行。疑當作。故自然之說未見信也。

然雖自然，亦須有為輔助。老子曰：‘聖人輔萬物之。”中間從日：“夫不能為也。’”宋未作行。疑作：

或為之者，敗之道也。宋人有問：“苗之不長者，歲而穀之明。

問曰：“人有於天地，天地無為，人棄天性者也。當無為而有，何也？”曰：“至德純渥之人，棄天氣多，

故能則天自然無為，棄氣薄少，不道。不似天地，故曰不育。不育者，不似也。論衡校釋，卷十八

論術校釋。卷十八

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不類聖賢，故有為也。天地為鑄，造化為工，造物之者，不為也。命之者，不為也。安能名賢之純者，黃老是也。黃老之學，於爲物自化，無意於生而物自成。黃帝者，黃帝之學也，其德與天地合，故知無為也。天道無為，故春不爲生，而夏不爲，秋不爲成，冬不爲。
無異于有巢之巢攒聚在穴里
不害他，僧人之有宅居者，如能行其所能，死傷病因，小大相害，或
捕取以治口腹者，作窟穿穴有所触東西行徒有所犯也，人有死生物
作血脈者，耳目鼻口，與人別性好惡，與人不同，故人不能傾其響，不見其指耳，
及於同品，其知有困，與人無異異具天同地並仰日月，而鬼神之適，
猶加於人。不加於物，未曉其故也。天地之性，人為貴，豈能為
財難，不愛貴者作，不為賤者設哉，何其性類同而過患別也。刑不加大
夫。見前記
聖王於貴者間也。聖王刑賤不罰貴神之神不在，賤，非易所謂大人與鬼神合其吉凶
也。乾文言文，其一吉凶也。宋本作其一吉凶也。一作今本作其一吉凶也。其一吉
凶也。其一吉凶也。宋本作其一吉凶也。一作今本作其一吉凶也。其一吉凶也。一作
今本作其一吉凶也。四字於無庸者，改其一作一，或一作一。一作一。一作一。一
作一。一作其一，或一作其一。一作一。一作一。一作其一。一作一。一作一。一
作一。一作一。一作一。