From the times of antiquity two primordial "social principles" were recognised by the Chinese: Civil (wen) and Martial (wu). They were fundamental to both social thought and the state organization, but they have rarely been described or analysed in classical literature, being considered "obvious". Even in modern times Chinese and foreign scholars have not paid attention to the Wen–Wu dichotomy, nor to their meaning. Only recently some attempts were made to pose the problem. To understand Wen and Wu, we must search for casual and incomplete references to them dispersed in classical literature, look at what the texts give us as corresponding to each of them, etc.

In the empire all state officials were divided into these two classes, the entire social life, as well as space and time were divided into segments

* The working copy of this paper was originally presented at the XXX European Conference of Chinese Studies, in Torino, September 1–6, 1987.

1 The problem of wen was, to a certain extent, discussed by Soviet sinologists. Cfr. works of V.M. Alekseev and N.I. Konrad quoted below. Also: K.I. Golygina, Teoria izjašenoy slovesnosti v Kitae, XIX–načala XX v. (The theory of artistic literature in China, 19th—beginning of the 20th century), Moskva 1971, pp. 8–22; I.S. Lisevič, Literaturnaja mysl Kitaja na rubéže drevnosti i srednich vekov (Chinese literary thought at the turn of antiquity), Moskva 1979, pp. 20–30; L.S. Perelomov, Konfucjanstvo i legizm v političeskoj istorii Kitaja (Confucianism and Legalism in the political history of China), Moskva 1981, pp. 76–78. All the books were published by "Nauka". N.I. Konrad mentioned also some elements of the wen and wu problem. Cfr. his Sun’-czy, traktat o voennom iskussste (Sunzi, A book on the art of war), Moskva—Leningrad 1950, Izdatelstvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, pp. 109–12. He briefly presented there their meaning and introduced the term “principle” (načalo) of social life, which is applied here. On May 16–17, 1986, the Pre–Modern China Seminar of the Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, organized a seminar: “Wu and Chinese History”, which posed the Wu problem.
with *wen* and *wu* characteristics. And even later on this tradition was not forgotten. It was echoed in discussions concerning the role of the army and the Communist Party, and in political and ideological debates. The Cultural Revolution can be interpreted as a reverse of the traditional priority given to *wen*. It promoted instead the fighting *wu* spirit, elevated the position of soldiers and the Red Guards at the expense of civil officials and education, and deprecated traditional moral values of *wen*, old culture and "moderation". It was ideologically justified in a traditional way: the contemporary epoch was called the period of Great Chaos (*da huan*), when obviously *wu* dominates, and which precedes Great Unity (*da tong*), the triumph of Communism in the world. Maoist ideology referred openly to the Legalists and Strategists, locating itself in the *wu* tradition. This study analyses ancient texts; only occasionally later texts were used in order to present the continuity of intellectual tradition.

1. **The notions of *wen* and their origins**

   The evolution of the character today read *wen*, is very complicated. Its various meanings are interrelated, but not always in a clear way, and there are some controversies about its original meaning. In oracle-bone and bronze inscriptions it was written as 🐠 🐠 🐠 🐠 🐠 🐠 🐠 🐠 🐠 .

   It seems that it represented several intersecting lines and meant "design", "ornament", "pattern". Since tattoo was also named *wen*, there was a hypothesis that just "tattoo" was its original meaning. The third explanation of its origin treats it as a pictogram of the heart. It is related to another of its meanings: "peaceful", "serene", "to calm", "to appease" and also "deceased" (in the sense of "quiet", "in pace"). Hence paternal and maternal ancestors are often named *wen ren* in the bronze inscriptions. The Confucian sage-king Wen Wang sometimes in the oldest texts is named Ning Wang, i.e. Peaceful King, which demonstrates that the characters *wen* and *ning* could substitute each

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3 Cfr. Liang Donghan, *Hanzide jiegou ji qi liubian* (Structure of the characters and their evolution), Shanghai 1959, Shanghai Jiaoyu Chubanshe, p. 91.
other⁴. (The kings’ names Wen and Wu are however earlier and were used in the Shang period⁵).

Perhaps the meaning “design” was the earliest, and only later on appeared that of “peaceful”, “serene”. They could be linked together by an idea of “harmony”; a design, to be beautiful needs harmony of colours and forms, and peace is also based on internal harmony. Hence, the “design” could be combined with “heart” and could signify the more complicated idea: a “decorated”, perfected, appeased mind⁶. In the “Record of Norms” (Li jì) one can find an elaborate theory which brings together individual peace of mind, a social harmony, harmony of nature and harmony of all “designs” into a homogeneous unity. The harmonious nature of wen is expressed there very clearly. In one passage we may read “when tones compose wen, it is named melody (sheng cheng wen, wei zhi yin)”, in another “five colours compose wen and do not come in disorder” (wu se cheng wen er bu luan)⁷. It is, of course, an open question whether this reflects an antique idea, or the later speculations related to various meanings of wen known to the authors.

In order to explain better the meaning of wen it seems useful to distinguish four main lines of its development. The first line of its meanings has been derived from the original significance “design”, “pattern”. It was used for man–made ornaments and for “designs” seen in

⁴ Cfr. Guo Moruo, Jin wen du kao (Studies in bronze inscriptions), Beijing 1954, Renmin Chubanshe, vol. I, pp. 18b–19a, 132a–b; the same author, Yin Zhou qingtongqi ming zhi yanjiu (Studies on the Yin and Zhou bronze inscriptions), Beijing 1954, Renmin Chubanshe, p. 28; Ju Wanli, Shang shu shi yi (The “Book of Documents” with comments), Taipei 1968, Zhonghua Wenhua Shiyue She, p. 71. Hu Houxuan accepts this interpretation of Wu Wang’s name (personal discussion, May 1986). There are also other examples of such a substitution of the wen by nǐng character.


It has to be mentioned that in early antique inscriptions the names of Wen Wang and Wu Wang sometimes are written with the addition of the “king” element as Wen¹ Wuj. Cfr. Guo Moruo, Jin wen du kao, p. 105a; Ma Chengyuan, Zhongguo gudai qingtongqi (Ancient Chinese bronzes), Shanghai 1982, Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, pp. 71, 74.

⁶ The pictogram, as was mentioned, has various graphic forms. Some of them could be considered a combination of wen–design with “heart”, i.e. with mental characteristics.

⁷ Li jì, ch. Le jì (Records on music), Huang Kan shou bi bai wen shisan jing (The Thirteen Classical Books with a hand written corrections and punctuation of Huang Kan), Shanghai 1983, Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, pp. 131, 137. A similar idea that “order” is fundamental to the meaning of wen was expressed by Yang Bojun (personal discussion, May 1986).
nature, for star constellations in the sky (tian wen), for designs on animal skin, on birds’ plumage, on fish, and on tortoises. Among man–made ornamennts the most important were references to textiles, to colourful threads which form a design\(^8\) (in a metaphoric way it was also used for literature and the structure of universe).

There was an idea that wen is an exterior form\(^9\). One can notice however that a design on a piece of textile produced by combination of colour threads of the warp and weft, is not a surface decoration, but a manifestation of the structure of the textile. Tattoos also quite often had a magical or mystical meaning; for instance, when the Yue people tattooed their bodies with designs of dragons, it served as an expression of their “dragon–like nature”, which permitted them to swim in water undisturbed by alligators (considered a kind of dragons) and other water creatures\(^10\). So, wen was also understood as a substantial element of things, as their form inseparable from their nature, as “the proper order”. It can be seen, for instance, in one particular use of wen in denominating the parts of characters: the part which gives the “significance” (a class of things) was nemad wen, and the part determining approximate pronunciation zi\(^11\).

The combination of those two meanings: decoration and nature, “proper order”, can be seen in a passage from the “Book of Liu” (Liu zi), written perhaps in the 6th century A.D.

“...The [proper movements of] the Sun and the Moon are wen (decoration, pattern) of Heaven; mountains and rivers are the wen of Earth; language is the wen of man. If the wen of Heaven is lost, faulty eclipses alter [the normal order]; if the wen of Earth is lost, natural calamities such as landslides happen; if the wen of man is lost, the disaster of a serious injury to health [or even death] follow”\(^12\).

\(^8\) Cfr. various meanings of wen enumerated in Zhongwen da cidian (The encyclopedic dictionary of the Chinese language), Taipei 1962, no. 13766 (pp. 6180 pass.); also Wang Li, Tong yuan zidian (An ethnomologic dictionary), Beijing 1982, Shangwu Yinshugun, p. 527. In this last work one peculiar ancient meaning of wen is mentioned, a combination of red with dark blue–green.

\(^9\) Cfr. Li ji, ch. Le ji, quoted ed., p. 133. The passage in question runs as following: “Music originates from inside, etiquette rises from outside; music originates from inside, therefore appeases, etiquette rises from outside, therefore it decorates (wen)”.


\(^11\) Cfr. Zhongwen da cidian, character no. 13766, meaning no. 7, point 1. Characters in general were also named wen, although it was used as well for simple characters only.

\(^12\) Liu zi, juan 6, (part 30). Liu zi ji jiao (The critical edition of the "Book
The concept of intimate interrelations between the form and nature of things has been described well in "The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons" (Wen xin diao long).

"Water by nature is plastic, allowing the formation of ripples; and it is of the essential nature of trees to be solid, supporting flowers on their calyces. The ornamental pattern (wen) [of a thing] is of necessity conditioned by its essential nature (zhì). [On the other hand], tigers and leopards deprived of their patterns (wen), would have the same kind of hide as dogs and sheep... The essential nature [of things also] depends on their ornamental pattern (wen)"\textsuperscript{13}.

A unity of "nature" and "form" can also be seen in some generalized meanings of wen: "beautiful", "elegant", "refined".

A similar unity of the form and nature can be seen in the second line of meanings, in which wen is applied to society; wen was used for those elements of culture which are "decorations" or "patterns" of humans, and at the same time constitute their human, i.e. "cultural nature", for the social obligations (yi), social norms and etiquette (li), for music (le), for virtues (de), for various combinations of these elements, and as the most general name for all virtues\textsuperscript{14}. Teaching of these attributes was also considered wen. Such a wen has to be lodged inside educated man\textsuperscript{15}.

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\textsuperscript{13} Wen xin diao long, juan 7, sect. 31, Beijing 1957, Zhonghua Shuju edition, p. 297. Tr. by Vincent Yu–chung Shih, Literary Mind and Carving of Dragons, New York 1959, Columbia University Press, p. 174 (small changes introduced). The work was written by Liu Xie (465?–520?). In this text I used the name of the book popularised by this translation. I would prefer, however, to translate it as "The forming of mind as the carving of a dragon". Wen can be interpreted here as a verb, with the sense: to decorate, to elaborate, to form.

Zi Gong said that culture is identical with natural human characteristics; so, skins of tigers and panthers without hair are the same as skins of sheep and dogs. He intended to say that an opposition of zhì and wen is merely apparent. The culture of a nobleman acquired by education becomes his nature, as tiger’s hair is inseparable from his skin. Thus culture is a nature of humans. Cfr. an interpretation of this passage by Yang Bojun, Lun yu yi zhu (The Confucian Analects with a translation and comments), Beijing 1965; Zhonghua Shuju (6th edition), pp. 133–4; N.I. Konrad, Zapad i Vostok (The West and the East), Moskva 1972, Nauka, pp. 56–7.

\textsuperscript{14} Cfr. Zhongwen da cidian, character no. 13766, meanings no. 4, 5, 13.

\textsuperscript{15} Zhou Yi, the explanation of hexagram 2 (Kun). Zhou Yi zheng yi (The correct meaning of Zhou Yi), juan 1; in: Shi san jing zhu shu (Thirteen Classics with comments), Beijing 1983, p. 18. This passage in the translations of the "Book of Changes" by J. Legge and R. Wilhelm is omitted.
Hence *wen* was put in opposition to natural, innate or biological characteristics (*zhī*). For instance, in "Confucian Analects" (*Lūn yù*) one can read that when the natural characteristics (*zhī*) predominate, rudeness results; when *wen* predominates a bookish erudition (*shī*) is the result. Therefore, the Confucian ideal "noble man" (*jun zǐ*) should combine both of them, nature with culture\(^{16}\).

This Confucian concept of culture involves, however, another meaning of *wen*, the third line of its development, which originates from "characters" and "scriptures", so similar in China to ornaments, and at the same time reflecting the very nature of things. The texts, inscriptions, books and literature in general were also named *wen*. Nikolaj I. Konrad (1891–1970), the great Soviet sinologist who studied the problem of *wen* and *wú*, pointed out that the literature—*wen* originally meant only the Confucian scriptures, canonical books of a normative nature and the Confucian teaching itself, not every kind of books. Only during the Han period a much wider concept of literature appeared, which included books of all ancient philosophers, histories and chronicles, as well as other writings of the imperial period, in particular those presented to the emperor\(^{17}\).

Wang Liqi, who studied the term *wen xuè*, indicates an even broader field of *wen*. In his opinion, from the Han period onwards it concerned the canonical books, in particular the "Book of Documents" (*Shāng shù*) and the "Book of Songs" (*Shī jīng*), studies of these books and norms contained in them, as well as persons who study them, i.e. Confucianists; and the art of government based on studies and teaching of norms explained in the canons\(^{18}\). This last element, although closely related to the literary meaning of *wen*, can be separated and combined with the fourth

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\(^{16}\) *Lūn yù*, book 6, sect. 18. The interpretation of this passage follows that by Konrad, *Izbrannye trudy*, Sinologija (Selected works, sinology), Moskva 1977, Nauka, p. 146. Yang Bojun interprets this passage in a slightly different way: he interprets *zhī* as substance, nature, contents juxtaposed to appearance, form, learning. Yang Bojun, *op. cit.*, pp. 65, 312. The division of the text of the Anlects accepted by him (and followed here) differs slightly from that used by James Legge (in his translation it is sect. 16). He translated *zhī* as the solid qualities, and *wen* as accomplishments, which is rather misleading here. Some commentators of *Lūn yì* define *zhī* as "natural" (*tìan*), others simply as "original", "basic" (*běn*). Perhaps, it is a range of its meanings. *Cfr.* comments to *Lūn yù*, to the passage given above and to another one, book 2, sect. 23. *Zhu zì ji chéng* (Collected works of philosophers), Beijing 1956, Zhonghua Shuju, vol. 1, pp. 39–40, 125.


line of meanings related to “establishing peace” based on the policy promoted by Confucian canons. Some details concerning this meaning will be given below, but at first a more profound analysis of the literary significances of *wen* is necessary since without this it is impossible to understand why and how the policy based on the Canons must bring peace to the country.

As far as the literary meanings are concerned it is worth mentioning that from the 2nd century A.D. there was a growing tendency to restrict the meaning of “literature” to the artistic genres, those in which the beauty of forms was paramount. Thus, Confucian canons as well as other philosophical works and histories were often excluded from “literature”, in particular in works devoted to literary criticism.³⁹ This separation however was never complete, and even in later periods, in particular in encyclopedic works, the presentation of *wen* starts from a description of canonical books and ends with a description of literary implemnents: paper, brush, ink and ink-slab.⁴⁰ A restricted meaning of *wen* can be found even in the literary works of the Qing period. Tang Zhen (1630–1704), for instance, defines *wen* as norms of behaviour and dignity of demeanour. Hence he identifies *wen* with the canons which teach “duties”, and puts it in opposition to other writings called merely “words” (*yan*). For him the substantial characteristic of *wen* is its transmission from generation to generation, as a source of eternal teaching. Narrative literature, even of artistic value, is merely *yan* not *wen*. He admits however that antique books which were merely *yan* for the further generations became *wen*.²¹

The “literary” meanings of *wen* were closely related to the original meaning “design”, “decoration”. For instance, in the book quoted above, “The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons”, one can read:

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⁴⁰ See, for instance, Ouyang Xun et al., *Yi wen lei ju* (The collection of all kinds of literary pursuits), juan 55–58, Shanghai 1959, Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, pp. 983–1057. (This book was written during the Wude period, 618–623; Xu Jian at al., *Chu xue ji* (Records for elementary studies), juan 21, Beijing 1980, Zhonghua Shuju, pp. 497–522. This book was written for sons of the emperor Xuan Zong (713–756) as a text–book.

"For the description of our inner spirit, or the description of physical objects, the contents of the mind are inscribed in ‘the marking of birds’ [that is, in writing], and in the literary expressions woven on ‘fish nets’ [that is, paper]. Elegance achieved in them is named literary decorativeness. Thus the way in which literature (wen) is created is based on three principles. The first is called the pattern of form (xing wen); it is [a composition of] the Five Colours. The second is called the pattern of sounds (sheng wen); it is [a composition of] the Five Tones. The third is called the pattern of emotions (qing wen) and it is [a composition of] the Five Emotions. The mixing of the Five Colours [produces] elegant embroidery; the combination of the Five Tones creates [such beautiful pieces of ancient music as] Shaoxian; the expression of the Five Emotions makes the essence of literature (ci zhang). They result from the Holy Principle (shen li).\(^22\)

The wen was related to the Way (Dao) and represented the natural order of the universe; it was related to "patterns" of all things and to civilization, a proper human order, artificial, but essential to man. And this order was disclosed by the sages in their writings (wen) or even occasionally in inscriptions or books sent by Heaven.

Such ideas appeared in antiquity. For instance, in a book of the 3rd century B.C., the "Book of the Master Han Fei" (Han Fei zi) elementary ideas can be found, that the Way is the source of the evolution of all things, allows the natural order to appear, and determines the form, of designs (wen) of all things. The sages who knew the Way could compose literature (wen zhang).\(^23\) In the appendices to the "Book of Changes" (Yi jing) this passage can be found:

"The Way is manifested in changes and in movements, therefore the lines are named; the lines have [various] values, therefore the things and phenomena are named; things and phenomena are mixed together, therefore the design (wen) is named; the designs are not equal, therefore good and bad luck happens."\(^24\)

The concept of interrelation between the Way and literature was elaborated later on. An interesting description of this interrelation can be


\(^23\) Cfr. Han Fei zi, juan 6 (sect. 20); Chen Qiyou ed., Han Fei zi ji shi (The "Book of Master Han Fei" with comments), Shanghai 1974, Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, p. 365.

found in "The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons". The book begins with the statement:

"Wen is a very great power indeed. It was born together with Heaven and Earth [...] The Sun and the Moon like two pieces of jade manifest the pattern (xiang) of Heaven; mountains and rivers in their beauty display the pattern of Earth. These are the wen of the Way [...] Man, and man alone, forms with these the Triad [...] He is the refined essence of the Five Elements indeed, the mind of universe. With the emergence of mind, language was created, and when language was created, writings (wen) appeared".

The the author describes the development of literature, the composition of canonical books and the mysterious appearance of the two diagrams sent by Heaven. He concludes:

"Thus [we] know that the Way is handed down in writing through the sages, and the sages make the Way manifest in their writings".25

Later on the problem of wen was analysed by Neo-Confucian thinkers. For instance, Hu Yuan (993–1059) stated that the Way has its basis (or substance, ti), its function (yong), and its literary expression (wen). He considered as "substance" the Confucian virtues, five basic relationships, rites and norms (li), and music. The activating of this substance and its putting into practice throughout the empire is the "function". The "Book of Songs", the "Book of Documents", the dynastic histories, and the writings of the philosophers are the "literary expression".26

Hence wen had a particular, divine-like nature. It can be seen clearly from a case described in the "Confucian Analects". Once Confucius found himself near the settlement Kuang where, because of a mistake, the local population wanted to kill him. Then he said:

"Wen Wang has already passed away, but is not wen lodged in me? If Heaven did not wish to put an end to wen, then I, destined to an early death, should not be bestowed with wen. While Heaven does not let wen perish, what can the people of Kuang do to me?".27

This passage demonstrates a certain metaphysical dimension of wen, which is considered here as supported and protected by Heaven and which could be lodged in one sage, acting as its vehicle.

Sima Qian (145?–87? B.C.) related wen to the Ultimate Absolute (tai

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25 Wen xin diao long, juan 1, sect. 1, quoted ed., pp. 23–4; Yu–chung Shih's translation, slightly modified (cfr. op. cit., pp. 8–9).


27 Lun yu, book 9, sect. 5; Yang Bojun, op. cit., p. 94.
yi). He had written that the appreciation of the "root" (ben) of all things is called *wen*, its use is called the "principle" (li), and the combination of *wen* with *li* constitutes *wen*, which is a return to the Ultimate Absolute. How these two meanings of *wen* should be interpreted, remains an open question; it seems however that there is a shift from a gnosiological to an ontological interpretation of this term.

Culture, in the specific Confucian interpretation as a "culture of canons", was intimately linked to Heaven, which introduced moral values and norms to mankind through the sages and sage-rulers, through their books and by policy performed with the Mandate of Heaven. The great Soviet sinologist, Vasilij M. Alekseev (1881–1951) admitted that Confucian reverence to *wen* was religious in its nature, although this religiosity was atheistic.

It was commonly believed that such a mythicized culture could only be born in China, spreading outwards from her, owing to the natural order of the universe. The Middle Country has mysterious but intimate relationships with Heaven, since it is the center of the universe; there the Yin and Yang Forces are in harmony, and the Four Seasons are in a proper order. So, the sages are naturally born there, as ice and snow in the North, and heat, evergreen plants and snakes in the South.

Because of *wen*, of their "cultural transformation" (*wen* *hua*), the Huaxia people distinguished themselves from the surrounding barbarians, who live in unfavourable natural conditions at the edges of the world. One can notice that one of the most popular ethnonyms of the Chinese, used right from antiquity up to present times, is *Hua*, "colourful", "blossoming", which is related to the ancient meaning of *wen* (colourful, decorated), and perhaps indicated "elaboration" and culture, decoration and rites, as opposed to "natural rudeness". Since one of many meanings of *wen*

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28 Shi ji, juan 23; quoted ed., p. 1169.
is also "moderate", "keeping of the mean", there is yet another link with the Middle Country. This name was interpreted by some Chinese as "the land where the principle of the Middle Way is practised".32

Such a concept can be detected in the ancient "Book of Changes" (Yi jing), although it indicates spreading civilization and establishment of the proper political order by military rather than educative means33.

Sometimes an even more precise geographic concept appeared. The Central Plain area was considered the land where wen has to be practised, and the outside mountainous and river areas were considered the land of wu. Those outside areas were considered "barbarous" actually or only by origin, and the Middle Country was peaceful by its very nature, since its nature was determined by the Earth Element which has Peace (an) as its "virtue" (de). Thus, the wen area was limited to the ancient political core of the state, and the wide lands within China's borders were considered wu.34

In this context it is worth mentioning that in antiquity there was a well established belief that many Chinese sages were born outside "China proper". For instance, Mencius (372–289? B.C.) believed that the sages who promoted the Way, Yao and Wen Wang, were born in the East and the West respectively, and owing to their virtues became rulers of the Middle Country.35 Hence, not all thinkers were of the opinion that wen

1985, Zhonghua Shuju, p. 715. Yang Bojun considers the traditional interpretation of hua, given above, as reflecting well the ancient concepts of "China" (personal discussion, May 1986).


35 Cfr. Meng zi, juan 8, (Li lou), part 2, sect. 1; Yang Bojun Meng zi yi zhu (The Book of Mencius with a translation and comments), Beijing 1981, Zhonghua Shuju (6th edition), p. 184. James Legge translated this passage in a wrong way as "man near to the wild tribes", since he was unable to imagine that the sages could be born out of China. Cfr. Chinese Classics, The Book of Mencius, Hong Kong–London 1862, vol. 2, pp. 317–9. Similar records can be however found in other ancient books as Shan hai jing (The canon of mountains and seas), Lü shi chun qiu (Lü's Spring and
could be born only in the Middle Country. One has to remember however that the interpretation of "China" was changing, and there was a tendency to enlarge her area. Since the imperial period there was a tendency to consider the entire state territory the "Middle Country" and ascribe to it wen characteristics.

Moreover the interpretation of the "cultural" notion of wen was changing. Whereas in early Confucianism the emphasis was on the spiritual cultivation of the individual, in later times a new idea become popular: the cultural transformation of peoples, whole nations. So, it could be to a certain degree identified with Chinese culture, with dao de predominating in the entire Middle Country.

Early Confucianists did not separate clearly studies of books, i.e. literary knowledge, from culture and virtues. Sometimes they used wen in a narrow literary meaning, sometimes in a general one. For instance, in one case Confucius enumerated the talents of his pupils. Some of them, in his opinion, achieved excellency in virtuous behaviour (de xing), others in the oratorical art (yan yu), still others in political management (zheng shi), and the last in literature (wen xue). So, it is clear that wen, as literary erudition, was distinguished from moral behaviour in practice. This last was considered by Confucius to be much more important than bookish knowledge. It is clearly confirmed by another passage, when Confucius said that a boy should practise at home respect for his parents, outside respect for village elders, should be modest and sincere, and demonstrate sympathy towards people. In this way he approaches the virtue of benevolence (ren). If he has more energy to do something else, he should study wen. But on another occasion, as was mentioned above, wen was interpreted as the mystical truth and teaching promoted by Heaven.

Therefore, even within one book various meanings of wen can be found. All those various significances and different lines of meanings should not however be considered just a mechanical combination. There are intimate relationships among them, secondary meanings are related to original ones, one line to another, and so on.

Since the meaning of wen was considered "obvious" and there were no discussions on this subject, we have almost no comprehensive Chinese

Autumn Annals), Wu Yue chun qiu (Spring and Autumn Annals of the Wu and Yue States), Shi ji (Historical Records), etc. and concern also other sages: Fu Xi, Nü Wa, Yu the Great, Huangdi, Zhuang Xu, and so on. For an analysis of those records see Gu Jiegang, Lun Ba Shu yu Zhongguande guanxi (The relationships between the Ba Shu region and the Central Plain), Chengdu 1981, Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe, pp. 6–17.

37 Lun yu, book 1, sect. 6; Yang Bojun ed., op. cit., p. 5.
definition of the term. One of the rare exceptions is a description of posthumous titles (shi fa) given by the "Lost Zhou Books" (Yi Zhou shu), and repeated by several other ancient sources. There meanings of wu and wen used in the rulers' posthumous names, and limited to the political sphere, can be found. It is interesting to see how the Ancient Chinese defined wen, although the description is not complete.

"[To understand and to follow] the order of the universe is called wen. [To have] great knowledge of the virtues and a true moral nature is called wen. [To be] earnest in studies and fond of knowledge is called wen. To protect the people with kindness and compassion is called wen. To demonstrate pity for the people and to favour them according to the norms of propriety is called wen. To confer honours and to give ranks of nobility to the people is called wen. To be loyal, to trust [the others], and to keep relations [with them] according to the norms of propriety is called wen".38

The sentence before last refers to the ancient identification of wen with a policy of "ruling by rewards", whereas wu was a rule by restrictions and punishments. In a more general sense, wen rule could be defined as administration by creation of positive motives in the society, by fostering the will to achieve rewards which raise "meritorious persons" in social prestige, by inspiring and propagating loyalty and confidence to the rulers, a sense of social obligations, "propriety", etc. Wu on the other hand was identified with administration by provoking fear, avoidance of "crimes", etc., i.e. with negative stimuli. In this sense wen could be opposed to wu, or could be considered complementary to it.

To conclude these remarks on wen it seems useful to enumerate the most important meanings of this term at the end of the Spring and Autumn and in the Warring States periods. Yang Bojun in his vocabulary of the "Confucian Analects" explains them as following: 1. literature and the knowledge preserved in literature; 2. literary education, elegance, opposed to "natural characteristics"; 3. sentences, phrases; 4. the verb "educate", "decorate", "paint" (in a metaphoric sense)39. In his dictionary of the

38 Yi Zhou shu, juan 6, sect. 54 Shi fa; Zhu Youceng ed., Yi Zhou shu ji xun jiao shi (The Lost Zhou Books with collected comments and explanations), Hubei Zhongwen Shuju, 1877, p. 7a. The same piece of the text was included in some editions of the "Book of Origins" (Shi ben), supplied by commentators with corresponding names of rulers and princes. Cfr. Shi ben ji bu (The Book of Origins with collected addenda), ed. by Qin Jiamo, juan 10, Shi fa, in: Shi ben ba zhong (The eight editions of the Book of Origins Shanghai 1957, Shangwu Yinshuguan, p. 367. The same text is preserved in the "Dai the Elder's Records of Norms" (Da Dai li). The history of this text is too complicated to be analysed here, but one can suppose that it circulated widely during the Han period, and could be of an earlier origin.

“Spring and Autumn Annals and Zuo’s Commentary”, he added the system of writing; decoration; colourful; ornament; a textile ornament based on warp and weft, on combination of colour threads; cultural virtues; and the administration based on civil principles contrasted to military actions based on physical force.\(^{40}\)

This last sense belongs to the fourth line of meanings, and it is the main subject of this study. It originated from “peaceful”, “serene”, “to bring peace”, “to pacify”, “to tranquilize”, but being combined with the meanings described above, it was developed into: tranquilize by education, by teaching of canons, by promoting virtues and norms. Since these type of activity were traditionally considered the main functions of the clan and state administration, it was identified with “administrative methods”. Hence, wen—affairs are defined as “cultural (or literary) education” (wen shi, wen jiao ye)\(^{41}\); and the “cultural education” is interpreted as “instruction in li, music and other subjects of that kind, thereby transforming the people and establishing proper customs”\(^{42}\). Thus the “role of wen” is defined as a policy based on “cultural education”\(^{43}\), and the “Way of wen” (wen dao) is described as the way of establishing peace by literary education, as opposed to military means\(^{44}\).

Therefore, wen as culture and literary education was also identified with social harmony and peace, and wildness with bellicosity. And the Middle Country was imagined as a land of civilized people, the motherland of civilization; the empire had to enjoy peace and promote it in the world, although there were different opinions by which means, by wen or by wu. “Civil education” was promoted by scholars who considered barbarians the “wild humans”, who can be educated; military means were promoted by those who considered them animal—type creatures which cannot be “transformed”, i.e. civilized\(^{45}\). Hence the expulsion of criminals,


\(^{41}\) *Zhongwen da cidian*, quoted ed., character no. 13766.250.


\(^{44}\) *Ibid.*, 13766.656.

the Chinese who failed in “cultural transformation”, to the borderland had ideological justifications. Since antiquity many thinkers were of the opinion that even in China statecraft is a combination of both wen and wu, i.e. “cultural education” with “coercion” and the use of force. In order to better understand this concept it is necessary to analyse the development of the idea of wu.

2. **The notions of wu confronted with wen**

In oracle-bone inscriptions it was written as 🙌 🗡️ 🗡️. The character is composed of a pictogram of a foot and a battle-axe, i.e. it expresses the idea of “to guard”, “a soldier”, “military expedition”, or “bellicose”. The interpretation given in “Zuo’s Commentary” (Zuo zhuan), that it is “to stop war”, seems to be a late idea, which could have evolved at the end of the Spring and Autumn period (722–481 B.C.)

46 This concept was reflected in the traditional differentiation of distances for life exile, related to the zonal concept of the Chinese state. Subcommentary to the article 6 of the “Tang Code” states: “The greatest criminals are sent to the bounds of the state or exiled beyond the seas [i.e. to the territories of the wildest barbarians]; the next are exiled for life outside The Nine Provinces [i.e. outside China in a broad understanding based on the description given in the “Tributes of Yu”–Yi gong, Shang shu, ch. 4]; and the next outside the Central State [i.e. beyond the China Proper]”. Cfr. Wallace Johnson, The Tang Code, Vol. 1, General Principles, Princeton University Press, 1979, p. 59 (translation slightly modified). Cfr. also Dou Yi, Song xing tong (The Song code), j. 1, part 1; Beijing 1984, Zhonghua Shuju, p. 3. Those distances were identified in a symbolic way with an exile for distances 3000, 2500 and 2000 li.

Ju. L. Krol pointed out that the terminology used for crimes of the Chinese and aggressions or rebellions of the barbarians was the same. Even many customs popular among barbarians were crimes in China. So, various types of crimes were associated with barbarians and the Chinese who committed them “were of the same kind”. Cfr. Ju. L. Krol, O koncepții “Kitaj–varvary” (On the concept “the Chinese—the barbarians), in: Kitaj–obșeștevo i gosudarstvo (China–the society and the state), Moskva 1973, Nauka, pp. 16–20.


48 Cfr. Jia gu wen bian, quoted ed., no. 1510, pp. 492–3; Liang Donghan, op. cit., p. 101; Zuo zhuan, Xuan Gong 12; Chun qiu Zuo zhuan zheng yi (The standard edition of the Spring and Autumn Annals and Zuo’s Commentary), in: Shi san jing
book and the evolution of the Confucian concept of "culture", it came to dominate the thought of later periods.

The great dictionary of the Chinese language gives the following meanings of *wu*: to stop use of arms, excellence in use of military force, military men, armed forces, weapons, military power, art of war, bravery, and some other particular significances. The "military sphere" is however even broader, for it includes activities which involve physical force, coercion, punishment, cruelty, or "immoral" tricks and actions based on deception. Thus criminal law belongs to it as well as activities related to physical exercises and abilities, in the West considered "sports". One Chinese dictionary defines it in a synthetic way: "*wu* is the using of force, an antonym of *wen*".

The identification of legal punishment with war can be bewildering for a Western mind, but in China a concept was elaborated according to which war aims at preventing or stopping injustice, rebellion, invasion and its cruelties, or is a punishment for such actions. Hence, in the "History of the Han Dynasty" (Han shu) military problems are described in the chapter devoted to punishments and law, and the following sequence of punishments is given: the greatest punishment is a military expedition,

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zhu shu (Thirteen classics with comments), Shanghai 1957, Zhonghua Shuju, p. 938; J. Legge, The Chinese Classics, vol. V, The Ch'un Ts'ew, with the Tso Chuen, part 1, p. 320; Shuo wen jie zi, quoted ed., p. 266. The conclusion given above is accepted also by Hu Houxuan and Zhou Zumo (personal discussion, May 1986).

49 Zhongwen da cidian, quoted ed., character no. 16623, pp. 7592–3. Among various particular meanings there are, for instance, "half a step", "a kind of military dance", "Wu Wang's music", "a bronze musical instrument", "a kind of ceremonial head-gear" (related to "military activities"), "a military official", etc., also "vehement", "strong" (in a construction "strong fire" (*wu huo*), ibid., no. 16623.24. The most popular significance of *wen* and *wu* in ancient Chinese literature are however Wen Wang and Wu Wang, the founders of the Zhou dynasty.

50 See, for instance, an analysis of war in Sun zi bing fa (Master Sun's principles of war), the most important military text of the Chinese civilization, written probably in the 5th or 4th century B.C. Immoral nature of war is expressed there very clearly. It is summed up in a statement: "War is the Way of Deception" (*bing* *zhe* gui dao ye), (ch. 1). Guo Huarruo ed., Shi yi jia zhu Sun zi (The Book of the Master Sun with comments of the eleven authors), Shanghai 1978, Shanghai Guji Chubanshi p. 18; L. Giles, Sun Tzu on the Art of War, London 1910, Luzac and Co., p. 6. Innumerable books on military methods in various spheres of life published later on continued this tradition. The Way of Deception was juxtaposed to the Confucian Right Way (zheng dao) based on the Principle of the Middle. Cfr. "Zhong yong" (The Doctrine of the Mean).

51 Chen Hexiang, Si ti da zidian (A great dictionary of the characters in the four styles), Beijing 1984, Zhongguo Shudian, p. 634. The first edition of this dictionary was published in 1926.
followed by an execution with the use of an axe; the moderate punishment is the cutting off of feet or other parts of the body, then removing the knee-caps and branding a criminal on the face\textsuperscript{52}. Only in the middle ages law and punishment were separated from military affairs, and the sphere of \textit{wu} was limited to a more narrow "military" sense. Yet this separation was never complete in imperial China\textsuperscript{53}.

The identification of sports and various games with \textit{wu} is more difficult for interpretation. On the one hand it was related to their clear military purpose, on the other to the nature of antique games. Nguyen Tien Huu illustrated it well on Vietnamese material related to village festivals.

"At the seasonal festivals the people organize games and competitions whose objective is to maintain the traditional fighting spirit (...) All the contest, whether sportslike or military, show the same characteristics: they are very brutal games, without definite rules or regulations and they are ruled by strength, speed and daring. Such a game is more fight than sport. Its objective is to develop and maintain the fighting spirit"\textsuperscript{54}.

There are, of course, some differences between traditional Chinese and Vietnamese games, but their nature seems to be similar, and even games which were played on a table, without any force, were linked to the military tradition by their strategical principles and concepts.

It has to be mentioned that physical strength and abnormal abilities


\textsuperscript{53} This tendency to separate military affairs in a strict sense can be seen, for instance, in medieval dynastic histories, where military affairs started to be described under a specific name \textit{bing}, as distinct from law and punishments. In a well-known encyclopedic work completed in 624(?) "The Collection of All Kinds of Literary Pursuits" (\textit{Yi wen lei jia}), the \textit{wu} section is limited to wars and the military command, and even weapons are described in the section on "military instruments" (\textit{jun qi}). Quoted ed., juan 59, 60, pp. 1058–93. But in another Tang encyclopedic work, "Records for Elementary Studies" (\textit{Chu xue ji}), the \textit{wu} section presents various types of weapons, nets and whips, obviously used for punishment. Quoted ed., juan 22, pp. 523–46. Until the beginnings of the 20th century, when fundamental reforms of military institutions were initiated, military units were integrated with administration and performed many functions, served as forces preventing or punishing domestic riots, accompanied tax collecting officials, guarded administrative buildings and store houses, served as police, fire brigades, transported state post, money and grain, accompanied travelling state officials, and so on.

are a constant element of the Chinese images of "soldier" or "fighter". It can be seen in various descriptions of them, in the emphasis which is laid on physical exercises in Chinese armies, as well as in "martial arts".

A very broad interpretation of wu was related to social realities; at the very beginning of the formation of a bureaucratic state system there was no clear distinction between civil and military functions. So, various functions of "real politics" were included in the sphere of wu, and this state of an early political thought was fixed in the Chinese classics. Hence, it became a theory of statehood for the future generations. Such a wide interpretation of wu can be found in the "Zuo's Commentary", where its seven components are enumerated.

"Thus military prowess (wu) is seen (1) in the repression of cruelty, (2) in the removal of all weapons, (3) in the preservation of the greatness [of the ruling house], (4) in the consolidating of [ruler's] merit, (5) in ensuring peace to the people, (6) in harmonizing the multitude [of states], and (7) in the ensuring abundance".

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56 *Zuo zhuan, Xuan Gong 12.* This passage was interpreted and translated in various ways, though differences do not influence much the general meaning of wu exposed here. Perhaps one has to admit that the text is ambiguous and its interpretations inevitably differ. James Legge translated it: "Thus military prowess is seen in the repression of cruelty, the calling in of the weapons of war, the preservation of the great appointment, the firm establishment of one's merit, the giving repose to the people, the harmonizing all [the states], and the enlargement of the general wealth The Chinese Classics*, vol. V, p. 3230.


Nothwithstanding some explanations which follow this passage, and references to the "Book of Songs" which precede, the meaning of the seven "military virtues" was interpreted in different ways. In particular the elements 3 and 4 are ambiguous, and their explanation given above needs an additional clarification. It has to be also mentioned that the logic of the ancient author differs from much more precise and disjunctive categorisations introduced to the Western philosophical tradition by Greek thinkers. So any attempt to make them "logical" and "clear" for a contemporary Western reader must inevitably lead to a falsification of the text.

The "cruelty" named at the beginning means the provoking of death and leaving bodies not buried, which destined the souls to the fate of "wandering and malignant spirits". It refers to the ruler's own soldiers and people, but can include those of the opposition as well. The second element should be understood as the collecting of all weapons of war and putting them into the store-houses; in a general sense it means "to put an end to the use of weapons", "to terminate military actions". The third element can be understood as a synthesis of both of them, thereby ensuring peace for China or for "the world". Since it refers to a piece of poetry ascribed to Wu Wang (Shi jing, IV, I/i/, VIII), where some other elements are enumerated, such as establishment of field and distribution of power according to merits, possessing and displaying the Virtue by the king of China, preservation of the dynastic mandate and so on, it can be interpreted even in a more general sense, as the preservation of such "greatness and power" of the ruling house based on justice, peace and the Virtue. The fourth element can be interpreted in several ways: it can be understood as "to bring into effect ruler's merit", to liquidate those who contest it and oppose him; or as "finishing the task" of uniting China, of establishing the virtuous rule; it can refer to a single person or to a ruling house, to one's merit or to the preservation and ensuring the great political achievements and merits of the ancestors; it can emphasize the virtue, moral qualities or practical aspects, the real political achievements, power, prestige and influence. So, all those numerous possible interpretations refer in fact to power. Whereas the element number 3 referred to prestige and influence obtained by ensuring peace and justice, by proper administration of the state, of the people and spirits as well, the element number 4 refers rather to elimination of an opposition and to increasing practical political influence.

of Odes", where many similar formulations and ideas can be found. Cfr., for instance, III, I, X; III, II VI; IV, I (i), VIII; the use of the word bao, etc. Useful comments and explanations are given by Chen Zizhan, Shi jing zhi jie (The Book of Odes with commentaries), Fudan Daxue Chubanshe 1983 (Shanghai), vol. 1–2.
The fifth element is close to the initial three, but it points out the necessity to ensure the people a peaceful and happy life, without excessive burdens of the state services. It can also be interpreted as giving the people repose. The sixth element refers once again to the state power, but from another point of view: it is a demand to use political and military power for establishment of "peaceful coexistence" of the states, for establishment of an international harmony. In the context of the Confucian images of China it meant the establishment of the firm hegemony of the "true king" over all other states and preventing their aggression towards China and one against another. The seventh element introduces somethings new: it concerns general wealth, the proper state administration which will ensure the people good harvests and abundance. On the one hand it seems to refer to the old concept which emphasized the necessity of the performance of work on the land at the proper time. Such an adjustment to seasons and natural time—changes was considered a substantial element of "martiality". Hence, in the "Historical Records" military matters are described in detail just in the chapter devoted to calendar. On the other hand it is related to the points exposed above, to avoidance of excessive taxation and service in the army, disastrous for peasants' economy, but necessary for war. Battles and military actions are usually described in ancient Chinese sources as resulting in economic disaster, as provoking ruin, poverty and devastation of the country. So, all elements of *wu* described above are related to war and military policy in a more intimate way than would appear from a superficial reading of the text. Such a vision of *wu* is closely related to the Confucian ideology, but several of its elements are not alien to other schools of thought too.

It is very interesting to compare this description of *wu* with a description of politics (*zheng*) given by Tang Zhen (1630–1704), who in a syncretic manner tried to expose the "ancient truths".

"These who make politics are numerous, but those who understand it are few. Politics is based on military affairs (*bing*), hence is seen in strengthening of the borders; politics is based on foodstuff, hence is seen in brimming granaries; politics is based on estimations, hence is manifested in a respect for the ruling house; politics is based on rewards and punishments, hence is manifested in an establishment of administrative system of offices."

One can see that all the four fundamentals of politics accepted by him are in one way or another included in the descriptions of *wu* given in "Zuo's Commentary" and other ancient books. Practical policy—making

and administration were closely related to the *wu* sphere in a broad understanding.

Hence, *wu* cannot be reduced merely to military preparations and wars. They constitute its essential element, but other aspects are also important. Moreover, the broad concept of the "military sphere" influenced even the conduct of "war", directing and implementation of military force in a way opposed to the traditional Western bellicosity. One can recall here the recommendations on war given in the "Master Sun's Principles of War" (*Sun zi bing fa*), the most fundamental text of Chinese theory of war written perhaps in the 5th–4th centuries B.C., but considered the highest authority in the subject until modern times. There we read that the best war is to prevent, or destroy, the enemy's plan of war, eliminate his aggressive intentions; the next best kind of war is to destroy enemy's alliances (and in this way prevent an outbreak of hostilities); then comes combat with troops in field, and the worst is to attack strongholds\(^{59}\). So, even war was understood by the ancient Chinese in a very broad sense, as all forms of struggle between states, political, diplomatic and military, as a combination of *wen* and *wu* elements\(^{60}\). It was however, first and foremost, a "lesson for the rebels", a "reestablishment of the proper order"\(^{61}\).

In the "Lost Zhou Books" (*Yi Zhou shu*) the meanings of *wu* are enumerated as follows: to strengthen the bordelands and enforce the right; to awe the peoples of the borderlands and make Virtue manifest; to arrange appointments properly and liquidate chaos; to punish the people and ensure their submission; to praise good intentions and not hesitate to test them many times\(^{62}\). In another chapter there is an even more detailed description.

"To block narrow passes, to punish barbarians, to unite small [states], to put an end to chaos, to punish with a military expedition powerful [states or rulers], to attack weak ones and unexpectedly invade evil ones—these are the basic principles of *wu*.

To attack those who provoke disorders, to attack those who commit crimes, to

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\(^{59}\) *Sun zi bing fa*, sect. 3 (*Mou gong*); Guo Huaruo, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

\(^{60}\) Cfr. the text of *Liu tao* (Six quivers), where even the term "civil attack" (*wen fa*) is used (juan 2, sect. *Wen fa*).

\(^{61}\) Cfr. *Bai Hu tong de lun*, juan 2, sect. 2–3, quoted ed., pp. 3b–5a. These ideas were reflected even in the characters. In the Shang period "march of the army", "to attack" (*zheng!*) was written as "to order", "to regulate" (*zheng?*). Cfr. Guo Moruo, *Bu ci tong zuan*, quoted ed., p. 453.

\(^{62}\) *Yi Zhou shu*, juan 6 (sect. 54, *Shi fa*), quoted ed., p. 7a. For other details cfr. note 33.
attack those who initiate war on the borderlands—this is to behave according to wu [...].

A handsome boy [the ruler’s favourite] overcomes a grown-up man; a beautiful girl frustrates the efforts of an honest official; clever plans destroy a state; intelligent craftiness transcends the seasons of the year; devious music annihilates order; cunning speeches overcome justice—these are the mans by which wu does harm.

Economising one’s own foodstuff [and taking it from the enemy side], regretting one’s own mistakes [and avoiding them in the future], overcoming difficulties and fulfilling one’s own treasure house—these constitute wu.

Long overcomes short; light overcomes heavy; straight overcomes twisting; strong overcomes weak; numerous [forces] overcome scarce; well-fed [men] overcome hungry ones; a respectful [opponent] overcomes an angry one; the first to arrive overcomes late-comers; fast overcomes slow—these are factors by which wu achieves victory.

Those who act by military means are not kind; poor robbers do not know a “proper measure”; when soldiers are tired and their spirit is exhausteed, they are easily subdued—these are principles of the wu actions.

To approach victory over the enemy, to give orders [to one’s own troops] by raised banners, to command officers and to prohibit plundering, to avoid undertaking invasions; to favour the ranks of nobility and not practise modesty, not to lose [one’s own] dwellings and fields, to preserve peace among [one’s own] family, to subdue the people as metal is smelt—these are the principles of pacifying by wu”63.

In the same text a statement is given that Heaven has established wu in order to give care to weapons of war necessary for the support of righteousness and right behaviour as well as for the punishment of those who do not follow the Heavenly order64. It is a leitmotif of Confucian thought: wu serves wen and protects it.

Wen was identified with the Way and the Virtue, and wu with punishments. Barbarian invasions and aggressions, together with domestic riots, were considered “rebellions”, and all kinds of robbery and murder, those related to military actions and those committed by criminals, were considered “crimes” which have to be punished. They were included in a sphere of “chaos” (luan), and the main aim of wu was to restore “order” (zhì) and establish peace and harmony65.

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63 Ibid., juan 2 (sect. 6, Wu cheng), quoted ed., pp. 10a–11a. Same passages of this description can be found in other ancient books. See, for instance, “Plans of Warring States” (Zhan guo ce), juan 3, Chu gong Wei Zhang Yi wei Qin wang; Shanghai 1978, Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, p. 125. The entire description of wu was incorporated without changes into “Tai Gong’s Principles of War” (Tai gong bing fa). Cfr. Zhongguo bingxue da xi (The great collection of Chinese military texts), ed. by Li Yuri, Taibei 1957, Yiwen Yinshuguan, vol. 3, p. 41.

64 Yi Zhou shu, juan 2 (sect. 9, Da ming wu), quoted ed., p. 4b.

65 Cfr., for instance, Shi ji, juan 24, 25, quoted ed., pp. 1222, 1240; Shang shu,
Thus, the meaning of wu in the Confucian interpretation can be explained as the defence of order by force, or solely by a presence of force. This idea was explained clearly in a poetic form contained in one of the most revered canonical scriptures, the “Book of Songs” (Shi jing).

“Have in good order your chariots and horses,
Your bows and arrows, all kinds of weapons,
By preparations for waging war
To keep at a distance the [aggressive] South”.

It was described in detail in another Confucian scripture, the “Book of Documents” (Shang shu) where also “punishment” of the “rebels” was a constat topic. These tendencies grew in strenght in the empire and were related to its policy of domination over its neighbours, a base of Pax Sinica.

In appreciation of wen, the Confucians were not unanimous, and there were significant differences among them. Some took a more realistic position and accepted wu as an element necessary for the state, although secondary in relation to wen. Others took a more radical standpoint, and in fact rejected wu, playing it down to such an extent that it lost any importance. Whereas Confucius can be considered the founder of moderate concepts, Mencius promoted the other, radical stand—point. A good example of such a discussion among various Confucian orientations is the “Discussion on Salt and Iron” (Yan tie lun), a description of debates held in the court in 81 B.C.}

ch. Wu cheng (considered non authentic), Ju Wanli ed., quoted ed., p. 184. For the ancient concepts of zhi and luan see: Han shu, juan 48, (The biography of Jia Yi); other non authentic chapters of Shang shu (Ju Wanli, op. cit., pp. 171–92); Tai ping jing (The canon of the Ultimate Peace), juan 35, 41, 48, Beijing 1979, Zhonghua Shuju, Wang Ming ed., pp. 31–2, 84, 152–6. “Order” (zhi4) was identified with “the proper order” (zheng2) and closely interrelated to the concept of “the centralized unity” (da yi tong). For a brief description of these concepts see: Song Longji, Zhongguo wenhuade “shenceng jiegou” (The “fundamental structure” of Chinese culture), Xianggang 1983, Taishan Chubanshe, pp. 169–172, 309, 424–9.


68 Cfr. Meng zi, chapter 1.

69 Cfr. an analyss of this debate by Wang Liqi, Yan tie lun jiao zhu (The col-
It was this moderate standpoint that dominated official ideology of the empire during two millennia. One of the best expressions of such a concept can be found in the "Secret Book" (Qian shu) written by Tang Zhen (1630–1704). He compared the "complete wisdom" to a tripod which has three legs: one is benevolence (ren), the second is righteousness (yi), and the third is "military ability" (bing). Thus they compose one balanced entity. He compared bing to the horns of wild animals, used for protection. One can find in Chinese literature many such metaphors, sometimes claws and fangs are mentioned instead, and warriors are usually called tigers and panthers. The term bing used by Tang Zhen seems significant. Perhaps, he intended to emphasize the strictly military element; wu was for him and for many others a rather ambiguous term.

Some differences of opinion among Confucianists are merely apparent, since their opinions, in fact, were related to different subjects, not distinguished clearly even by themselves. Sometimes they spoke about the state in a broad sense, as an entire organization of the society. Sometimes they spoke about the state in a narrow sense, i.e. about civil administration, separated from the "army", i.e. military structure. So, the phrase ascribed to Confucius: "military preparations (wu bei) are indispensable to civil affairs (wen shi) and civil preparations are indispensable to military affairs," concerns obviously all public organizations. When, on the other hand, the military theoreticians promote the concept according to which the army has to be administered with the help of the Martial Principle, and the state has to be administered with the help of the Civil Principle, they speak about the state in a narrow sense. Thus, the domination of one or another principle could be restricted to their respective fields, which should be kept separate.

There were, however, many theoreticians, including Strategists, who

70 Tang Zhen, Qian shu, juan 2, part 2, sect. Quan xue; Beijing 1957, Guji Chubanshe, p. 173.

71 Cfr. Sun Bin bing fa (Sun Bin's principles of war), ch. Shi bei, Beijing 1975, Wenwu Chubanshe, p. 64; Shi ji, juan 25, quoted ed., 1240; Li Gou ji (Collected works of Li Gou), Beijing 1981, Zhonghua Shuju, p. 151 (Qiang bing ce di yi).

72 Shi ji, juan 47, quoted ed., p. 1915. This statement corresponds to Confucian thought as described in Lun yu, but seems to be apocryphal, since both terms, wen and wu, in this meaning are lacking there.

73 Cfr. Sima fa (Principles of Sima), chapter 2, comment by Liu Yin. See a detailed analysis of this problem in the ancient books of Strategists and in medieval comments to them by N.I. Konrad, Sun'-czy, traktat o voennom iskustve (Sunzi, A treatise on the art of war), Moskva 1950, Izdatestvo Akademii Nauk, pp. 109–12.
considered that civil virtues are fundamental for both the state and the army. For instance, in the "Master Sun's Principles of War" (*Sun zi bing fa*) the both principles are recommended for the commanding of army.

"Therefore it is necessary to inspire soldiers by *wen*, and submit them all alike by *wu*".74

The commentators explain that *wen* signifies here "benevolence" (*ren*), and *wu* "law", "punishments", "discipline".

In the "Master Wu's Principles of War" (*Wu zi bing fa*), the second most important treatise of the School of Strategy, the following passage can be found:

"Generally speaking, in administering the country and commanding the army it is necessary to instruct the people with norms of propriety (*li*) and to encourage them with a devotion to duty (*yi*), so as to inculcate the sense of honour. Now if men's sense of honour is great, they will be able to go on campaign, if smaller, they will be able to defend [the country]".75

Such a standpoint can be understood better when one considers the real duties of the military commander in ancient China. The "Book of Master Xun" (*Xun zi*), ascribed to Xun Qing (298?–238? B.C.), contains the following definition.

"The tasks facing the commander are: to direct work in fields according to the seasons, to move towards ever higher achievements, to maintain harmony among village elders and to keep order, preventing them from acquiring privileges against the law".76

In the "Master Wu's Principles of War" (*Wu zi bing fa*) this syncretic approach to the commander was expressed in a very concise form:

"The commander of an army is one in whom the civil (*wen*) and martial (*wu*) elements are combined. The military affairs (*bing zi shi*) unite hardness with softness".77

Thus, two concepts can be detected. According to one, the military element by itself comprises military and administrative functions. According to the second, it is so because the commander unites the *wen* with

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wu elements. Notwithstanding subtle differences of theoretical interpretations, the practical conclusion was the same: the civil peace—protecting duties of the military leader are emphasised as well as the necessity to combine civil with martial qualifications.

This traditional unity of wen and wu can also be seen in popular images of "military heroes": for instance, in the image of Guan Yu, who during the last millenium has become one of the most revered personages in the Chinese religious pantheon, with honorific titles equal to those of Confucius. He is not only the God of War, but also the patron of business, theatre, etc., he is an embodiment of civil values such as benevolence, righteousness, loyalty, fraternity and so on.\(^78\)

Such ideas were also expressed by many popular sayings, usually of a literary origin, for instance: "wen and wu compose the complete ability", "wen and wu support each other"\(^79\), "the Way of wen and wu consists in stretching and relaxing", "wu is a plant and wen is a seed", "to have wen and wu abilities"\(^80\). One of the traditional inscriptions in the schools of martial arts was: "to esteem wu and to cultivate wen" (shang wu xiu wen).

Therefore, the concept of war which is not purely military and the unity of wen and wu corresponded to the system of values and organization of the ancient Chinese society, to social roles and the entire cultural heritage. It has to be recognised that the military functions in the narrow sense and the use of force enjoyed no social esteem; it was only by "civil" activities and virtues that a person could acquire higher social prestige\(^81\). The Western tradition of the Spartan, the Roman, and the

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\(^80\) Cfr. Su Ruozhou, Ke Li, Junshi chengyu (Military proverbs), Taiyuan 1983, Shanxi Renmin Chubanshe, pp. 106, 123, 142. In both dictionaries of chengyu their meanings and literary sources are given. The proverb on stretching and relaxing is related to Wen Wang and Wu Wang, but it can be considered as well as an opinion concerning wen and wu embodied by these two rulers.

\(^81\) It explains many particular phenomena of the process of modernization promoted by military reformers in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, such as development of cultural and political education in Chinese armies to such an extent
medieval knight were alien to China. A military victory did not bring "eternal glory". All ancient schools of thought, with the sole exception of the Legalists, condemned war and considered it a "tool of disaster" which can be used by a nobleman only in the case of extreme necessity. This conviction was also shared by many Strategists. For instance, in the "Principles of Sima" (Sima fa) such a statement can be found.

"In antiquity benevolence (ren) was considered the root, but it was directed by righteousness (yi) [...] Therefore, to kill people is acceptable [only] in order to give them peace; to attack an other state is allowed when one loves its people; if it is necessary to resort to war in order to stop war, even war is acceptable." 84.

In another military treatise the "Book of Master Wei Liao" (Wei Liao zi) a similar concept is presented, although some other elements are involved.

"Military forces are a tool of disaster, and war contradicts the Virtue. Every action should have its reason, therefore, the [true] King attacks in order to stop 'chaos', and relies on Benevolence and Righteousness [...] Military struggle takes wu as a plant and wen as its seeds, practise wu as an [external] expression and wen as an [internal] substance. [One who] is able to consider those two [elements], knows [in advance] victories and defeats. Wen serves to calculate profits and losses, to discriminate peace and a critical situation [of the state], [i.e. serves for profits and peace]. Wu is used to attack a strong enemy, to attack or defend by force. When [wen and wu] are united, victory is granted, when [they are] divided defeat follows." 85.

that soldier became quasi—scholars, an emphasis on political functions of the army, self—presentation of military leaders as scholars—bureaucrats, and so on. Cfr. R.L. Powell, The Rise of Chinese Military Power, 1895—1912, Seattle 1964; Rossov, Vooruzhennyie sily Kitaya v period preobrazovaniy 1906 g. (The Chinese military forces at the time of reforms, 1906), Harbin 1906, Štab Vojsk Dalnego Vostoka. The earliest complaint that wu is not esteemed enough in "our times" can be found in Han shu, ch. 19, part 1, quoted ed., p. 728.


84 Sima fa, ch. 1, sect. 1; Zhongguo gudai bingfa (The ancient Chinese art of war), (Beijing) 1982, Junshi Xueyuan Junshi Ziliaoshi, vol. II, p. 121. Cfr. also Shu jing, ch. Da Yu mo, Legge's translation, p. 58. Sun Wu took, however, another position, and accepted an aggressive war without any moral justifications. Also Wu Qi, notwithstanding his Confucian orientation, is in fact close to Sun Wu.

85 Wei Liao zi, juan 5 (sect. 23). Here the standard text from the Martial Canon
Since the text was written in the 4th or the 3rd centuries B.C., one can conclude that the concept of an organic unity of wen and wu was known at this time. This concept was put into practice in the ancient empire when all its officials were divided into two categories: wen and wu.

Sima Qian wrote: "the use side by side of wen and wu is an art of government which ensures a long existence [to the state]." 86

In a way similar to wen, wu also underwent a process of mythicization, and acquired some supra-natural characteristics. Some elements of such concepts can be detected in the Han sources. The evolution of wu was related to Heaven which gave the first weapons of war, transmitted to Huangdi the principles of art of war, etc. 87 In later sources the expression "divine wu" (Shen wu) appears 88. During the Tang period the state cult of wu evolved. In the Civil Temple (wen miao), which is also known under the name of Temple of Literature, Confucius was the central figure, accompanied by his famous pupils, Mencius, and sometimes by others respected scholars. In the Martial Temple (wu miao) the central position was occupied by Zhou Gong, a venerated confucian sage, to whom the "Book of changes" is ascribed as well as "Six Quivers" (Liu tao) and some other apocryphal military texts. The Confucianists considered just this sage the founder of martial wisdom. He was accompanied by Sun Wu, Wu Qi, Zhang Liang, Huang Shi Gong, and other well-known military theoreticians and commanders 89. Hence, wu cannot be considered

86 Shi jì, juan 97, quoted ed., p. 2699.
88 Cfr. Sun Chengze, Tian fu guang ji (Comprehensive records of the Heavenly Prefecture), Beijing 1982, Beijing Guji Chubanshe, vol. I, p. 35. Similar but much earlier passage can be found in the apocryphal chapter of Shang shu, Da Yu mo; Ju Wanli, op. cit., p. 171.
merely an apposition of *wen*; they both were simply two aspects of the state, rooted in Confucianism.

Whereas Confucianists emphasised the *wen* element as a main or the only reliable factor for good government, the Legalists promoted a concept of using both of them, *wen* and *wu*. And many of them considered just *wu* the fundamental factor for the state. It must be pointed out, however, that *wen* and *wu* as used by Legalists differ to some extent from the interpretation of the terms given by Confucian-oriented scholars referred above. In the "Book of the Lord of Shang" (*Shang jun shu*) such an explanation is give:

"Generally speaking, rewards constitute *wen*, and punishments constitute *wu*; *wen* and *wu* are combined together in law (*fa*). Hence a brilliant ruler relies on law".\(^{90}\)

A similar identification of *wen* with rewards and *wu* with punishments, and a strong conviction that both of them must be used in state administration can also be found in the "Book of Master Guan" (*Guan zi*).\(^{91}\) Whereas negative statements concerning *wu* in its broad understanding are lacking in their scriptures, *wen* is openly rejected in its Confucian sense, at least for the "contemporary period".\(^{92}\)

Sometimes even in books belonging to this school, acceptance of both, in a Confucian interpretation, can be found. For instance, in the "Book of the Lord of Shang" the statement is given:

"One can raze to the ground [the enemy state] with the help of the Great Martial Principle, and with the help of the Great Civil Principle can tranquilize itz descendants, [i.e. next generations]".\(^{93}\)

\(^{90}\) *Shang jun shu*, sect. 14; Zhu Shiche ed., *Shang jun shu ze gu ding ben* (The authentic text of the "Book of the Lord of Shang" with comments), Beijing 1956, p. 49.


\(^{93}\) *Shang jun shu*, sect. 15. Some Chinese commentators and both translators of this treatise into Western languages interpreted this passage as referring to the principles exposed in two chapters of the "Lost Zhou Books", entitled "Great Martial Principle" and "Great Civil Principle". It is based not only on the identity of those two names but also on the identity of the preceding passage with the text of the "Lost Zhou Books". Cfr. J.J.L. Duyvendak, *op. cit.*, p. 271; L.S. Perelomov, *Kniga pravitela oblasti Šan* (The Book of the Lord of Shang), Moskva 1968, Nauka, pp. 202, 292.

It is however possible to interpret this passage merely as speaking about the two great principles, *wen* and *wu*, about a strong military force and education of virtues. See:
The same book appreciates the policy of Wen Wang and Wu Wang, "who put an end to wars, educated and exhorted [the people]". Hence, the attitude of the Legalists to the concept of *wen* should not be oversimplified, although the traditional opinion that they deprecated *wen* and appreciated *wu* is, generally speaking, true. Their influence on the later syncretic Confucianism can be seen in an incorporation of their concepts of *wen* and *wu* to meanings of both words, and in more common acceptance of their equal use in policy.

A different picture is found in Taoist scriptures. For instance, in the "Canon of the Way and the Virtue" (*Dao de jing*) both terms are present but in a negative context, as elements which have to be rejected. One passage states that an excellent warrior is not bellicose (*wu*). Others reject the use and the value of military forces in general, although it is acknowledged that sometimes for defensive purposes one has to use military forces and trickery in war. The case of *wen* is more complicated since the text is ambiguous, and various scholars have interpreted it in different ways. Perhaps, it can be understand as following:

"Abandon sagacity and discard wisdom;
Then the people will benefit a hundredfold.
Banish benevolence and discard righteousness;
Then the people will return to filial piety and compassion
Banish skill and discard profits;
Then thieves and robbers will disappear
[since there will be no goods to appropriate].
[The rejection of] these three [kinds of values]
which serves as false education (*wen*) is not sufficient.
Therefore let the people hold on to these:
Exhibit unadorned and embrace uncarved things;
Reduce selfishness and have as few desires as possible."


95 *Han shu*, juan 51, quoted ed., 2369.

96 *Dao de jing*, sect. 68; Zhu Qianzhi, *Lao zi jiao shi* (The Book of Laozi with comments), Beijing 1980, Zhonghua Shuju, p. 176. The term *wu* can be interpreted here as "taking the initiative", "starting an offensive" (Zhou Zumo's letter dated August 19, 1986).


So, quite clearly the "elaboration", or "decoration" of wen are rejected here, and opposed to the right simplicity. But in this enumeration of elements of wen, besides wisdom and virtues, something new can be found: skill, or more exactly ingenuity, skillful trickery and greed for profits. These last elements can be easily associated with education, and involve negative evaluation.

Such an interpretation of wen is not rare in ancient sources. For instance, when Ban Gu (32–92 A.D.) described the Zhou people of the most civilized capital region, he noticed similar characteristics: skill in cheating the people, greed for profits, respect for richness and disrespect for poverty, rejection of social duties and quest for welfare. Those negative characteristics of wen are expressly formulated in another antique source, the "Canon of the Great Peace" (Tai ping jing), where various popular opinions of those days are presented. On several occasions wu and wen rule are mentioned there. Rulers follow various paths, it is stated. The one who holds to Merit follows the True Way, receives the support of Heavenly spirits and achieves abundance. He who holds to Virtue is provided with the Yang growing force, and receives the support of the spirits of Earth, achieving riches. He who holds to Benevolence receives the support of the spirits of Benevolence, which correspond to Man, is bestowed with the harmony of the Middle Way, and achieves modest sufficiency. He who holds to wen is deeply misled, he is supported by the spirits of Cheating, and his rule is marked by limited chaos. He and wen mislead each other, hence he loses the essentials, his "root". Ruling and ruled cheat each other by false "decorative patterns" (wen). Therefore, his affairs are in chaos. He who holds to wu receives the support of the Robber and Bandit spirits; his rule is against the Mind

wen is ambiguous and is interpreted in various ways. The newly discovered texts of this book do not clarify the situation, since the text does not differ much from the traditional version in this point. Cfr. Zhang Songru, Lao zi jiao du (The Book of Laozi with comments and studies), Changchun 1981, Jilin Renmin Chubanshe, pp. 111–2. I follow here to a certain extent an interpretation given by Yu Shengwu (cfr. Zhu Qianzhi, op. cit., p. 48). Even without a change of the character suggested by him for an introduction of the meaning "false", the wen by itself can be interpreted as a "false education" or "false culture", and it finds support in the following passages. The word "rejection" at the beginning of the phrase I introduce following Waley's suggestion that a negative has fallen out of the phrase. A Soviet scholar, Jan Hin–Sun interpreted the phrase in another way: "All these three things [originate from insufficiency of knowledge (wen)]". Cfr. Drevnekitsajskij filosof Lao–czy i ego učenie (Ancient Chinese philosopher Laozi and his teaching), Moskva–Leningrad 1950, Izd. Akademi Nauk, p. 125. It seems, however, not fit for the context.

99 Han shu, juan 28, part 2, quoted ed., p. 1651.
of Heaven, and does harm to worthy people. He subdues the people by harmful punishments and executions. Since the people are oppressed and angry, there are many rebels and bandits, who also oppress the people by punishments and killing. Hence, his rule is disastrous, the country is ruined and wealth lost.

The best ruler—continues the source—subdues the people by the Way; the modest ruler subdues the people by Virtues; the low—ranking ruler subdues the people by Benevolence. The ruler of chaos subdues his people by wen, and the disastrous ruler subdues the people by punishments and executions. In antiquity the rulers held to the Way, the Virtue and Benevolence, not to wen and wu, they nurtured everything rather than bringing harm and death. They acquired vassals and honest servants, and were called fathers, mothers or teachers of the population. Those who relied on cheating and punishments could not become emperors or kings, they could not establish order and their rule was quickly overwhelmed.

In another chapter the book enumerates ten kinds of rule based on various factors: original qi (juan qi), nature, the Way, Virtue, Benevolence, Duty, Norms (li), wen, law, and wu. This enumeration starts with the best original qi, the source of all things, and ends with the worst Martial Element, identified with death. The initial five are considered "positive", the last five are "negative", with growing harmfulness and disorder. The text gives also a certain philosophical vision of history: those initial forms of government are based on Heaven, which protects the "roots", preserves constants principles, and gives life and growth. The intermediate forms are based on Earth and provide achievements and maturity. The final ones are based on Man, who produces "chaos". Those three phases constitute the Way of Disorder.

The term wen means here obviously a false bookish knowledge, a devotion to misleading texts and scriptures which do not embody the Way. Such an interpretation was possible since the text seems to be of folk provenance, and for illiterate people the Confucian—type government of officials was not much better than this based on law. It is also symptomatic that the Way, Virtue and Benevolence are here separated from wen. It has to be mentioned however that in other parts of the text, wen appears in positive contexts, is related to Heavenly patterns, to a "design" of nature, and true scriptures sent by Heaven or written by sages are also called wen.

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100 Tai ping jing, juan 35 (sect. Fen bie ping fa, 41), quoted ed., pp. 31—2. The dating of this source is controversial, and the present text underwent various changes in later epochs.

101 Ibid., juan 67 (sect. Liu zui shi zhi jue, 103); quoted ed., p. 254.

102 Ibid., juan 37, 69.
It has to be mentioned that Taoism had a particular impact on Chinese martial tradition. Its respirative techniques and body-training practice inspired development of magical martial gymnastics, which could protect the body of a fighter against swords or bullets, which allowed an individual to fight with “empty hand” against simple or sophisticated weapons of war. Such practices were popular among the civil population, in particular in Chinese secret societies. Thus wu acquired some magical characteristics and supra-natural components. They were related to quite common negative attitudes to physical force, shared also by Confucianists\(^3\). Hence, all kinds of struggle were considered a competition of mind, intelligence and skill, not of physical forces.

The negative approach to war and military duties, contemptuous attitudes to them and avoidance of the use of force, have ancient roots and various factors contributed to their development. Only some of them can be enumerated here. They were related, it seems, to an ancient clan organization of peasants and their ideals of peace and internal harmony which became a leitmotif of Confucian thought\(^4\), but were also promoted by the Taoists.

Richard H. Solomon pointed out that avoidance of conflict and aggression was related to various factors, psychological and political, to dependence on hierarchical authority, to the strong self-control of emotions and aggressive impulses, and to expectations of the maintenance of social order by an authoritarian government. An individual sought security by adjustment to group norms and interests, by keeping social harmony and obedient respect for authority rather than by personal efforts. Even the expression of individual judgements was usually avoided. Harmony in the world and in the country was connected with harmony in the family, obedience and respect for elders, observing “proper manners”, etc. A conflict disrupted all those relations, therefore must be condemned\(^5\). Though some of those opinions can be queried or are only partially true, Solomon’s description is a valuable attempt to present

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interrelations between various parts of the traditional Chinese culture and its peculiarities, the cultural background to the appreciation of "harmony" promoted by Confucianism.

It seems that the world for the Chinese and many other related peoples was fundamentally divided into two spheres: inner (nei) and external (wai). Niels Mulder in his description of the traditional Thai social values and behaviour gives a description which can be considered true also for traditional China, ancient in particular.

"The picture that we derive from modern Thai literature about village and family life, is a picture of people who are close to each other, willing to help each other, sharing happiness and burdens, rituals and tradition, and who are intimate as a matter of course. It is a picture of a small self-contained unit of relatives and quasi-relatives who can be trusted and whose mutual well-being is a natural part of their mental make-up. It is a picture of a small moral world that, if not perfect, is certainly not bad or threatening.

A second outstanding aspect of this literature tends to be the role of the trusted leader, a father, a village headman, sometimes a teacher, and seldom a monk [...] who gives one the feeling of trustful warmth, and to whom one feels to be intimately and respectfully related and committed. A third picture from this literature is the relative ease with which the peace and security of the community are upset by outside forces and relative defenselessness of the community against threats from the outside, whether illness or death, usurers, corrupted and power-hungry officials; merchants and capitalists, malicious spirits, gangsters and thieves, or natural disasters [...] Its goodness is vulnerable to attack and has little power of its own to fight off the threat of evil that surrounds it, and there is no security that good will in the end prevail against an outside world of amoral power [...] The world outside the trusted home is presented as fearsome, threatening, unreliable and dangerous, populated with spirits, "tigers", fate and other mysterious forces [...]"

Respect and obedience to elders, trust in their wisdom and protection, to return the favours received, all these are strong themes in Thai culture. The underlying idea is the idea of mutual dependence and reciprocity, and the idea of being practically and morally indebted [...] This mechanism of reciprocity and obligation cements the group, first of all the family, and further the community, one's wider functional group(s) [...] These groups, from moral to functional, comprise one's moral order par excellence and are one's refuges in an unreliable world. Beyond these groups, where one has to fight one's own battles, and where one is morally alone, individualism may dominate the scene, because there one acts in the realm of amoral power, pure and simple [...] Outsider's power is the power of compulsion and is potentially dangerous [...] One's relationships with the outside are pragmatically inspired by gain and superficial when compared with the deeper relationships of care and community with near persons. Toward distant persons one shows one's presentation and invests in one's presentation and invests in one's honour and prestige, among inmates one shows responsibility and invests in friendship and kindness. In the outside world one needs to care for oneself and fight one's own battles, the smaller world of trusted near persons cares for its members and functions as a centre of stability in spite of its lack of power [...] The essential characteristic of the "inside" is therefore
trust rather than hierarchy. As soon as one deals with the "outside", hierarchy is felt and oppressive because of its overwhelming characteristic of power and its basic unreliability".

The author indicates that "inside" there are interactions in the khuna dimension of existence, the domain of moral goodness, characterised by moral order, moral obligations, virtues and moral power, which provide one with safety. "Outside" there are interrelations in the decha dimension of tenuous order or chaos, of power and evil, amoral or immoral, which is the sphere of potential danger.

A similar distinction can be found in traditional Vietnamese thought, where "inside" is defined as "round" and "outside" as "square". The family is "round" in relation to the "square" village; a village community is "round" in relation to the "square" province, but again a province is "round" in relation to the "square" country, which in turn is "round" in relation to the "square" foreign areas. One has to remember that the "round" was traditionally identified in East Asia with Heaven, i.e. with moral power, and "square" with Earth, which was identified with death and gain. Similar descriptions of love limited to one’s own group (the family, the village community, the county, the province, the country) and hatred towards "outside" groups can also be found in Chinese 19th century sources.

Perhaps the description of the Thai "inner" sphere is idealised. Class differentiation and a deep penetration of the state in China diminished its harmony and moral order, but at least in Confucian theory those ideals were preserved. This Thai description of the world from a clan or village perspective explains, perhaps, in the best way the social roots of the distinction between the wen and wu spheres and their nature, although Confucianism brought various modifications to this original scheme. It explains why in the sphere of wu were included not only wars, punishments and to a certain degree the state power, but also trade and merchant (diming at gain) which were treated as destroying moral clan and village order, as well as malignant spirits, which could be opposed only with protective

106 N. Mulder, Everyday Life in Thailand; An Interpretation, Bangkok 1985 (2nd edition), Duang Kamol, pp. 88–96. In the text quoted above the numerous Thai terms are omitted.

107 Ibid., pp. 96, 20.

108 Based on personal information of several Vietnamese scholars, Ngyuen Dong Chi and others, February 1978.

gods of martial character. On the other hand, it explains the combination of morality, virtues and norms of *li* with order and harmony, with teaching of the sages and canons in the *wen* sphere, as well as a high esteem for this last.

The civil nature of the ruling class, apparent since the Han period, its efforts to keep military staff under control, and wars against foreign invaders contributed to further development of the negative attitudes towards military values and actions. They determined the low prestige of military functions and the social groups which performed them\(^ {110} \). Such a situation, on the other hand, strengthened those contemptuous attitudes towards wars, soldiers and military values. They gained in strength, it seems, from the Tang period (618–907 A.D.) onwards and influenced virtually all aspects of life. For instance, among the Chinese population appeared contemptuous attitudes towards physical activities, identified with *wu*. It can be seen even in the education of children; there is evidence that they were educated until quite recent times to avoid conflicts, protests, or fighting\(^ {111} \). It does not mean, however, that bellicosity was completely


Very interesting in this respect are results of a sociological study from the People’s Republic. The survey of more than 300 students from the Shanghai University demonstrated that 54.6% of them preferred the life-style of a scholar, whereas only 16.7% favoured the aggressive lifestyle of the military figure. 21.3% of the questioned students preferred the romantic existence of an artist, and 15.2% liked a tranquil, idyllic life. Cf. *Students Stress Independence*, “Beijing Review”, vol. 28, no. 16 (April 22, 1985), based on “Shehui Zazhi”. Thus, in spite of all revolutionary changes and military values promoted by the state propagande, the traditional orientation of life style still predominates. The existence of a small number of aggressive-oriented persons corresponds to older results obtained by Olga Lang.

\(^{111}\) See: R.H. Solomon, *op. cit.*, pp. 67–8. Zeng Wenxing has observed that in Taiwan, according to the traditional customs of the treatment of children, babies are tied in order to prevent them moving their limbs. When they are bigger the parents usually do not allow children to move a lot, to run, to speak loudly, and indulge in physical activities. Even the use of the word “no” and a direct protest were forbidden, which has become a custom in life in general. See: Zeng Wenxing, *Cong renge
eliminated from traditional Chinese culture. The real situation was much more complicated.

(to be continued)

fazhan kan Zhongguoren xingge (On Chinese national cahracter from the view point of personality development), in: Li Yiyu, Yang Goushu eds., Zhongguorende xingge (Symposium on the Character of the Chinese), Taipei 1973, Institute of Ethnology Academia Sinica, pp. 234, 243. He linked directly this mode of education with the contempt for military values and activities: “If they are fighting with neighbours’ childe, the parents always call their own children home quickly. Regardless of the reason of their quarrel, they are usually told that fighting is forbidden. From this attitude of parents to children fighting it is not difficult to understand why hitherto we respected wen and neglected wu...” (p. 235).