REVOLUTION IN CHINA: THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN*
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He who succeeds becomes Emperor, he who fails is a bandit. ¹

I

These words of a Chinese proverb succinctly define the traditional Chinese attitude towards rebels. But they fail to do justice to the complex and sophisticated theory which lies behind the rationale of changes of dynasty — the theory of the Mandate of Heaven. This paper is an attempt to present the theory of the Mandate of Heaven and to illustrate it by examples from Chinese history up to the present day. I think this is a useful exercise both by way of contrast to European revolutions, and because of its relevance to any judgment we make on the most recent great world revolution, the Chinese Communist revolution. It may seem far-fetched to put the revolutionary theories of Mao Tse-tung in the context of the Mandate of Heaven, but it should be remembered that the present generation of Chinese leaders are still in reaction against their own Confucian education and background. It may be sufficient to recall how the “father of the Chinese Revolution,” Sun Yat-sen, western-trained and a doctor of medicine, on the success of the 1912 revolution, visited the Ming tombs and proclaimed aloud to the shades of the Ming Emperors, the downfall of the usurping Manchus. Deep-rooted traditions even, or perhaps especially when violently rejected, continue to affect men’s attitudes and responses.

Much of what follows is probably not strictly relevant to a discussion of “Revolution.” It deals rather with theories of government, of legitimacy and power politics. But it is impossible to discuss revolution in China without discussing the total political and social structure. For it is indeed arguable that “revolution” is almost completely absent from Chinese history. This is not just the usual semantic difficulty about the rate of change of the ultimate success of a “revolution.” It has been argued that China has only once or twice in its long history experienced a political upheaval so fundamental as to be called a revolution. Thomas Taylor Meadows, an interpreter with the British consular service in the middle of last century, wrote a book called The Chinese and their Rebellions in which he put forward the view that the Taiping Rebellion then in progress, and all earlier Chinese upheavals bar one, were properly rebellions not revolutions:

“Revolution is a change of the form of government and of the principles on which it rests; it does not necessarily imply a change of rulers. Rebellion is a rising against the rulers which, far from necessarily aiming at a change of governmental principles and forms, often originates in a desire of preserving them intact. Revolutionary movements are against principles; rebellions against men. . . . Bearing the above distinction clearly in mind, great light may be thrown by one sentence over the 4,000 years of Chinese history: Of all nations that have obtained a certain degree of civilisation, the Chinese are the least revolutionary and the most rebellious. Speaking generally, there has been but one great political revolution in China, when the centralised form of government was substituted for the feudal, about 2,000 years ago.”²

Presumably, if Meadows had witnessed the recent political history of China, he would include the modern revolution with its several stages among the true revolutions. In fact, it could be argued that the Communist Party has substi-

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tuted an ideology based on “revolution” for one based on the “Mandate of Heaven.”

We will return to many of these points later. For the time being I wish to make two preliminary points only:

(1) That the vast majority of political upheavals in Chinese history have been changes of masters, changes of dynasty, rather than changes in the basic form of government. This does not mean that Chinese history is, as the official historians presented it, nothing but a continual recurrence of dynastic cycles. There has been quite fundamental economic and social change; the role of the ruling bureaucracy has varied considerably and the content of official ideology drastically changed in emphasis. But, generally speaking, this change has been long-term, evolutionary rather than revolutionary.

(2) The intentions if not the practice of Chinese revolutionaries have usually been conservative, even reactionary. They aimed at restoring a “Golden Age” of social harmony and good government. Although I do not agree entirely with Karl Wittfogel’s portrayal of China as a rigid, unchanging “hydraulic society,” the very type of “oriental despotism,” I think that he is right in regarding most Chinese “revolutions” as “cathartic” or “regenerative.”

II

The theory of the Mandate of Heaven is found at the beginning of classical Chinese philosophy at the end of the Chou dynasty round the fifth century B.C. It would seem to have arisen out of an intense interest in history as the key to understanding the political confusion of the period known as the “Warring States.” Confucius and other thinkers of the “Hundred Schools” looked back to a largely mythical state of unity and peace under the Sage-Emperors and the first two dynasties which preceded the Chou — the Hsia and the Shang. They sought an explanation for this stability and social harmony in the ruler’s success in adapting his government to the cosmic harmony summed up in the concept of Heaven (t’ien).

It is impossible adequately to discuss here the significance and development of the concept of “Heaven” in Chinese philosophy. It would seem to have originated signified a personal or anthropomorphic deity (the character seems to have been originally a pictograph of a man, perhaps the Great Ancestor, with overtones of “above,” the heavens). But quickly it assumed a more impersonal meaning, something akin to the “Transcendent”; it is significant that by Confucius’ time it is t’ien rather than shang-ti, which is certainly anthropomorphic and closely connected with Chou ancestor-worship, that is normally used to signify the Deity. Of recent times it has been used in an even more impersonal way; Yen Fu, the great translator of European philosophy at the beginning of this century, regularly uses t’ien to translate Nature. It would be wrong, however, to regard t’ien-ming, the “Mandate of Heaven,” as carrying no traces of its origins or without some sense of ultimate supra-terrestrial sanction.

Confucius himself has little to say of the Mandate of Heaven. Most of his references to “Heaven” are to be found in the 20th and last chapter of the Analects where he is talking about the Sage-Kings and the early dynasties. Confucius seems to have based much of his teaching on government on the records of the past, especially the Spring and Autumn Annals of his own state of Lu (later attributed to Confucius himself) and The Book of History (Shu Ching). Although The Book of History almost certainly received its final form after
Confucius, in the early Han dynasty, it would seem to have existed in some form in Confucius' own time, and to have been used by him. It is to the version of early Chinese history given in the Shu Ching that we should look for the earliest exposition of the theory of the Mandate.

This can be stated briefly as follows: The Sage-Emperors Yao, Shun and Yu ruled by virtue of their moral and personal gifts, and since they brought peace and harmony on earth, Heaven approved, showed its approval by portents, and gave them the Mandate. Yu and his successors of the Hsia dynasty ruled with the Mandate until the King grew out of harmony with Heaven, oppressed the people, and lost the Mandate to the Yin (Shang) dynasty. Similarly, with passage of time, the Mandate was again lost through incompetence and arrogance to the Chou dynasty.

"The Mandate of Heaven is not easily preserved (we read in the Book of History). Heaven is hard to depend on. Those who have lost the mandate did so because they could not practise and carry on the reverence and the brilliant virtue of their forefathers . . ." 9

The most thorough, if not the most influential, treatment of the Mandate of Heaven is found in Confucius' successor, Mencius. I say "if not the most influential" advisedly, for Mencius' version of the doctrine has a tendency that never became really operative as part of the official Confucian ideology, a tendency that has been called by modern Neo-Confucians "democratic." Let us listen to Mencius' own words:

"Mencius said, 'Chieh and Chou lost their empires because they lost the people and they lost the people because they lost the hearts of the people. There is a way to win the empire. Win the people and you win the empire. There is a way to win the people. Win their hearts and you will win the people. And there is a way to win their hearts. It is to collect for them what they like and do not do to them what they do not like, that is all. The people turn to the humanity of the ruler as water flows downwards and as beasts run to the wilderness.'" 6

This sounds little more than an ancient "How to Win Friends and Influence People," but elsewhere Mencius founds it firmly on the Mandate theory. The Emperor Yao did not give the empire to Shun, he tells his disciple Wan Chang, "Heaven gave it to him." "By Heaven's giving it to him, do you mean that Heaven gave it to him in so many words?" "No. Heaven does not speak. It simply shows its will by (Shun's) personal character and his conduct of affairs." 7 Shun presided over the sacrifices and Heaven showed its acceptance. He presided over the conduct of affairs and the people felt satisfied. "It was Heaven that gave the empire to him. It was the people that gave the empire to him. Therefore I said, 'The emperor cannot give the empire to another person.'" 8

Even in Mencius' own time the implications of the "democratic" side of his theory seem to have aroused opposition. Mencius, like Confucius before him, found difficulty in getting a ruler to employ him, and no wonder, when we see his reply to one of them, King Hsuen of Ch'i. The King asks, "Was it a fact that T'ang banished King Chieh and that King Wen punished King Chou?"

"Mencius replied, 'Yes, according to records.' The King said, 'Is it all right for a minister to murder his king?' Mencius said, 'He who injures humanity is a bandit. He who injures righteousness is a destructive person. Such a person is a mere fellow. I have heard of killing a mere fellow Chou, but I have not heard of murdering (him as) the ruler.'" 9

This theory of Mencius has led to the claim that the Chinese recognise "the right of rebellion." Meadows, for example, says:
The Chinese people have no right of legislation, they have no right of self-taxation, they have not the power of voting out their rulers or of limiting or stopping supplies. They have therefore the right of rebellion. Rebellion is in China the old, often exercised, legitimate, and constitutional means of stopping arbitrary and vicious legislation and administration."

But I think it is a somewhat curious use of the term “right,” or, as Wittfogel says, a confusion of a legal and a moral issue. Few governments have ever recognised rebellion as a political or a legal right. Perhaps we might call it paradoxically the “right” to rebel successfully.

In discussing the Mandate theory we should not be misled by superficial analogies with European political theory. The Mandate of Heaven is not the same as the “divine right” theory of kingship. The difference mainly lies in the fact that its basis is naturalistic rather than voluntaristic. In only one early Chinese thinker, Mo Tzu, do we find “the will of Heaven” stressed. It should also be pointed out that China knew no primogeniture, or “divine right” by birth.

Later developments of the Mandate theory largely involved tying it in with philosophical developments such as the theory of the “five agents” of the correlation of political and social harmony with a pre-existing cosmic harmony. In practice this led to the custom of inaugurating a new dynasty and demonstrating the receipt of the Mandate by changing the official colour to signify the new predominant element. Tung Ching-Shu, an early Han Confucianist, in his commentary on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, writes:

“One becomes a king only after he has received the Mandate of Heaven. As the king, he will determine which day is to be the first day of the year for his dynasty, change the colour of clothes worn at court, institute systems of ceremonies and music, and unify the whole empire. All this is to show that the dynasty has changed and that he is not succeeding any human being, and to make it very clear that he has received the Mandate from Heaven.”

Tung also points out that the character for “King” (wang), with its three horizontal strokes joined by one vertical stroke, symbolises the King as mediator between Heaven, earth and man.

The only substantial addition to the theory of the Mandate of Heaven made in the light of the political experience of succeeding generations of Confucian scholars was the distinction of four kinds of mandate made by Shao Yung in the eleventh century A.D. It had become obvious by this time that the mandate theory could be easily manipulated if success was the ultimate criterion — portents could be conveniently manufactured and the moral qualities of a ruler cease to be more than an ideal. Hence Shao distinguished between “correct” mandate, given by Heaven and carried out, and what he called “accepted” mandate, “modified” mandate and “substituted” mandate. These latter forms corresponded to various kinds of temporary or even “revolutionary” rule. The most significant change, however, is the place Confucius has assumed in the scheme. It is the Confucian theory of government, or rather, the role of the Confucian scholar in government, that is now seen as the permanent feature:

“Thus we know that the despots, kings, emperors and sovereigns had what were called mandates for a limited number of generations. But the mandate of Confucius transcends generations.”

It is clear, then, that the role of the Confucian scholar-official is crucial in any consideration of revolution in China. If Confucian ideals and Confucian personnel remain unchanged beneath the change of rulers, then true “revolution” is impossible. And this is, in general, what happened. Even alien dynasties such
as the Mongols and the Manchus found themselves unable to govern successfully without the aid of the Confucian bureaucracy. True, the influence of this bureaucracy had its ups and downs; for a period Buddhism threatened its position; the Mongols employed foreigners — among them Marco Polo; the Manchus preserved a share of the offices for their fellow tribesmen; but never for very long did Confucianism cease to be the dominant ideology, or Confucian scholars the dominant social class.

On the other hand, the "Mandate of Heaven" theory made it easy for the bureaucracy to transfer their allegiance en masse from one dynasty to another. For, if popular discontent and misgovernment had reached such a level that the army, or barbarian tribes, were able to seize power without effective resistance, then this was an infallible sign of the withdrawal of the mandate and its transfer to the new dynasty. The Confucians were always on the winning side. "In China," says Etienne Balazs, "whether a new dynasty was founded by an adventurer or carried to victory by the peasants, sooner or later it was taken over by the literati, the traditional intelligentsia who, being both staunchly conservative and experienced administrators, always brought the revolutionary forces under control, canalised them, tamed them, and rendered them harmless." 16

Conversely, revolutionary movements in China (or should I say "rebellions") tended to seize on non-Confucian ideologies to provide a focal point and source of energy for their attacks on the reigning dynasty. Taoism and some forms of Buddhism were especially important in this respect. 17 The long-lived revolutionary secret societies, such as the Buddhist White Lotus Society which influenced rebellions from the fourteenth century to the Boxer movement, and the Taoist Triad Society, used Buddhism and Taoism to provide an alternative ideology to the Confucian orthodoxy and a ritual and emotional richness absent in Confucianism. 18 They also tended to recruit members from the ranks of those who had failed the official examinations and thus been excluded from the plums of office, or who were otherwise ineligible. Yuji Muramatsu characterises these people as a middle strata in Chinese society, between the ruling class and the common people — "literate but originally powerless intellectuals: monks, priests, jobless lower-degree holders, and the like, including such pseudo-intellectuals as fortune-tellers and sorcerers." 19

Such movements, however, rarely played more than a subsidiary role in the change of a dynasty. Even Chu Yuan-chang, founder of the Ming dynasty, who had been a Buddhist monk and who led the only real "national" revolution before the twentieth century in overthrowing the Mongols, once in power called on the Confucian scholars to govern on his behalf. And, as we will see later, the failure of the Taiping Rebellion of the nineteenth century can be attributed in part at least to its frontal attack on the position of Confucianism. As Professor C. P. Fitzgerald puts it: "The Mandate of Heaven theory works out in practice as a justification for rebellions which succeed with the blessing of the literate class. Rebellions contrary to the interest of this class did not succeed." 20

The role of the peasants in rebel movements was a restricted and largely passive one. Certainly peasant discontent was important as a background to rebellion. The peasants fought in the armies and peasant dissatisfaction was one of the "signs" of loss of the mandate. But peasant risings without leadership from powerful generals or officials had little chance of success. It is, of course, notorious that one of the most important factors in Mao Tse-tung's rise to power was his calculated appeal to peasant support. But the "People's Revolution" was not, and is not, led by the "People."
In the concluding half of this paper I wish to demonstrate the working out of these themes — the Mandate of Heaven theory, the role of scholar and peasant — in changes of dynasties, rebellions and revolutions in Chinese history.

I will start with the dynastic histories because it is in them — "history written by scholar-officials for scholar-officials" to use Balazs' phrase — that we find the traditional Confucian theory applied. There is, of course, considerable distortion of fact in the process, but for our purposes, so far as the early dynasties are concerned, the theory is far more important than the fact.

The Shu Ching (Book of History), which is not strictly a dynastic history but rather the ancestor of all dynastic histories, sets the pattern from the very beginning. Yao, the first of the (probably legendary) Sage-Emperors, when he grows old seeks a successor. He rejects his own eldest son (a most important point — even when the succession had become restricted to the reigning family there was never strict primogeniture) because of his lack of moral qualities (again one of the basic themes in Chinese history). He chooses instead one Shun who has proved his virtue by being able to live in harmony with a blind father, an insincere step-mother and an arrogant half-brother. He tries Shun by marrying his daughters to him and taking him as adviser. Shun tries to decline the imperial dignity (again a classical ploy) but eventually is persuaded to ascend the throne. "The report of his mysterious virtue was heard on high," says the Shu Ching, "and he was appointed to occupy the imperial seat."22

Shun's successor, Yu, founder of the first dynasty (the Hsia) is similarly appointed by Shun. This time, the Book of History is even more explicit. Yu is appointed because of his success in government (he is credited with the construction of the first effective system of flood-control and irrigation) and because various types of divination point to him as recipient of the mandate.23

When we come to the crucial episode of the end of the first dynasty and its supplanting by the Shang, we find an elaborately developed rationale. Kwei, the Hsia ruler, is leading a completely dissolute life and misgoverning the empire. T'ang leads a successful rebellion against him and justifies himself in a speech to his followers:

"Come, ye multitudes of the people, listen to all my words. It is not I, the little child, who dares to undertake what may seem to be a rebellious enterprise; but for the many crimes of the sovereign of Hsia, Heaven has given the charge to destroy him."24

T'ang, now significantly called T'ang the Successful, seems to have had his doubts about the legitimacy of his action for his minister, Chung-hwuy, defends him in a long speech, explaining that Heaven has abandoned the king of Hsia because of his dissolute ways and appointed in his stead T'ang, the man of virtue.25

Again, when we come to the account of the end of the Shang dynasty, the same drama is played out. Tsao E announces to Chou-sin, last emperor of Shang, that Heaven has cast him off:

"Son of Heaven, Heaven is bringing to an end the destiny of our dynasty of Shang, the wisest of men and the great tortoise equally do not venture to know anything fortunate for it. It is not that the former kings do not aid us, the men of this after time; but by your dissoluteness and sport, O King, you are bringing on the end yourself. On this account Heaven has cast us off, so that there is distress for want of food; there is no consideration of our heavenly nature; there is no obedience to the statutes of the empire. Yea, our people now all wish the dynasty to perish, saying, 'Why does not Heaven send down its indignation? Why does not someone with its great decree make his appearance? What has the present king to do with us?'"26
This, of course, provides the stage-setting for the entrance of King Woo, first ruler of the Chou dynasty, with the proclamation: “The iniquity of Shang is full. Heaven gives command to destroy it.” When we remember that the Book of History was probably written in the late Chou period, it is easy to see the political importance of this legitimate succession thus traced from Sage Emperors, to Hsia, to Shang, to Chou.

The later dynastic histories provide us with a curious mixture of acknowledgment of the role of Heaven in the rise and fall of dynasties and acute political analyses. Ssu-ma Ch’ien, the first of the great historians, can attribute the fall of the House of Wei to the inexorable operations of Heaven. Yet he also ridicules Hsiang Yu who neglected good government but blamed his fall on Heaven.

A particularly interesting example is the story of Wang Mang, commonly regarded as a usurper, whose reign forms an interregnum between the Early or Former Han dynasty and the Later Han. There may be some bias in Pan Ku’s account, for his father had belonged to a rival and unsuccessful party to the Wang family; but it is clear that Wang Mang’s chief failing was that he was not successful. What is interesting, however, is Wang’s manipulation of portents to achieve his ends. There was a widespread theory that 210 years was the normal length of a dynastic cycle and this would have meant the end of Han around 5 A.D. In 12 B.C., when Wang Mang, through the influence of the Dowager Empress, was already in high office, a number of very bad omens appeared — there was an eclipse on New Year’s Day, in May there was thunder without clouds, and in Autumn Halley’s Comet appeared. Wang Mang’s family claimed descent from the Yellow Lord, yellow was the colour of earth, and Earth was supposed to succeed Fire, the Han element. In 5 A.D. the Emperor Ping died, and Wang Mang became Regent. Soon all sorts of favourable portents appeared. As Homer Dubs, the editor and translator of Pan Ku’s History of the Former Han Dynasty points out, we need not necessarily conclude that Wang personally engineered the portents. He was clearly the most powerful man in the empire, he had shown himself favourably disposed to bearers of the right portents, and they quickly appeared. The chief of a commune reported a dream in which a messenger appeared and said: “I am a messenger from his excellency Heaven. His excellency Heaven sent me to inform you, Chief of the Commune, saying, ‘The Regent-Emperor is due to be the actual (Emperor).’ If you do not believe me, in this commune there is due to be a new well.” Sure enough, a new well had appeared over-night. And so Wang Mang became Temporary Emperor till the young prince could come of age.

Soon another portent appeared, a casket with an inscription purporting to be from the Emperor Kao, founder of the Han, announcing that Wang should be made actual Emperor immediately “according to the Mandate of Heaven.” Wang, afraid to resist the Mandate, was immediately proclaimed Emperor. He reinforced his position by introducing an investment ceremony, wherein the imperial seal was handed over by the young former emperor. But misgovernment brought about his downfall — ministers who would acquiesce in fraud were not likely to prove conscientious. Pan Ku’s final summing up is that circumstances enabled him to usurp the throne but that he did not possess the virtue to sustain his position. It is interesting to speculate how Pan Ku and later historians would have assessed his reign if he had been successful. It is quite obvious that even by this time the main criterion for maintaining the Mandate was that of success. Portents of one sort or another were obviously of secondary importance and for propaganda purposes. Wolfram Eberhard claims in a study of “The Political Function of Astronomy and Astronomers in Han China” that
by this time astronomy, astrology and meteorology had become political in function and no longer religious. "On the basis of a vague belief that there was a connection between abnormal natural phenomena and social life, there grew up a practice of utilising this belief as a tool in the political struggle." 35

In conclusion, I would like to look at two modern variations on the theme of "revolution" in China, the Taiping Rebellion of the 1850s and 1860s and the revolution culminating in the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949.

The Taiping Rebellion appears to fall into familiar categories: a rebellion with a non-Confucian ideology, in this case influenced by Christianity, 36 accusing the reigning dynasty of misgovernment, and with a leader claiming a mandate from Heaven to rule. There is little question that the regime was unstable and decadent; its failure to resist the token invasion forces of the foreign "barbarians" in the Opium Wars showed this as well as widespread peasant rioting. Yet the Taiping movement failed, and failed disastrously. Why?

There have not been lacking those who attribute the failure of the Rebellion to the failure of the Western powers to support it. Generally, however, historians are agreed that foreign influence, one way or another, was not great. The more important question is, why did the Taiping movement fail to attract wider Chinese support? I would suggest that this is due, paradoxically, to the fact that it was a true "revolution," not a mere "rebellion"; that it aimed at subverting the whole Chinese theory and practice of government; or, to put it another way, because it could never have attracted the support of the Confucian scholar-officials, or have tolerated and employed them if it had succeeded.

The most perceptive study of Taiping ideology from this point of view is that of Joseph Levenson, 37 a study which also throws light on the subtle relationships between Confucianism and the classical Chinese alternatives, Taoism and Buddhism. For Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, the Taiping T'ien-wang or Heavenly Prince, claimed a Mandate of Heaven far more akin to the European divine-right monarchy than the Confucian t'ien-ming. The Taiping God, Shang-ti or Tien-fu (Heavenly Father), is a God of power who orders men to obey his Heavenly Prince and his mandate. Hung claimed the mandate not on the basis of virtue or success, but on the basis of personal revelations in which he had been associated with Jesus, his "elder brother," and given a mission to convert men to the worship of the Heavenly Father and to live righteously.

Furthermore, the Bible was to replace the Confucian Classics as the basis of the state ideology. After the capture of Nanking, the Southern capital, the Taipings even instituted civil service examinations based on the Taiping writings with their selective use of Christian Scriptures and tracts. As Levenson points out, Taoism and Buddhism had never been regarded as positive rivals to Confucianism. It was quite possible, if not altogether common, for scholar-officials to be public Confucians and private Taoists or Buddhists. Taoist or Buddhist influences on other rebellions were, as Levenson shows, "chiliastic, i.e., anti-social, anti-historical," leaving Confucianism as "the dominant thought for prosaic social history." Both religions (or "philosophies"); I do not wish to debate the point here) had "a recognised extra-rebellious existence," a "low-temperature state in a continuing dynastic history." 38 When the "revolution" was over Confucianism and Confucius took charge once more and Taoism and Buddhism returned to their traditional roles of popular religions and escapist or personal philosophies. Taiping religion could never do this. Perhaps the most significant
fact about the movement as a whole is that once the Rebellion failed, Taiping religion completely vanished.\(^\text{39}\)

The Taiping Rebellion failed because it was a true "revolution"; it sought to overthrow the basic state ideology, to supplant it, not supplement it. The scholar-official class recognised this and opposed the movement bitterly. Hence, the movement failed to attract their support and leadership. Fanaticism and discipline enabled the Taipings to win a number of striking military successes, but in the long run it failed through inadequate leadership. Hung retreated into a private world of fantasy, the place-men and hangers-on abandoned him, and the movement dissolved.

Yet, was not the republican revolutionary movement which succeeded less than half a century later in itself a direct attack on the traditional system? There are a number of answers to this difficulty. Firstly, it was half a century later, a half-century in which the incapacity of the government in the face of the Western, and even more important the Japanese, challenge had become completely obvious. Secondly, there had been considerable erosion of the solidity of Confucianism as a state ideology. Thirdly, the movement was largely led, or at least taken over by, the old dominant social class. Yuan Shih-k'ai, the first President of the Republic, even attempted to use the revolution to secure his elevation as the first emperor of a new dynasty, and serious attempts were made to have Confucianism declared the state religion.

Finally, I would like to turn to the Communist Revolution. It is impossible to discuss this adequately here and I will not attempt to do more than use the Revolution to tie together a number of the themes we have been considering. For I find myself in general agreement with Professor C. P. Fitzgerald's thesis that the present regime in China has many elements of continuity with traditional China. However, I think Fitzgerald has overstated his case. The communes, for example, cut across the family structure far more severely than he admits, and the degree of effective control at the local level by the central government is greater than ever before. Moreover, I think Fitzgerald is wrong in avoiding value judgments about the features whose continuity he proclaims. Rather, with Étienne Balazs and Karl Wittfogel, I regard the study of Chinese despotism and bureaucracy, traditional and modern, as of particular significance as a prognostic for the fate of our own society and institutions.

But, with these qualifications, I intend to approach the Communist Revolution from the point of view of continuity. It is undoubtedly a true revolution for it has completely replaced the traditional ideological foundation with another. Yet, the new ideology has important points of comparison with the old. I will not discuss the influence of Confucianism on Maoism because it is a particularly complex question. It will suffice to say that the founders of the Chinese Communist Party had little acquaintance with Marxist theory in the beginning — only the Communist Manifesto had been translated by 1920; that Mão himself had never been outside China before 1949; and that the leaders of the CCP are mostly drawn from the old scholar class. The existence of an official orthodoxy, moreover, its perpetuation and implementation by an elite of specially trained functionaries, totalitarian government — none of these are new. Even the problem of succession to Mão and "the cult of personality" can be seen as following the old pattern.\(^\text{40}\)

And in the revolution itself we find the age-old alliance of scholars and peasants that has again and again provided the successful formula for revolution
in China. The acceptance of the new ideology by the scholars can be seen as the old acceptance of success as the indication of the Mandate of Heaven. It is interesting to note the large number of Chinese intellectuals, once hostile to communism, who have accepted academic and official posts under the new regime and submitted more or less voluntarily to thought control. It would, of course, be foolish to seek in Mao's writings any explicit reference to the Mandate of Heaven, but his presentation of the Marxist theory of the inevitability of revolutionary change has at least points of similarity to the Confucian theory. Beneath his explanation of the victory of the forces of revolution over what he calls so elegantly "comprador-feudal-state-monopoly-bureaucratic capitalism" does there lie the vision of over three thousand years of dynastic change? We are told that Mao's favourite reading as a boy was the great Chinese novel, the San Kuo or Romance of the Three Kingdoms, with its story of dynastic change and political intrigue. Does he, perhaps, still sometimes see himself as the latest in the long line of successful holders of the Mandate of Heaven?

NOTES
1. Quoted, E. Balazs, Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy, Yale, 1964, p. 158.
2. ibid., p. 23.
4. One recent translator, James R. Ware (the Mentor Book translation of The Sayings of Confucius) has rejected this aspect by translating t'ien throughout as "Sky."
6. Chan, op. cit., pp. 75-6 (Mencius 4A:9).
7. ibid., p. 77 (4A:10).
8. ibid., pp. 77-8.
9. ibid., p. 62 (11B:9).
11. op. cit., p. 108.
13. ibid., p. 257.
15. op. cit., p. 159.
17. ibid., p. 247.
18. ibid., p. 255.
20. ibid., op. cit., p. 34.
21. Balazs, op. cit., p. 34.
23. ibid., op. cit., p. 178 (Book of Shang, Bk. 1, c.1).4
24. ibid., Bk. II.
25. Lege, iii, pp. 289-71 (IV.XI & II).
26. ibid., p. 237 (V. 1).
30. Shih Chi, 7/76 (quoted in ibid., pt. 3).
32. Dubs, op. cit., p. 471 (89C:293).
33. op. cit., p. 70.
34. v. E. P. Boardman, Christian Influence upon the Ideology of the Taiping Rebellion, 1851-1864, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1962. Boardman's final conclusion, with which I agree, is that despite obvious and direct Protestant influence, "the Taiping religion was still not Christianity" (p. 114).
36. Geoffrey Hodson in The China Quarterly, no. 21, January-March, 1965, has re-stated in striking form the parallelism of traditional and contemporary China. For him it is 1912 (or 1919) to 1949 that is the atypical period in Chinese history.