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Permanence and Change

An Excursion into the Realm of Chinese Etymography

When reading or translating ancient Chinese literature, one stops at almost every word to wonder what it really meant to the Chinese of those times and what might possibly have been the associations connected with it. Having to do with phonetic writings, it is only necessary to find out the consecutive sound transformations of the language to get at the original form of the word and of those cognate with it. Only then it is possible to form a more or less adequate image of the semantic field of the word with its various shades of meaning. This kind of search for the original meanings of old words seems to be easier and perhaps more interesting in case of the languages like the Chinese, using ideographic or even pictographic writing, as the object meant by the word is plainly drawn by the writer in a more or less simplified form. It is quite obvious that not all the notions or ideas could be represented in the form of a picture. For instance, almost all the words, functioning as verbs or adjectives, need some more complex ways to express their meaning in an ideograph. So, in the course of the development of their writing, the Chinese invented new ways of representing even undepictable notions in the form of the so-called Chinese characters or ideograms. The types of the structure of Chinese characters are, of course, no secret for sinologists, but I believe a short presentation of them would be useful for the readers, specializing in other fields of philology.

The first Chinese etymographical dictionary, the *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu*¹ ('The explanation of writing and analysis of characters') was the work of a scholar named H s ü S h e n who lived at the turn of the 1st and 2nd century. He handed his work to the emperor in 121. It contains the first classification of the characters by the so-called radicals, 540 in his work and 214 radicals since 18th century. H s ü S h e n also divided the ancient characters into six groups, according to different types of their construction.

¹ H s ü Shen, *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu*, Peking 1978, 328 + 62 p.

The first group was called *hsiang-hsing* (literally: 'the shapes of the image'). It contained quite a number of characters, which were pictograms i.e. simplified drawings of the objects they represented. Belonging to this group were the characters, representing 'man', 'sun', 'tiger', 'fish' and similar.

The second group, not very numerous, was called *chih-shih* (lit.: 'pointing at something') or Indicative Symbols. It contained such characters as *shang* and *hsia*, meaning 'up' and 'down', 'above' and 'below', 'to ascend' and 'to descend' and depicted by a perpendicular line (formerly a dot) over or under a horizontal line, thus showing the spatial relations. Another character belonging to this group is *chung*, meaning 'the middle' or 'to hit the centre', and being represented by a small rectangle crossed in the middle by a perpendicular line, thus pointing to the "middle" part of the rectangle.

The third group of the characters seems to be most interesting, both for the Chinese and the foreigners. It is called *hui-i* (lit.: 'the meeting of meanings') or Logical Combinations and contains the characters which are constructed of two or more simple pictographs, belonging to the 1st group, to produce a new meaning, being a synthesis of its semantic components. To illustrate this type of characters, it may be interesting to mention the character *hsiu* ('to rest') which is a combination of the pictograms representing "a man" and "a tree", as men used to take a rest under the shadow of a tree. The symbols of simplified drawings of 'a swine' under 'a roof' put together give a new character *chia* ('home, house, family'), as presumably early houses in China were built over the pigsties in ancient times. Sometimes three identical pictographs were put together to form a new character belonging to this group. Thus three drawings of "a man" formed the character, pronounced *ch'ung*, which meant 'all', 'multitude', 'many', 'masses of people'.

The fourth group of characters, called *hsing-sheng* (lit.: 'form and sound') or *hsieh-sheng* (lit.: 'harmonized sound') or Phonetic Compounds, is the most numerous one and nowadays it contains about 90 per cent of all the characters. Ideograms belonging to this group mostly consist of two parts, one of them printing to the general meaning of the character, and the other one, showing its approximative pronunciation. The semantic part mostly constitutes the so-called radical, by which it is looked up in traditional Chinese dictionaries, the other part gives the general idea of how the character is pronounced. This structure-type of Chinese characters may be exemplified by a pair of ideograms, having a common sound indicator, pronounced *men* (meaning 'a door', 'a gate'), functioning as their phonetic part, and different radicals (semantic parts), *k'ou* (meaning 'the mouth') and *erh* (meaning 'an ear'). Both characters are pronounced nowadays *wen*, as in ancient times *men* and *wen* were similar in pronunciation, while the former one with "the mouth" as signifier means 'to ask', and the latter with "an ear", conveys the meaning 'to hear', 'to listen'. When spoken, a different "tone" distinguishes the character for "asking" from that for "hearing", so they are not accurately homophonous.

The last two groups of characters are not very numerous, and they were "invented" only in the earliest period of the development of Chinese writing.

The fifth group was called *chuan-chu*. The name of this category and the characters belonging to this type were likened to water poured from one bottle into another—the water is the same but the bottle different. There are only two or three pairs of such characters, so we shall not pay much attention to them, as they are not of much use for our purpose.

The last group is called *chia-chieh*, that is the borrowed characters. In the oldest period of Chinese writing, when people could not “invent” a character for a word (usually undepictable) that was already in use in the spoken language, they simply “borrowed” for it a character of similar pronunciation, notwithstanding its meaning. Usually the character *lai* (originally meaning ‘wheat’ and being a simplified drawing of the plant) is brought as an example of this group of characters. As in ancient times there was no character for the word ‘to come, to arrive’, which was pronounced *lai*, they “borrowed” the character *lai*, meaning ‘wheat’ and used it in the meaning ‘to come’, only later differentiating those two by adding the signifying element of “a plant, grass” to that one, meaning ‘wheat’.

Out of these six types of characters, a special importance for our study will have the groups number one, three and four.

Before we come over to the etymographical analysis of such abstract notions as “permanence” and “change” as well as associations connected with them by the Chinese in their ancient literature, it may be useful to find out how were the very common non-abstract things looked upon and if they aroused any different associations in the minds of the Chinese and for instance Polish or European people.

We chose for our purpose the word ‘fish’ (Polish *ryba*). *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego* (The etymological dictionary of the Polish language) by A. Brückner states that “unlike quadrupeds and birds [...] fish [...] have no common name (in European languages)”.² Other Polish dictionaries, by M. S. B. Linde³ and by F. Sławski⁴, dealing partly or wholly in etymology of Polish language, give no further information on the origin of this word.

‘Fish’ *yü* was one of the very early words in Chinese language and it was represented in writing by a character belonging to the first group, i.e. being a simple drawing or a pictogram. In the *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu* dictionary it is defined as follows: “It is a water-worm. It belongs to the *hsiang-hsing* type. [The drawing] resembles the fish-tail or the swallow-tail.”⁵ The early form of the character in fact has a distinctly forked tail of a fish or of a bird at its bottom and the head-part not complete enough to determine whether it was a drawing of a fish or a bird. We know now that it must have been a fish-head, because the character embodies no meanings connected with “birds” and all other characters having this element as a radical, denote things related to fish, either different kinds of fishes or their parts and properties.

² Aleksander Brückner, *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego*, Warszawa 1970.

³ M. S. B. Linde, *Słownik języka polskiego*, Lwów 1860, vol. I–VI.

⁴ Franciszek Sławski, *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego*, Kraków 1952–1982, up to letter “Ł”.

⁵ Hsü Shen, op. cit., p. 242.

It is quite obvious, that apart from different kinds of fish living in Poland and in China (some of them are the same), a general image of "a fish" in both countries is certainly the same. And this would be enough in a word-for-word translation of a scientific, ichthyological text or a commercial one. But in reading or translating a literary text we must also take into consideration the associations connected with a word, which may not be identical in different languages.

In Polish language a fish is associated with good health. We say: *jest zdrow jak ryba* (lit.: '[he is] as healthy and fit as a fish'). Fish is also the symbol of dumbness. There is a saying *dzieci i ryby głosu nie mają* (lit.: 'children and fish cannot emit a sound') used to express the idea that children are not allowed to speak unless they are spoken to. This association was known in Polish language at the close of 18th century, as we find in M. Linde's dictionary, a phrase *siedział jak niema ryba*⁶ (lit.: 'he was sitting like a dumb fish'). Another association with "a fish" is *gruba ryba* (lit.: 'a big fish') in the meaning of a bigwig, a V.I.P. Finally, it would be a good thing to mention the expression *czuć się jak ryba w wodzie* (lit.: 'to feel like a fish in water') which means "to be in one's element".

When we look at the associations, the word "fish" has created in Chinese literary works since the oldest times, a few centuries before this era until now, as well as in everyday expressions, thus reflecting the mind of the Chinese, we can find that they in quite a few cases were not the same as in Polish language. Out of many kinds of fishes in China, the carp enjoyed a special respect.

It is said, that in China "the fish is used to signify abundance or wealth, which arises from the words *yü* (fish') and *yü* ('abundance') being pronounced alike".⁷ To support this association, there is a popular Chinese expression *yü-mi-chih-ti* (lit.: 'the land of fish and rice'), which is interpreted as a land where fish are as plentiful as grains of rice—"a land of milk and honey".⁸

"A fish" or "a carp" sometimes symbolized "a letter". It started from the legend of a man who found a letter from a friend in the belly of a fish. Hence letters came to be folded or shaped in ancient times (this custom began in 8th century) to resemble a fish. There is also a common expression *yü-yen wang-lai* (lit.: 'fish and geese passing backwards and forwards') to denote epistolary correspondence.⁹

Some other associations might have had their source in the following expressions: *yü-t'ou*—'a fish-head', being a synonym for a righteous and inflexible man; *kuan-shu hsüan-yü*—'to suspend a fish in the courtroom', which stood for an incorruptible judge; *wu-yü* (lit.: 'no fish'), i.e. not to serve fist at table, which was tantamount to treating a guest badly.¹⁰

⁶ Linde, op. cit., vol. V., p. 170.

⁷ S. Couling, *The Encyclopedia Sinica*, Oxford University Press 1917, p. 180.

⁸ H. Giles, *A Chinese-English Dictionary*, London 1892, p. 1671.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ F. S. Couvreur, *Dictionnaire Classique de la Langue Chinoise*, Sien-Hsien 1930, p. 1042.

Contrary to Polish usage, where the attention is attracted by muteness of fish, Chinese were more conscious of fish's eyes. Already in the ancient Book of Songs¹¹ of the 10th century B.C., we find the word *yü* ('a fish') used in the meaning of "a horse" with eyes white or with white framing, like those of a fish. Connected with fish-eyes is also the name of a musical instrument, called *mu-yü* (lit.: 'the wooden fish') or *mu-li* ('the wooden carp'). It is a hollow piece of wood used as a night-rattle in Buddhist monasteries. It is shaped like a fish and they say it is the symbol of wakefulness, because a fish never closes its eyes.

Water is the element in which fish as well as the kings of rain, the highly-revered dragons live. It was believed, that under some circumstances a fish could change into a dragon. This kind of transformation was even shown in the early Chinese theatrical performances during Han period at the beginning of our era, and described in a poem by a contemporary writer, Li Yu.¹² A few centuries later it was the carp who used to change into a dragon. There appeared a saying *li-yü t'iao lung-men* (lit.: 'the carp has jumped the dragon gate') used of success at the public examinations and referring to the belief that the carp of the Yellow River make an ascent of the stream in the third moon of each year, and that those which succeed in passing the rapids of Lungmen in Honan become changed into dragons. It should also be remembered that dragons were emblems of the emperor.

In conclusion of the above, a few remarks should be made about fish getting into water or staying out of water. *Yü-chih shih-shui* (lit.: 'a fish losing water' (i.e. a fish staying out of water signified a man short of means of subsistence, while a fish getting back into water or staying in water expressed the joy of meeting a good friend or a congeniality of character or mood. Moreover, the connection of fish and water may mean a marriage harmony, as the husband and wife are supposed to agree like fish and water. A pair of fish is considered to be an emblem of marriage, and a couple of fish or their artistic representations are often given as wedding-presents.

Even more examples of the associations aroused in Chinese mind by the word "fish" could be mentioned here, but the above few are thought to be sufficient to show the actual differences between them in Polish and Chinese usage. Generally speaking, "fish" seems to have been even more revered in China than in Poland.

Now at last we are approaching the main subject of our considerations, that is the associations connected with the words for "permanence" and "change". Being neither a linguist nor a philosopher, I am going to confine myself purely to the literary phenomena, encountered while reading or translating ancient Chinese literary texts. That is why I should like to caution the readers against possible inaccuracies or even mistakes from the linguistic or philosophical point of view. To substantiate my statements some dictionaries will be quoted, mostly at random, as it is not possible in a short paper like this, to cite all the pertinent passages.

¹¹ *Shih-ching (Mao-shih)*, ed. S s u - p u t s' u n g - k' a n (SPTK), Shanghai 1936, vol. 2., p. 157b.

¹² Li Yu, *P'ing-lo-kuan fu*, cf. Yen K'o-chün, *Ch'üan shang-ku san-tai Ch'inHan San-kuo Liu-ch'ao wen*, Peking 1958, vol. 1, p. 747a.

First, we take the notion of "permanence". Two words in Polish language, *wieczność* ('eternity', 'perpetuity') and *trwanie* ('constancy', 'duration') will be examined. Both are the words of modern Polish usage, and a few centuries ago they were used in other meanings and also other words were used for the present meanings, what can be deduced from the *Podręczny słownik dawnej polszczyzny* (Reference dictionary of the Old Polish language).¹³ Here only their oldest meanings will be quoted, as reconstructed by A. Brückner in his etymological dictionary: the word *wieczność* ('eternity') is cognate with *wiek* ('age', 'old age'), *na wieki* ('for ever')¹⁴ which in turn is derived from other languages in antiquity where it happened to be associated with the meanings 'strength', 'power', 'liveliness', Lat. *vincere* ('to gain a victory', 'to win'), Old-German *wig*, *weihan* ('a struggle', 'to struggle'). The word *trwanie* ('constancy', 'duration') comes from the verb *trwać*¹⁵, which in turn is traced back to old Indo-European languages where it meant 'to protect', 'to guard', 'defence' and 'time'.

As it was already mentioned before, some information on the origin of words is also supplied by M. Linde's *Dictionary of Polish Language*, which was compiled at the beginning of 19th century, about a century before the Brückner's. Moreover, to every word-entry there is attached a set of the meanings of the word, illustrated with phrases and sentences from the texts compiled in the period 1555–1800. M. Linde links the words *wiek*, *wieczność* with Italian *vecchio*, Latin *vetus* ('old') as well as Dutch *weeke* and English *week*.¹⁶ An interesting description of originating in people's minds of the notion of *wieczność* ('eternity') is represented there: *Przez ustawiczne dodawanie pewnej długości czasu, tworzymy w sobie wyobrażenie wieczności*¹⁷ (lit.: 'By continuously adding a length of time, we create in us a conception of eternity'). Hence it appears that the notion of eternity was then understood (at least by the author of the quoted passage) not as endless undivided span of time, but as a sum of continuously added spaces of time.

Linde mentions also some interesting information on the word *trwać*, *trwanie* ('to last'; 'constancy', 'duration'). He finds the word to be connected with Lat. *durare* and German *dauern*.¹⁸ It may be instructive to quote some of his examples, to illustrate the meanings of the word a few centuries ago. Its main meaning *nie ustać*, *ciągnąć się* ('not to stop', 'to continue') is illustrated by an aphorism by A. Naruszewicz, a famous 18th century Polish poet and writer, combining the words *wiecznie* ('eternally') and *trwać* ('to last'): *Nic w swym wiecznie nie trwa stanie. Co ma natura, podlega odmianie*. (lit.: 'Nothing eternally lasts in its state. What belongs to nature, is subject to change'). This is however an exceptional statement. More often the "lasting" is concluded with "the end" than with "a change" like in the above

¹³ St. Reczek, *Podręczny słownik dawnej polszczyzny*, Wrocław 1968, 933pp.

¹⁴ Brückner, op. cit., p. 615.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 578.

¹⁶ Linde, op. cit., vol. VI., p. 289–290.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 285.

¹⁸ Ibid., vol. V., p. 716–7.

example. For instance: *Długo trwać nie może, co mus i gwałt przemoże* (lit.: 'What is imposed by force and constraint, can't last long [and must come to an end]'). L i n d e mentions also an old meaning of *trwać*, being in a sense related to old Indo-European meanings 'to protect, to guard'. In 16th century Mikołaj Rej's *Postilla* we find the phrase: *Ty jeno stale trwaj panu swojemu* (i.e. 'You should be loyal and defend your master all the time').

Generally speaking, in Polish language the permanence signifying the lack of any changes was usually expressed by the negated form of the notion "change", thus *niezmiennność* ('changelessness'), while the other words denoted the permanence either to the very end or without end.

Now two Chinese characters, comprising the meaning of "permanence, constancy" will be examined. One of them is pronounced today *yung* and the following denotations of it can be found in most dictionaries: 'long in time', 'everlasting', 'eternal', 'permanent'. The other one, pronounced today *ch'ang*, seems to have originated a few centuries later than the former, and the scope of its meanings appears larger, as it may denote: 'a long time', 'lasting', 'permanent', but also 'frequent', 'regular', 'common', 'ordinary', 'normal', 'a rule', 'a principle'. There also exists a compound word *yung-ch'ang* meaning 'continually' and being a combination of the two basic words.

The *yung* is a very old character, and what is most surprising is that it is classified into the first group of characters, that is that of simple pictograms. The afore-mentioned paleographical dictionary by H s ü S h e n¹⁹ states, that the meaning of the character is 'long'. It is "the image of the long course of a river". Then he quotes from the Book of Songs, probably the only phrase in ancient Chinese literature with the word *yung* used to denote the spatial (not temporal) meaning of "long". It runs as follows: *chiang-chih yung-i*²⁰, which is translated either as 'the length of the river [Chiang]' or 'the course of the river [Chiang] is long'.

The exact date of the composition of this song is not known. This ancient Chinese collection of poetry (which used to be sung) is traditionally connected with the name of C o n f u c i u s (551-479), who collected them and edited. So it could not be later than the 6th century B. C. Yet earlier use of this character can be found in the inscriptions on the ancient bronze vessels. The oldest one I managed to find comes from the year 1001 and is engraved on the tripod La-ting.²¹ The character *yung* was used in the following phrase: *ch'i tzu-tzu yung pao-yung* (lit.: 'May his sons permanently [forever] use it as a treasure'). This formula quite often appeared in the inscriptions on bronze vessels in later centuries, but also other expressions with *yung* can occasionally be found, like *yung-k'ung hsien-wang* (lit.: 'Permanently be in fear of the ancient rulers').²² The pictograph *yung* in the inscriptions actually resembles

¹⁹ H s ü Shen, op. cit., p. 240a.

²⁰ *Shih-ching* (*Mao-shih*), op. cit., p. 6a.

²¹ J u n g Keng, C h a n g Wei-ch'ih, *Yin Chou ch'ing-t'ung-ch'i t'ung-lun*, Peking 1958, pp. 29, 88.

²² Ibid., p. 92.

the streams (trickles) of water flowing in the perpendicular direction. Thus we can infer therefrom that permanence in the sense of long time without end or change, was in the minds of ancient Chinese associated with incessant flowing of water in rivers. A similar association in Polish language is found in connection with "time", which is said "to be flowing away" (*czas upływa*) in the meaning of lapse of time.

The span of time covered by the meaning of *yung* in ancient Chinese literature varied from one day to eternity, sometimes followed by negated verb, and thus rendered as "never". Some significant examples can be quoted from the *Shu-ching* or the Book of History:

yung pu-wang tsai wang-chia.²³ 'And forever you will not be forgotten in the royal house'.

*yung-wei fa*²⁴ 'What should be perpetually feared is the punishment [of Heaven]'.

*yung-pao t'ien-ming*²⁵ 'They will forever secure the decree of Heaven'.

The word *yung* might denote the span of man's life.

*chiang-nien yu-yung yu-pu-yung*²⁶ '[Heaven] sends down [years =] life either long or not long'.

It was also used for much shorter intervals. In the first chapter of the *Shang-shu*, the *Yao-tien*, there is the phrase *jih-yung hsing-huo*²⁷ traditionally interpreted as 'the day being at its longest and the asterism being Huo'.

The denotation of even shorter time by the word *yung* can be found in the Book of Songs. The phrase *yung-kuan chüeh-ch'eng*²⁸ used to be interpreted as 'they listened with pleasure to all the pieces of music [from the first to the last one] until their completion'.

It can be inferred from the above, that already in the very early Chinese literary compositions the word *yung*, with one exception, denoted an uninterrupted length of time, which however might vary from permanence, everlastingness to shorter periods even within a day.

Luckily, the word *yung* is also explained in the *Erh-ya*, the oldest Chinese dictionary (probably 1st century B.C.), belonging to the Thirteen Classics of Confucian Canon. In this dictionary some words from the Five Books of Confucian Canon arranged according to their meanings, are illustrated and explained by sets of their synonyms. The word *yung* is even defined by two sets of semantically somehow related words:

1. *yung* ('long in time')—*yu* ('far', 'extensive')—*hui* ('to turn', 'to rotate')—*wei* ('to go against', 'to go away')—*hsia* ('distant', 'advanced in years', 'to die down')—*t'i* ('to keep at a distance')—*k'uo* ('wide', 'separated', 'widely apart')—*yüan* ('distant', 'remote').²⁹

²³ *Shang-shu (Shu-ching)*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 1. p. 57a.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 86a.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27b.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 38b.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6b.

²⁸ *Shih-ching (Mao-shih)*, op. cit., p. 151b.

²⁹ *Erh-ya*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 10. p. 2b.

2. *yung* ('long in time')—*yang* ('swelling water')—*yin* ('to stretch', 'to lead', 'to prolong')—*yen* ('to extend', 'to continue', 'to prolong')—*jung* ('hot air', 'brightness of the time when the sun is at its highest')—*chün* ('swift horse', 'speedy')—*ch'ang* ('long', 'a long time', 'always').³⁰

From the above enumerations of synonyms many deductions can be made as to the features of time in the minds of ancient Chinese, such as its being long and speedy and turning back or rotating. However we shall not dwell at this problem any longer, and only close our analysis of the word *yung* with an interesting observation that it seems not to have been used in the early Taoist texts, at least it does not appear in *Lao-tzu's Tao-te-ching*, where the word *ch'ang* was presumably more favourable.

As mentioned above, the word *ch'ang* had a larger scope of meanings: 'ranging from permanent', 'unchanging', 'constant', 'up to regular', 'ordinary', 'normal', 'common', and it does not seem to have appeared in the inscriptions on oracle bones and bronze vessels.

First the *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu* dictionary will be consulted. The word *ch'ang* is included among the *hsing-sheng* characters, that is phonetic compounds, composed of a semantic and a phonetic part. „*Ch'ang* means 'a lower garment'. It is composed of the *chin* (radical, semantic part meaning a towel, a kerchief and found in compound characters denoting cloth and things made of it) and the phonetic part *shang*".³¹ Unfortunately there is no example of the word *ch'ang* used in the sense of „a lower garment" in Chinese literature both ancient and mediaeval, so it can be assumed that this semantic explanation was just put up by *Hsü Shen* somewhat from the structure of the character without a corroboration in any literary text.

However, the character *ch'ang* was used in ancient times in the meaning somehow connected with „sloth". In *Chou-li* (The Chou Ritual) the officer called the *ssu-ch'ang* is mentioned. It is explained there, that *chu-wang ching-ch'i*³² 'he was in charge of the king's banners and flags'. In the next chapter of this ancient classical book a more detailed information about the flags and banners of the royal court can be found. „The *ssu-ch'ang* [officer in charge of the banners] controls the names [and use] of nine [types] of banners. Each of them belongs to a separate class [and is appropriately used] in attending the affairs of state. [The banners] with the sun and the moon depicted on them are called the *ch'ang*, those with entwining dragons are called the *ch'i* [...] those with bears and tigers are called the *ch'i* [written with a different character than the former *ch'i*...]"³³

It can be inferred from this passage that the word *ch'ang* was once used to denote a special kind of cloth banner which represented the permanently reappearing heavenly bodies.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ *Hsü Shen*, op. cit., p. 159a.

³² *Chou-li*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 3., p. 85b.

³³ Ibid., p. 131a.

Yet the word in some other meanings, in which we are here interested, although absent from the oracle bone inscriptions, was quite often used in early literary texts both Confucian and pertaining to other schools of thought.

It seems proper to begin our considerations with an example from the first book of Confucian Canon, the Book of Changes. At the beginning of the „Great Appendix” to the Book of Changes, in spite of its dealing with universal changes, the following phrase about permanence, constancy of these changes can be found: *tung-ching yu-ch’ang, kang-jou tuan-i* ‘Movement and rest have their constancy, according to these strong and weak are differentiated’.³⁴ Thus the term *ch’ang* was used to express the changelessness of the law of changes in nature.

The word *ch’ang* in the meaning of changeless constancy is many times used in the Book of History. Here are some interesting statements using it:

ming-mi-ch’ang, ch’ang-chüeh-te, pao-chüeh-wei ‘The decree of Heaven is not constant [irrevocable], those who constantly conserve their virtues, they will retain their throne’.³⁵

min-hsin wu-ch’ang ‘The hearts of the people have no constancy [are changeful]’.³⁶

yung ch’ang-jen ‘He employed the men who were constant [in their loyalty]’.³⁷

What was constant and changeless, gradually obtained the meaning of regular, frequent, usual, common, normal, ordinary, and even became a rule, a principle a code of moral obligations. In the Book of History the mention of *wu-ch’ang* or “five constant principles” was made:

Chin Shang-wang Shou hsia-wu wu-ch’ang ‘Shou, the king of Shang with undue familiarity violated the five principles [of moral obligations between the ruler and his subjects, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder brother and the younger ones and between friends of equal position]’.³⁸

The „five constant principles” also used to be interpreted as „five primary elements” (metal, wood, water, fire and earth) or as the „five constant virtues” (benevolence righteousness, propriety, knowledge and sincerity).

The significance of constancy, permanence is many times stressed in the above mentioned Book of History, but here a sentence from *Kuan-tzu* (7th century B.C.) will be quoted to illustrate this attitude:

ming-fa shen-shu li-ch’ang pei-neng, tse-chih ‘Those who made the laws clear, examined the estimates [of their officials], set up constant standards and prepared men of ability, achieved a well-ordered government’.³⁹

What was permanent, constant, unchanging, considered by some to be a virtue gradually become universal, current, ordinary, common and the binom *ch’ang-jen*, which in the Book of History denoted ‘a man constant in his loyalty’, a few centuries

³⁴ *Chou-i (I-ching)*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 1. p. 42b.

³⁵ *Shang-shu (Shu-ching)*, op. cit., p. 31b.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 69b.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 74a.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 42a.

³⁹ *Kuan-tzu*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 78. p. 15a.

later meant 'an ordinary man', 'a commoner'. This semantic shift will be illustrated by two passages from the *Shih-chi* (Historical Records) by Ssu-ma Ch'ien: *ch'ang-jen an-yü ku-su, hsüeh-che ni-yü suo-wen* 'The common run of men are contented with old conventions, while scholars are given over to what they have heard about'.⁴⁰

kai-shih pi yu fei-ch'ang-chih-jen, jan-hou yu fei-ch'ang-chih-shih. yu fei-ch'ang-chih-shih, jan-hou yu fei-ch'ang-chih-kung. fei-ch'ang che ku ch'ang-jen-chih suo-i-yeh. ku-yüeh fei-ch'ang-chih yüan, li-min chü-yen. chi-chen chüeh-ch'eng, t'ien-hsia yen-ju. 'In every generation, first there must be unusual men, and only then there are unusual events. [First] there are unusual events, and only then there are unusual achievements. The unusual men are surely different from the ordinary men. Therefore we say: the source of the unusualness lies in the fearing attitude of the black-haired [common] people. When this state is gradually attained, peace prevails in the whole empire'.⁴¹

A few words should be added about the meaning of *ch'ang* in early Taoist texts. In *Tao-te-ching* of Lao-tzu (presumably Confucius's contemporary of 6th cent. B.C.) this word seems to be quite frequent. It is found already in the first two sentences of this text:

tao k'o-tao fei-ch'ang-tao, ming k'o-ming fei-ch'ang-ming. 'The way that may be expressed in words is not the eternal [or constant, permanent] way. The Name which may be named is not the eternal [constant permanent] Name'.⁴²

It is sometimes interpreted as if a distinction was there made between an "eternal" Way and Name, i.e. a Noumenon, and a Way or Name of the world of phenomena, which is the only one that may be expressed in words. However, there existed also different interpretations. Some ancient scholars in discussions on the relations between name and reality considered that the meaning of a certain concept was established for all time by the use of a certain term. The Taoists opposed such a view. In a constantly changing world the meanings of concepts were neither permanent nor constant. Therefore true terms are such terms which express this constant inconsistency. In consequence they render the first sentence of *Tao-te-ching* as 'the way that may be considered the [true] Way is not the permanent [changeless, Way] and the names [terms] that may be considered the [true] names, are not the permanent [changeless] names.'

In chapter 16 of *Tao-te-ching* there is another passage on the meaning of the *ch'ang* ('the constant law').

fu-ming yüeh-ch'ang, chih-ch'ang yüeh-ming, pu-chih-ch'ang wang-tso, hsiung 'Surrendering to one's lot is called the constant [law]. He who knows this constant [law] is called enlightened. He who does not know this constant [law] is foolishly active and comes to grief'.⁴³

⁴⁰ Ssu-ma Ch'ien, *Shih-chi*, Peking 1973, p. 2229.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 3050.

⁴² Ma Hsü-lun, *Lao-tzu chiao-ku*, Peking 1974, p. 87.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 200.

The legalist school of thought at the end of Chou dynasty more decidedly opposed the permanence in the ways of ruling the country. A characteristic passage can be found in the work of Han Fei-tzu (280–233):

sheng-jen pu-ch'i hsiu-ku, pu-fa ch'ang-k'o. lun shih-chih-shih yin-wei-chih-pei.

'The sage does not seek to follow the ways of the ancients, nor does he regard precedents [what was always possible] as the rule. He examines the circumstances of his own time and plans his course of action accordingly'.⁴⁴

Many other examples of the use of *ch'ang* could be quoted from ancient Chinese literature, but to save place for the second part of our paper, devoted to the concept of „change”, here only a few more expressions containing the term *ch'ang* will be demonstrated.

The reduplication of *ch'ang* means 'constantly'. The expression *ch'ang-ch'uan* (lit.: 'constant + stream') means 'uninterruptedly, constantly'. The expression *wu-ch'ang* (lit.: 'without, no + constancy') i.e. 'inconstant', 'irregular', is used by the Buddhists in the sense of annihilation, death. *Tsou wu-ch'ang* (lit.: 'to run into inconstancy') means 'to fall into a trance'. *Pu-i ch'i-ch'ang* meant 'not to change old established customs' and the phrase *wu shih wo-ch'ang-yeh* (lit.: 'I-lose-my-constant') was used in the sense of "I am out of my element".

Even this short review of the various meanings and semantic associations of the word *ch'ang* could be supplemented with a long list of other examples.

Now it is time to pass over to the notion of "change" and its associations in Polish and Chinese languages.

Very little is known about the origin of the Polish word *zmiana* ('change'). In the above-mentioned Brückner's dictionary there is no separate entry for it. It is only necessary to look up the *miana* ('entry')⁴⁵ to find out the word being the root of such cognates as *odmiana* ('modification'), *zamiana* ('exchange', 'transformation'), *wymiana* ('interchange', 'replacement'), but also *zmiennik* and *zmienniczy* which in old Polish language were associated with the notions of 'a traitor', 'a turncoat', 'false', 'trappy, undependable'. Furthermore, it is derived from the root *mei*, lat. *meo* meaning 'to go, to pass, to come to an end'.⁴⁶ B. Linde in his dictionary confirms the notion of 'treason, betrayal' having been associated with the verb *zmienić* ('to change') in his times.⁴⁷ He also quotes some phrases with the word *zmienić* (to change) in pejorative meaning, like *wino zmienione jak naprawić i przeczczystym czynić* (how to rectify the wine that has changed, i.e. has grown muddy, and to make it clear again).⁴⁸ Until today there is an expression in Polish language *zmieniłeś się na twarzy* (lit.: you changed on your face) in the sense of 'you don't look yourself', quite often meaning also 'you look haggard, poorly'. Thus in Polish language the associations

⁴⁴ *Han Fei-tzu hsüan*, Shanghai 1974, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Brückner, op. cit., p. 329b.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 337b.

⁴⁷ Linde, op. cit., vol. VI., p. 1101–2.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

aroused by the word 'a change' used to be, and sometimes still are to some extent, negative. It is nevertheless possible to think up an expression in the positive meaning, such as for instance *Trzeba tu coś zmienić* (It is necessary to change something here) in the sense of 'changing it for the better', as when we mean 'a change for the worse' we must explicitly express it.

In Chinese language there were several words to express the notion of 'change'. Six of them: *i*, *pien*, *keng*, *kai*, *hua* and *i* will be briefly analysed below to show the different associations aroused by them. First of all, it seems useful to separate the first *i* from the remaining words, as this one seems to express a natural, spontaneous change, while the others denote the changes somehow brought about by something or somebody.

The *i* character is interpreted in the *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu* dictionary as *hsi-i yen-t'ing shou-kung yeh. hsiang-hsing. mi-shu-shuo jih-yüeh wei-i. hsiang yin-yang-yeh*. 'A lizzard, a chameleon, a gecko. It is a character belonging to the simple pictogram type. In the secret texts it is explained that the sun and the moon (put together) make (the character) *i*. They represent the *yin* (female) and the *yang* (male) principles.'⁴⁹

K'ang Yin, a modern Chinese paleographer, discovered in the early forms of the character *i* "a drawing of pouring water from one vessel into another".⁵⁰ He finds Hsü Shen's interpretation of it being a drawing of the sun and the moon too far-fetched, but points to its similiarity with another character pronounced today also *i* and representing "a bowl full of water", and in ancient literary texts meaning 'increase, more, advantage, profitable'.

However, the explanations of either authority seem to be plausible, as the word *i* did not appear in ancient texts in the meanings suggested by their interpretations of the graph. Eventually the explication of it as being a combination of "the sun" and "the moon" may hold water in view of their constant change of place, appearing and disappearing in the sky.

Below are some examples from ancient Chinese literature. Already the first book of Confucian Canon, the *I-ching* or the Book of Changes has the character *i* in its title. In the "Great Appendix" to this book there is the following definition: *sheng-sheng-chih wei i* "the production of beings is called *i* (transformation)".⁵¹

In the explication of the first hexagram, *ch'ien* it is recommended that the man *pu-i-hu-shih* 'should not change with [the changes of] his times'.⁵²

The word *i* in the sense of 'to change' is also found in other compositions of ancient Chinese literature.

In the Book of Songs, in one of the Greater Odes, the ruler says: *chen-ming-pu-i* 'my decision has not been changed'.⁵³

⁴⁹ Hsü Shen, op. cit., p. 198b.

⁵⁰ K'ang Yin, *Wen-tzu yüan-liu ch'ien-shuo*, Peking 1979, pp. 95-6.

⁵¹ *Chou-i (I-ching)*, op. cit., p. 44a.

⁵² Ibid., p. 1b.

⁵³ *Shih-ching (Mao-shih)*, op. cit., p. 141b.

In early texts the word *i* was also used in the sense of 'to exchange, to substitute something for something else', 'to barter'. "The Great Appendix" to the Book of Changes contains the following statements:

shang-ku chieh-sheng erh-chih, hou-shih sheng-jen i-chih i shu-ch'i pai-kuan i-chih wan-min i-ch'a 'In the earliest times knotted cords were used in government, but the later sages substituted written documents and tallies so that the officials were kept in order and the people had a clear idea of their duties'.⁵⁴

chü t'ien-hsia-chih-huo chiao-i erh-tui, ke-te-ch'i-suo. '[He set up markets at midday and caused the people of] the world to bring all their goods and exchange them and then return home, so that every thing found its proper place'.⁵⁵

In the book of *Meng-tzu* (372–289) we can read the following statement:

i-su-i-chieh-ch'i pu-wei li t'ao-yeh. 'Procuring utensils and tools by bartering grain would surely not be oppressing the potter and the caster'.⁵⁶

As can be seen from the above examples and considerations, the word *i* seems to have denoted a special kind of change, on one hand being natural and spontaneous like the appearing and disappearing of the sun and the moon, like the unrestrained succession of the seasons, and on the other hand being a kind of exchange, substitution of things more or less equivalent. This kind of "change" seems to have been considered very easy and effortless, as almost simultaneously with its meaning of "a change" the same word *i* functioned in the sense of 'easy', 'to be at ease', 'flat ground' and even 'to treat lightly', 'to depreciate'. Some examples will illustrate this semantic phenomenon.

First two examples from the "Great Appendix" of the Book of Changes will be demonstrated:

ch'ien i-i chih, k'un i'chien neng 'The *ch'ien* knows through the easy, the *k'un* accomplishes through the simple'.⁵⁷ The word *i*, meaning 'easy' here is set together with the word *chien* 'simple' in the parallel phrase.

tz'u yu hsien-i 'In the oracles the danger and the safety are expressed'.⁵⁸ Here again the word *i* as 'safety' is set against the *hsien* meaning 'danger'.

In two other examples, one from the Book of History and the other from the Book of Songs, the character *i* seemingly could be also interpreted in the sense of "to change", but in fact it means 'easy':

t'ien-ming pu-i 'The decree of Heaven is not easily preserved'⁵⁹, but it also could be rendered as 'the decree of Heaven does not change'.

pu-i wei-wang 'It is not easy to be a king'⁶⁰, but it could be also translated as 'he did not change being a king'.

⁵⁴ *Chou-i (I-ching)*, op. cit., p. 49a.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 48b.

⁵⁶ *Meng-tzu*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 10. p. 43a.

⁵⁷ *Chou-i (I-ching)*, op. cit., p. 42b.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43a.

⁵⁹ *Shang-shu (Shu-ching)*, op. cit., p. 67a.

⁶⁰ *Shih-ching (Mao-shih)*, op. cit., p. 114b.

There are at least four other meanings associated with that of "easy, effortless", which seem to be worth-while to be demonstrated here. They are also selected from the early Chinese literature:

erh-huan-erh-ju, wo-hsin i-yeh 'When you return and get home, my heart will be at rest'.⁶¹

i tse yung-ch'e, hsien tse yung-ch'i 'When [the land] is flat [level] then the chariots should be used, when it is a dangerous [steep pass] they should ride horses'.⁶²

li yü-ch'i-she-yeh ning-chien, sang yü-ch'i-i ning-ch'i 'As to etiquette, where there is likelihood of extravagance, they would rather demand economy, in those which relate to mourning and where there is likelihood of being easily satisfied [or negligence], what is wanted is real sorrow'.⁶³

kuo wu-hsiao, pu-k'o-i yeh. 'As the state is not small, it should not be disrespected [lightly treated]'.⁶⁴

From the above quoted examples it is possible to grasp the character of "changes" expressed by the word *i* and the semantic associations connected with it. Starting from the natural changes observed in the sky and spontaneous succession of the seasons, it came to denote "exchange" or "substitution" of equivalent things. In the minds of the Chinese, for instance, "night-time" is of equal value and equally necessary as the "day-time". It can be deduced that further from the notion of a spontaneous, effortless "change" developed the meaning of "easy" and the meanings associated with it as "flat" i.e. "easy to ride on", "to feel at ease", "to be easily satisfied" and "to treat lightly, without due respect".

The character *i* which has been just examined belonged to the first type of characters, that is of simple pictographs. As it was interpreted by some scholars as a combination of two drawings, namely of the sun and the moon, it could be reckoned among the characters of the third type, that of Logical Combinations. All the other characters, which will be discussed below, are numbered among the fourth group, called Phonetic Compounds, as they consist of two parts, the semantic and the phonetic one.

The characters *pien*, *keng* and *kai* can be grouped together, as they have the same semantic part, pronounced today *p'u* and meaning 'to rap', 'to tap', 'to strike'. The *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu* dictionary explains it as *hsiao-chi yeh, ts'ung yu pu-sheng* "a light stroke (a tap), it consists of (the element believed to be the drawing of) the right hand and the sound *pu*".⁶⁵ It can be inferred therefrom that the "change" expressed by each of the three characters was not a natural, spontaneous one, but somehow induced by somebody or something. They should be in a way synonymous, as in the *Shuo-wen chieh tzu* dictionary their meanings are explained one by the other. Thus: *pien*,

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 91a.

⁶² *Huai-nan-tzu*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 96., p. 116a.

⁶³ *Lun-yü*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 9., p. 9b.

⁶⁴ T's o - c h u a n, *Ch'un-ch'iu ching-chuan chi-chieh*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 6., p. 51b.

⁶⁵ H s ü S h e n, op. cit., p. 67b.

keng-yeh, *ts'ung-p'u luan-sheng* "pien—a change. It consists of the element *p'u* ('to strike') and the *luan* sound (phonetic element)." ⁶⁶ *keng*, *kai-yeh*, *ts'ung-p'u ping-sheng* "keng—a change. It consists of the element *p'u* (to strike) and the *ping* sound (phonetic element)." ⁶⁷ *kai*, *keng-yeh*, *ts'ung-p'u chi-sheng/li yang-ping yüeh chi yu-kuo p'u-chih chi kai* "kai—a change. It consists of the element *p'u* (to strike) and the *chi* sound. Li Yang-ping says that when *chi* (oneself) committed mistake and *p'u* (strikes) it, then it is *kai* (changed, corrected)". ⁶⁸

From the above explanations in the *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu* it is evident that this kind of "change" expressed by the characters *pien*, *keng* and *kai* was associated with the change incurred by the stroke, tap", an activity of someone and that it led to something better in other words, it was originally a "correcting change". Of course, what for someone was a change for the better, an improvement, by others might be considered a deterioration. Therefore at least some of the words are encountered in the negative meaning. But let the examples speak for themselves.'

The *pien* denoted a change resulting from man's volition or action. It was also used to denote vicissitudes and portents such as draughts, earthquakes and similar calamities. They were, evidently, not induced by man's volition, but were the result of some natural transformations. These transformations were also reflected in the mutations of the lines of the diagrams in the Book of Changes.

chih-ssu pu-pien 'He will die sooner than change' (lit.: he is not going to change up to his death.) ⁶⁹

fu-tzu-chih-ping ke-i, *pu-k'o-i pien* 'My master, your illness is extreme. [The mat under you] cannot now be changed' ⁷⁰

chiün tsai chi-yüeh-chung, *t'ai-fu yu-pien*, *i-wen-k'o-hu*. 'When the ruler is in the course of sacrificing musical performances [to his ancestors] and his high minister dies, may he be informed about it?' ⁷¹

The primary meaning of both *keng* and *kai* seems to be 'the correcting one's faults', but they have also some different lines of semantic associations.

chiün-tzu-chih kuo-yeh ju jih-yüeh-chih-shih-yeh, *kuo-yeh jen chieh chien-chih*, *keng-yeh jen chieh yang-chih* 'The faults of a prince are like the eclipse of the sun and the moon, when he has a fault, all the people see it, when he corrects it, all the people look up to him' ⁷²

hsi Pa-Shu tsu-fu pu-tsu i keng-chih 'All the contributions from the regions of Pa and Shu will not be sufficient to compensate this'. ⁷³

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 68a.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ *Li-chi*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 5., p. 157b.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 20b.

⁷¹ *Ch'un-ch'iu ku-liang chuan*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 8, p. 70b.

⁷² *Lun-yü*, op. cit., p. 90b.

⁷³ *Ssu-ma Ch'ien*, op. cit., p. 1421.

chi Yen-tzu ju-Chin, kung keng ch'i-chai 'When Yen-tzu went to Chin the prince changed [moved] his abode [to another place]'.⁷⁴

yin yü t'ung-shih, tao pi keng Hsiung-nu chung, nai mu neng-shih-che 'As they wanted to send an envoy to [Yüeh-chih], and he road must have passed across the territory of the Hsiung-nu tribes, they [selected] and summoned the experienced messenger'.⁷⁵

In the ancient Chinese literature the word *keng* was also used as an adverb in the meaning "again", "once more".

Chin pu-keng chü [ping] i 'Chin will never again raise the troops [against us]'.⁷⁶

The word *kai* more evidently, and more often, denoted the change for the better or the correction of one's faults. In the *Lun-yü* or Analects retailing the views of Confucius on a variety of subjects, the following famous statement can be found:

kuo erh pu-kai, shih wei kuo-i 'To commit a fault and not to correct it, this is what [really] can be called a fault'.⁷⁷

This sentence is repeated in the *Tso-chuan*, but with a different conclusion:

kuo erh pu-kai erh yu chiu-chih 'to commit a fault and not to correct it makes one commit it again and again for a long time'.⁷⁸

Now two examples for the use of the word *kai* will be quoted from the ancient Book of Changes:

chün-tzu i-chien-shan tse ch'ien, yu-kuo tse kai 'When a man of noble character sees a good thing, then he advances towards it, when he has a fault, then he corrects it'.⁷⁹

kai-i pu-kai-ching 'It is possible to change the place of [to move] a town, but it is not possible to move a well [around which there are cultivated fields]'.⁸⁰

The word *kai* was also used for something new that was the result of a change. A suitable example can be taken from the Book of Songs:

yüeh wei kai-sui 'I told them that soon a new year would come'.⁸¹

From the above examples it seems evident, that originally the word *kai* had meant 'a reforming, correcting change' and then evolved into more general meanings of 'changing the place' or 'changing into something new'.

Out of the remaining two, first the character *hua* will be examined. The *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu* dictionary gives the following explanation *hua, chiao-hsing, yeh, ts'ung-hu ts'ung-jen, hua i sheng* 'The character *hua* means to teach moral conduct (to change for good by teaching). It consists of the element *hua* and the element denoting a man. *Hua* also points to its pronunciation'.⁸² From this explanation we can infer that for

⁷⁴ Tso-chuan, op. cit., p. 179a.

⁷⁵ Ssu-ma Ch'ien, op. cit., p. 3157.

⁷⁶ Tso-chuan, op. cit., p. 42a.

⁷⁷ Lun-yü, op. cit., p. 72b.

⁷⁸ Tso-chuan, op. cit., p. 94b.

⁷⁹ Chou-i (I-ching), op. cit., p. 27b.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 31b.

⁸¹ Shih-ching (Mao-shih), op. cit., p. 60b.

⁸² Hsü Shen, op. cit., p. 168b.

H s ü S h e n the element *hua* in the character *hua* performed two functions, both the semantic and the phonetic ones. When we look up the element *hua* as a separate character in the dictionary, the following definition of it can be found there: *hua*, *pien-yeh*, *ts'ung tao-jen* "hua means 'to change'. (This meaning) comes from the inverted (changed drawing) of a man".⁸³ Thus the notion of "change" seems to have been expressed in this case by putting together two drawings of "man" turned back to back.

The afore-mentioned Chinese paleographer K'a n g Y i n⁸⁴ finds in the archaic forms of the character the drawing of "a fox" and as a result of this, he interprets the character as "fox's skin" being the object of commercial exchange, hence deriving its primary meaning of "change". However this shade of meaning does not find any corroboration in the texts of ancient Chinese literature.

The predominant number of examples with the word *hua* in the oldest texts connect its meaning with the constant operations of heaven and earth (i.e. of nature) in producing changes in everything that was considered to be living, people included. Hence the natural birth and death of a man were also considered to be a kind of change similar to the transformation of the silkworm into the moth, and were expressed by this word.

The following two passages from *Tao-te-ching* may be quoted for the illustration of this meaning:

ku sheng-jen yüin: *wo wu-wei erh min tzu-hua* 'Therefore the sage says: If I practise doing nothing, the people will of themselves be transformed'.⁸⁵

hou-wang jo neng shou-chih, *wan-wu chiang tzu-hua*. 'If the vassal kings could abide by this, the ten thousand things would develop [be born, be created] of themselves'.⁸⁶

Similar notions were expressed by the word *hua* in Confucian texts of *Meng-tzu* and in the Ceremonial Records:

ch'ieh pi hua-che wu-shih t'u-ch'in-fu 'When the time of dissolution [death] comes, [it is nice to feel] that the earth will not come into proximity with the skin [of the dead body]'.⁸⁷

ho ku pai-wu chieh hua 'Through the harmony [between heaven and earth] the hundred [all the] things change [i.e. come into existence]'.⁸⁸

The change or transformation might also be effected by other means, such a fire. In the above-quoted text of *Li-chi* the following passage can be found:

hsi-che hsien-wang [...] *wei-yu huo-hua*, *shih ts'ao-mu-chih-shih*, *niao shou-chih-jou*, *yin ch'i-hsüeh*, *ju ch'i-mao*. 'Formerly, the ancient kings [...] did not know yet the transforming power of fire, but ate the fruits of plants and trees, and the flesh

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ K'a n g Y i n, op. cit., p. 174-6.

⁸⁵ M a H s ü-lun, op. cit., p. 502.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 361.

⁸⁷ *Meng-tzu*, op. cit., p. 34b.

⁸⁸ *Li-chi*, op. cit., p. 112b.

of birds and beasts, drinking their blood, and swallowing [also] the hair and feathers.'⁸⁹

Interesting enough is the meaning of *hua* (change, transformation) associated with influence, teaching or guidance exerted by other people.

ch'en-hsia hua-chih 'His ministers [following his example] have changed [to become] like him, [their wicked sovereign].'⁹⁰

chün-tzu ju yü hua-min ch'eng-su ch'i pi yu hsüeh hu 'If a ruler wishes to transform the people and to perfect their manners and customs, must he not start from the lessons of the school?'⁹¹

Finally, a few words should be said about the expression *wen-hua*, which today is a word signifying 'culture, civilization' and in this meaning is considered to be a modern reimportation from another language, but in ancient times it was used in Chinese language in the meaning of changing, influencing and even subduing other people not by military force but by peaceful, refined, civilized methods of promulgating and spreading their own customs and civilization. One of the earliest employments of this expression can be found in the *Shuo-yüan* (The Garden of Anecdotes) from 1st cent. B.C. *fan wu-chih hsing-wei pu-fu-yeh, wen-hua pu-kai* [...] 'All those who were not brought into submission by military action, and who could not be changed [corrected] by peaceful guidance [...].'⁹²

The last word which has connotations with "change" to be discussed here, is the word *i*, having similar pronunciation with the *i* that was examined at the beginning of this group of words, but represented by a different character and covering a different range of semantic associations.

The *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu* dictionary gives the following explanation of the word *i*: *i, ho hsiang-i i-yeh, ts'ung-ho to-sheng, i-yüeh ho-ming* "(The character) *i* means crops mutually leaning and moving. (This character) consists of the (semantic part, meaning) crops and the phonetic (part) *to*. Another explanation of it is the name of a kind of grain".⁹³ Below this definition, there is a short remark by a *Ch'en Hsüan* about the pronunciation of the character, which already in those times must have had nothing in common with the reading *to*, but was rather pronounced like *i*.

The character *i* must have been a relatively late accretion in the vocabulary of Old-Chinese language. It was used in the Book of History, but only in its later parts, coming from the 7th cent. B.C.

wo nai ming-chih t'ien-fa, i-erh hsia-t'i 'At the same time I made evident the punishment appointed by Heaven, and moved you [changed your place of living] to this distant abode'.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 69a.

⁹⁰ *Shang-shu (Shu-ching)*, op. cit., p. 41b.

⁹¹ *Li-chi*, op. cit., p. 108b.

⁹² *Shuo-yüan*, quoted after the *P'ei-wen yün-fu*, Shanghai 1937, p. 3185b.

⁹³ *Hsü Shen*, op. cit., p. 144b.

⁹⁴ *Shang-shu (Shu-ching)*, op. cit., p. 65a.

chi li san-chi, shih-pien feng-i 'Three periods [of twelve years] have elapsed, the generation has been changed and manners have altered'.⁹⁵

Two interesting and very popular among the Chinese examples of the use of the word *i* can be quoted from the text of *Meng-tzu*:

chü i-ch'i, yang i-t'i 'How the air of a man changes with his surroundings! It is much as the body alters with the food it eats'.⁹⁶

fu-kuei pu-neng-yin, p'in-chien pu-neng-i, wei-wu pu-neng-ch'ü. tzu-chih-wei ta-chang-fu '[He is one] whom riches and honours cannot taint, poverty and lowly station cannot shift, majesty and power cannot bend. Such a one I call a great man'.⁹⁷

The word *i* was also used together with the other *i* in a common expression *i-feng-i-su* (lit.: to change customs, to change manners) and we can infer therefrom that the two words were close synonyms and at times were considered interchangeable. At least twice is this expression used in the *Li-chi* (Ceremonial Records) and later repeated in the *Hsiao-ching* (The Classic of Filial Piety):

yüeh-yeh-che sheng-jen-chih suo-lo-yeh. erh k'o-i shan min-hsin, ch'i kan-jen shen, ch'i i-feng-i-su, ku hsien-wang chu-ch'i-chiao yen. 'In music the sages found pleasure, and [saw that] it could be used to make the hearts of the people good. Because of the deep influence which it exerts on a man, and the changes which it produces in manners and customs, the ancient kings appointed it as one of the subjects of instruction.'⁹⁸

ku yüeh-hsing erh lun-ch'ing, erh-mu ts'ung-ming, hsüeh-ch'i hop'ing, i-feng-i-su, t'ien-hsia chieh ning. 'Therefore when the music is fully implemented, the [different social] relations are clearly [defined by it]; the perceptions of the ears and eyes become sharp and distinct, the action of the blood and physical energies is harmonious and calm; [bad] customs and manners are changed and all under heaven there is complete repose.'⁹⁹

i-feng-i-su mo-shan-yü yüeh. 'For improving the customs and manners there is nothing better than music.'¹⁰⁰

Summing up the above considerations on permanence and change, no general conclusions can be drawn from this list of more or less at random selected examples. However it seems that permanence was more strongly associated with social life of people, as it used to be measured by generations, and it was considered so normal and natural, that soon it obtained the meaning of commonplaceness, ordinariness. As concerns the notion of change, it seems to have been used in two aspects: a spontaneous change and the change induced by somebody or something. The spontaneous

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 80b.

⁹⁶ *Meng-tzu*, op. cit., p. 112a.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 48a.

⁹⁸ *Li-chi*, op. cit., p. 113b.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 114b.

¹⁰⁰ *Hsiao-ching*, ed. SPTK, Shanghai 1936, vol. 9, p. 6b.

changes were a part of the operations of nature and a man could not exert any influence upon them. The other type of change was somehow effected by a man, but as can be seen from the above examples, mostly it was the change for the better, an improving change or a correcting change.

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