

Paul U. Unschuld (1985) **Medicine in China, a history of ideas**. University of California Press.

5. Religious Healing: The Foundation of Theocratic Rule (pp. 117-131).

Chinese primary sources and Western secondary literature dealing with the history of the numerous imperial dynasties and other short-lived or more durable small and large states seldom even mention prevailing medical concepts and practices. The present study, which attempts an integral historical approach combining general cultural concerns, in particular the socio-political developments, with the more specialized field of medical thought, thus represents a completely new approach to Chinese history. There is, however, an extremely important exception. During the second century A.D., the so-called revolt of the Yellow Turbans broke out in China; almost simultaneously, but without direct connection, a small renegade state was established in the western part of the country. Both of these occurrences, which otherwise were in no way unusual, achieved historical significance because they were associated with attempts to establish theocratic ruling structures based on a religious organization. Among the numerous studies and histories dealing with the socio-political events of this period, we know of none that does not include an analysis or presentation of the prevailing health care concepts. Indeed, the close relationship between socio-political ideals and therapeutic thought throughout the entire history of Chinese culture has never been so apparent as during this brief period spanning several decades during the second century. The art of healing constituted both a foundation and an integral component of the attainment and exercise of power and was understood and described as such by all historians of this period.¹

5.1. SOCIAL CONDITIONS DURING THE LATER HAN

In A.D. 184 members of the movement "The Way of Great Peace" (t'ai-p'ing tao) staged the so-called Yellow Turban Revolt. As Michaud has convincingly demonstrated, it is scarcely possible to identify any specific underlying cause for this rebellion. It appears that a number of unfavorable factors during the second Han dynasty (A.D.25-220) ultimately created a political climate that required only determined leaders to ignite the flames of rebellion. Internal political conditions, foreign policy concerns, natural catastrophes, and mass epidemics undoubtedly smoothed the way.

Only several decades after the founding of the second Han dynasty, the vast empire was no longer ruled by an adult monarch, but by a series of boys who, completely unequal to the task, became pawns of their advisers in the intrigues of various groups within the imperial family. Prince Chao was the first of these child emperors, ascending the throne in A.D. 89 at the age of ten. Until the collapse of the dynasty more than 130 years later, none of the rulers was older than fifteen at the time of accession, with the youngest being installed at age two or three. Occasionally during the periods of minority, the regency was assumed by the widow of the father or preceding emperor, and some of the youthful rulers, to counter-balance this familial authority, took the castrated palace servants into their confidence. Initially, the eunuchs usually lacked a decent education and were thus totally unprepared for conducting state business. Their natural opponents therefore were the Confucian

officials, who were thoroughly educated administrative experts. Despite this animosity, the eunuchs were able to strengthen their influence to such an extent that, after a final attempt to reverse this development to their own advantage, the Confucians were outlawed as a "forbidden party" in 168 and persecuted throughout the empire like common criminals. The eunuchs also removed qualified officials from the highest administrative positions, establishing in A.D. 178 their own training centers for favorites, whom, despite their continued lack of ability, the emperor then appointed to the vacated positions. The eunuchs appear to have used their new-found power primarily to squeeze enormous wealth from the population for their own personal gain. Thus, five leading members of this group, for their assistance in exterminating the Liang family in A.D. 159, which had grown too powerful for one of the emperors, each received the income of 13,000 to 20,000 families plus a total sum of 56 million cash, an amount whose true significance can be appreciated by realizing that this sum equaled the large state expenditures during the decades of struggle with the neighboring Ch'iang. Moreover, it is probable that this one-time, enormous payment represented only a fraction of the wealth amassed by the eunuchs, which ultimately had to be taken from the people in the form of heavy taxes.² The wars with the Ch'iang, particularly in the years from 107 to 118, 134 to 145, and 159 to 169, when invasions of Chinese territory entailed considerable defensive measures, placed an additional burden on the Chinese economy. The outlying provinces, which bore the brunt of the conflict, contained no less than a fourth of the entire Chinese population. Increased taxes in the areas not directly affected by the fighting were required to compensate for lost revenue in the remote regions.³ Finally, it is necessary to mention the great number of natural catastrophes—droughts, earthquakes, torrential rains, floods, hailstorms, locust plagues, and epidemics—which placed even more hardship upon the people. Chinese sources record only a total of ten years during the two centuries preceding the Yellow Turban Revolt that were purportedly free of such disasters. A word of caution is advised here, however, since the political significance of such obvious signs of celestial displeasure concerning the reign of the emperor may have resulted in the possible omission of some catastrophes or, conversely, the exaggeration of what was in actuality an insignificant event.⁴ An indication of the growing unrest and disorder in the empire was the unusual growth, evident by A.D. 103, of the unregistered itinerant population. Official attempts to settle these groups and incorporate them into the economic system met with varied success; after A.D. 170, authorities seemed to have lost all control over these developments. In the capital, officials were too concerned with struggles between various cliques, and the number of the migrant masses soared. The amount of cultivated land decreased as innumerable peasants fled the intolerable conditions imposed by the large landowners; famine and the formation of numerous local gangs ensued. The condition of the government at this time is evident in the creation of a department in A.D. 179 in which public offices were offered for sale.⁵ All these events contributed to a situation in which large segments of the population had apparently lost confidence in the prevailing form of government and were ready to embrace a new leadership which, on the basis of a system of healing, promised a better future. Chang Ch'ieh and his "Way of Great Peace" provided the nucleus for open rebellion.

5.2. T'AI P'ING IDEOLOGY AND THE YELLOW TURBAN REVOLT

Chang Chüeh was born in Chü-lu, located in what is today Hopei. His activities remained centered in this area and the surrounding provinces of eastern China, although the effects were visible in nearly all other portions of the country. The doctrine with which Chang Chüeh was able to attract the masses from ca. 173 to 184 was drawn from various sources. The most important concepts of the ideology were taken from a partly written tradition that believed it had discovered how society could find the "Way of Great Peace." Proponents, so tradition indicates,⁶ had already attempted, in 300 B.C., 6 B.C., and once more during the reign of Emperor Shun-ti (A.D. 126-144), to present their ideas in the form of a "Classic of Great Peace" (T'ai-p'ing ching) to the ruling parties, but their views on social reorganization were repeatedly perceived as dangerous to state authority and branded as heresy.

T'ai-p'ing ideology rests on a belief in the

cyclical recurrence of immense world catastrophes, which are survived only by a small, select group of men. It reveals how man can withstand these periodic cataclysms and join the chosen few who survive. The critical point is preceded by a period of increasing floods, droughts, failed harvests, political disruptions, wars, and especially pestilence, as was the case near the end of the second Han Dynasty.⁷

A "divine man of the great Tao," it was believed, had revealed to mankind the possibilities of a code of conduct favorable for survival and had also presented specific measures to be enacted by the government. The ethics of government, according to these precepts, must concentrate on a modest and economical court, support of the poor and indigent, care of the elderly, and the reduction of taxes and penalties.⁸ Those who followed the ethic of the "divine man of the Great Tao," were guided safe and sound through the collapse by sacred emissaries and led into the ensuing new age of great peace. Chang Chüeh had apparently come into possession of a copy of the T'ai-p'ing ching that purportedly had been given by Lao-tzu himself to the Taoist Yü Chi, also active in the second century. The version of the T'ai-p'ing ching that has survived in the Taoist canon, which is not necessarily identical to the one of Chang Chüeh, contains a commentary dealing with this occurrence, and indicates that the purpose of the work was, on the one hand, to reveal instructions concerning the achievement of physical immortality, and rules regarding the attainment of harmony in society, on the other hand.⁹ Nowhere else do we find such a clear admission of the complete integration of medical and political concepts.

Around the year 173, Chang Chüeh began to preach this doctrine among the population. His success, particularly among the non-registered migrants, was extremely impressive. The official history of the period mentions hundreds of thousands of followers; when Chang Chüeh called public gatherings, the streets were blocked by the enormous crowds. The medical portion of his doctrine had three components. Chang Chüeh stood in the tradition of demonic medicine, which, with the aid of oral, written, and gesticulated spells and interdictions, attempted to resist harmful demons or expel those that had already invaded the body. Chang utilized a bamboo staff containing the magic efficacious number of nine knots, in conjunction with specific gestures, to enact a spell. In addition, Chang had the masses confess their sins during impressive rituals, in order to induce the "divine man of the Great Tao," who watches over longevity and the approaching epoch of Great Peace, to prolong the time allotted to individuals, a period easily diminished when the t'ai-p'ing was violated. Finally,

Chang Chüeh utilized written characters, in which certain cosmic relationships were expressed. These characters therefore possessed the power to eliminate pathological disturbances that resulted in the physical microcosm losing its place within the macrocosm of universal actions, which itself was brought about by sinful conduct. Chang Chüeh wrote down for his followers the various necessary character combinations; the consumption of the ashes of characters, which followed the purification achieved through public confession, provided the desired protection and healing.

Chang Chüeh soon was unable to handle by himself the great influx of devotees from wide areas of the country. He then dispatched, again in accordance with the significant number nine, eight disciples, whom he had initiated into the secrets of his teachings. In addition, a group of four military commanders and deputy commanders was appointed to each of the ideological leaders, including Chang Chüeh, and the masses were assigned in groups of thousands and ten-thousands to the resulting thirty-six organizational units.

The year 184 marked a significant phase. In this year the Chinese calendar began a new sixty-year cycle, and the leaders of the t'ai-p'ing movement promised the downfall of the existing order and the establishment of a new rule for this period. The rebellion of all sympathizers, however, intended for 184, was betrayed by an insider shortly before the planned surprise attack; the central government finally emerged victorious from the fierce fighting, which left at least 241,000 rebels dead.¹⁰

5.3. PHYSICAL EXISTENCE: TENSIONS BETWEEN DAILY LIFE AND THE ETHOS OF NATURE

In the cult of Chang Chüeh, the religious medicine that concentrated on a recognition and confession of past misconduct, could only, albeit unsuccessfully, assume the function of achieving power; the exercise of power was denied to Chang following the unfortunate collapse of the rebellion. Only a few years later, however, a small state was established in the western part of the empire, in which the same principle—linking sin and illness—produced a form of government, over a period of three decades, which differed greatly from the Confucian social system. Even more clearly than the views of Chang Chüeh, the ideology adopted by the founder of this state, Chang Lu, was founded on non-Confucian social philosophies. Moist, Buddhist, and Taoist ideas influenced a regime, in which a religious leader, on the basis of "communality," supervised the lives of subjects that were free of sins and, consequently, illness.¹¹ The three forces of Heaven, Earth, and Water were accorded the highest existential authority; in addition, the presence and actions of evil demons were to be combatted through a suitable code of conduct. The T'ai-p'ing ching, which formed the basis of Chang Chüeh's teachings, achieved a certain renown in the new state, but it appears that another work, an individualistic annotated version of the Tao-te ching, fragments of which have survived under the title Lao-tzu Hsiang-erh chu, played a much more significant role.¹²

We have already encountered the belief in a spectral world that punishes human misconduct in the ancestor therapy of the Shang; deceased ancestors exhibited their displeasure with living descendants by means of illness-causing curses. Such views are recorded explicitly for the first time in the work of Mo Ti (479?-381 B.C.), a philosopher living during the highly unstable period of the Warring States, who, in violent words, reproached those of his contemporaries who believed they could deny

the existence of spirits and demons. Mo Ti had reached the conclusion that only the fear of retribution by such forces could induce society to adhere to certain virtues and behavioral norms; he also believed to have discovered the underlying cause of the chaos of his time:

Master Mo Ti said: Since the sacred kings of the three dynasties of antiquity are no longer living, and the world has renounced their principles, feudal lords consider force to be the correct basis for all actions. Between prince and subject, superior and subordinate, goodwill and loyalty no longer prevail; between father and son, between younger and elder brother, kindness and piety, fraternity, respect, virtuousness, and harmony no longer exist. The leaders of the state no longer strive to govern and the simple folk do not attempt to fulfill their obligations. The people are evil, violent, thieving, and rebellious; thieves and robbers attack innocent men on the roads and byways with weapons, poison, water, and fire, seizing wagons, horses, clothes, and furs, in order to enrich themselves. All of this has the same cause, and brings the empire into disorder. What lies behind these conditions? All now doubt the existence of spirits and do not perceive that spirits have the power to reward the industrious and punish the evil. If all men of the empire could be convinced that spirits are capable of rewarding the industrious, and punishing the evil, how could the empire be disrupted?¹³

Therefore Master Mo Ti said: if the fact that spirits reward the good and punish the bad can be made the foundation of the state and be explained to the people, then this is a way to preserve order in the country and to benefit the population. If then integrity and selflessness no longer prevail among the officials, and if men and women are no longer separated, this would be seen by the spirits. When the people are depressed and corrupt, and rise in rebellion, when thieves and robbers lie in wait for innocent men on the roads and byways with weapons, poison, water, and fire, and steal wagons, horses, clothing, and furs in order to enrich themselves, this, too, the spirits would see. For these reasons the officials will not dare to be corrupt and self-seeking; when they encounter the good, they will not dare fail to reward them, and when they encounter the bad, they will not dare fail to punish them. And the fact that the people are depraved and corrupt, rebellious and hostile, that thieves and robbers attack innocent people on the highways and paths with weapons, poison, water, and fire, stealing wagons, horses, clothing, and furs, in order to enrich themselves, all this shall stop from that point on. One cannot escape the alert eye of the spirits in dark valleys or vast marshes, in the mountains, forests, or deep ravines, for the eyes of the spirits will still see him. One cannot avoid the punishment of the spirits through wealth, nobility, numerical superiority, arms, or weapons, for these will not hold off retribution by the spirits.¹⁴

Therefore Master Mo Ti said: If kings, princes, high officials, scholars, and noblemen today truly desire to make the empire more beneficial and prevent any harm, then they must acknowledge the existence of spirits and demons and honor them accordingly, for this is the way of exemplary kings.¹⁵

The specific forms of punishment meted out by the spectral world, which Mo Ti so forcefully stresses, are also described. Several examples are provided, particularly how men unjustly executed return to take revenge upon those responsible. Mo Ti likewise describes the rewards of a virtuous life: attentive gods prolong the lives of those who are virtuous.

These notions were not restricted to the Moists; they were also cultivated in Taoist circles, and it is possible that these groups first associated such ideas explicitly with the origins of illness. In this connection, the T'ai-p'ing ching remarks:

Heaven knows of all failings, whether grave or minor. For each year of life it has accounts, in which all good and evil actions are recorded. Each individual day and month are examined, and in accordance with the evaluation, units [of three days] are deducted [from the originally fixed life span], and the length of life is decreased.¹⁶

At the beginning of the fourth century, the Taoist and natural philosopher Ko Hung recorded several concepts that had possibly already influenced Chang Chüeh and Chang Lu:

In the I-ching, section "Nei-chieh," and in the Classic of Ch'ih Sung-tzu, as well as in the Ho-t'u chi-ming fu, it is written: "In heaven and on earth there are spirits who observe misconduct. According to the severity of the sins committed by man, several years are deducted from their life span. A decrease in the originally allotted lifetime causes the victim to fall into poverty and illness; if the originally allotted time is exhausted, he dies!"¹⁷

There are three beings in the body. They are actually present, even though they are formless. They belong in fact to the group of souls, demons, and spirits. Their primary objective is to bring man an early death, for this enables them to then function as demons, move around freely, and treat themselves to the offerings presented by men. For this reason, they ascend each keng-shen day to the ruler of all fates in heaven and report the failings of men. In addition, on the last night of each month, the god of the kitchen ascends to heaven, in order to report the evil deeds of men. For grave [sins] a year of 300 days is deducted [from the originally allotted life span]; for minor failings, the life span is decreased only by a unit of three days.¹⁸

Finally, the Hsiang-erh commentary on the Tao-te ching, which supposedly played such a central role in the Chang Lu state, linked the concepts of a connection between sins and life span with notions of a life based on the Tao and belief in the influences on men by ch'i, which transforms itself in the organism into the life-giving essence ching, one of whose manifestations was male semen. Again and again, the Hsiang-erh commentary stresses the senselessness and foolishness of the widespread tricks for prolonging life, in particular the sexual techniques which attempted to protect against the loss of semen by returning this precious substance to the brain. The numerous passages dealing with this problem underscore the intention of shaking the faith in mechanistic, and therefore amoral, longevity practices, and drawing the attention of the reader instead to the inseparable link between adherence to an ethic of the true Tao, on the one hand, and the enjoyment of the longest possible life free from illness, on the other hand:

Men who conduct their lives in accordance with the doctrine of Tao accumulate essence and their spirit realizes its full potential. Unfortunately, these days several tricks masquerade under the name of "Tao." In following the writings of the Yellow Emperor, the mystical maiden, Kung-tzu, and Jung Ch'eng, some men spend their lives in incessant pursuit of the female sex, hoping to strengthen their mental faculties through the return of the [seminal] essence. For these people, mind and spirit no longer form a whole; in reality, they lose that which they thought to preserve.... The corporeal soul is white and therefore the [semen] essence is white; the primordial influence [to which man owes his life] has the same color. The body is a wagon loaded with [semen] essence. If this essence flows out, more must be loaded to re-establish the correct proportion. When the spirit has realized its full potential, the essences flow into the body until the correct level has been reached again. One now desires to maintain continually the achieved level [of essence] and not lose the unity [of mind and spirit]. If this unity is attained, it signifies the [complete harmony of personal existence with the] Tao. But how is the presence of this harmony in the body to be understood? How can this unity be preserved in the body? It is not present in the body from the very beginning, and this is why the widespread tricks that are concerned with the body do not [conform to the] true Tao. The harmony comes from beyond heaven and earth, entering from there the region between heaven and earth. When it then enters the body, it does not occupy one specific spot, but fills the entire space enclosed by the skin. He who today conducts his life in accordance with the ethical precepts of the Tao, he who heeds this ethic and does not violate it, shall preserve harmony. He who does not conform to this ethic shall lose harmony.¹⁹

In subsequent sections, to be cited below, the commentary discusses the accounting procedures of the celestial authorities, consisting of left (positive) and right (negative) halves. At birth, all men receive a specific, fixed life span that is recorded on the right half of the account. In addition, each person receives the same period of time credited to a celestial account on the left side. Through exemplary conduct, the balance on the left side can be withdrawn and transformed into earthly existence.

Violations of the Tao ethic, conversely, result not only in a blocking of the left account but also in a reduction of the amount recorded on the right side, the time remaining in the allotted life span:

He who strives to achieve the longevity of the immortals and the good fortune of heaven, must devote himself with confidence to the Tao. He must follow the ethical precepts and must not betray his faith [through contrary behavior]. He must not make even two mistakes, for all sins are recorded in a list by the officials in heaven, until [the account] on the right side is exhausted and [no years] remain in the life span.²⁰

The immortals of antiquity preserved the abundance of their essence, thereby maintaining their life. The men of today lose their essence and consequently must die. This is truly the case! Can life today be extended simply by accumulating essence upon essence? By no means! Every aspect of life must contribute to [the goal of longevity]. Essence is only one of the many emanations of the Tao. They enter man and form the basis [of his existence], but half is withheld from him from the very beginning. If one desires to amass essence [in the body], he must devote his entire life to carrying out all kinds of good deeds. One must conform to the Five Phases and reject any emotional stimulation, be it joy or anger. The left half of the account [of the life span] maintained by the celestial officials will then show available credit, and one is protected against the loss of [vital] essence. When evil men desire to amass essence, all their efforts are in vain, and they must ultimately lose their lives, for all their essence [despite sexual techniques] flows inexorably away. One should carry out his good deeds with a virtuous attitude and, appealing to the three powers of the Hall of Light (ming-t'ang), confess all evil and injurious actions [which one has caused], in order to achieve the correct measure of finest emanations of the Tao. The vital essence can be compared to the water in a pond, the body to the dam that surrounds this water, and the correct life to the source [of the water]. When all three components are in their ideal state, the pond is filled to the rim. If a person places no special value on good deeds, the dam is missing and water flows away uncontrolled. If one has accumulated no beneficial works during his life, the source is obstructed, and the water unavoidably dries up. [Or it happens that] the waters burst forth like the violent torrents into the wilderness and flow away, even though a dam is present, so that the source is not obstructed, but [the pond] is nevertheless empty. The walls of the dam (?) finally burst from dryness and—at the same time—all kinds of illnesses arise. If one is incautious regarding the three [components: water = vital essence; dam = body; source = correct life], the pond becomes merely a dry hole.²¹

We know of no older text in which the naturalistic concepts of "essence" (ching) and finest matter influences (ch'i), which determine physical existence, are so obviously linked with the ethics of Tao. The transformation of the account on the left side into actual years of life and, conversely, the affliction or even curtailment of physical existence are the result of the quantity of influences that the Tao pours into man from diverse sources. A harmonious proportion of influences makes possible the continued necessary formation of "essence," from which the body takes its life; an imbalance or loss among the influences is accompanied by illness or even death. The rather cynical-sounding pronouncement in the T'ai-p'ing ching—"Fear is the basis of life"²²—blends well into this natural ethos.

5.4. THE FIVE-PECKS-OF-RICE MOVEMENT AND THE STATE OF CHANG LU

When the ideas outlined in the preceding paragraph found their theoretical and practical application in the philosophy and government of a renegade state in western China in A.D. 186, it was scarcely possible to ascertain which individuals had contributed concepts to the movement. It appears that two separate family traditions, both concerned with healing, developed in the same general area. Chang Hsiu, the leader of one of these traditions, required from the families of those he had healed the continued yearly payment of five pecks of rice, thus the name of the movement (wu tou mi tao).

Possibly encouraged by the Yellow Turban Revolt in eastern China, Chang Hsiu and his followers

initiated a revolt in A.D. 184. Since none of the Chinese sources mentions suppression of this uprising,²³ it seems likely that Chang Hsiu was able to establish his own political entity, which was even tolerated to a certain degree by the governor of the neighboring province I.

The second of these traditions arose at about the same time, with the appearance of Chang Lu. Chang Lu declared himself the grandson of Chang Tao-ling, a local magician who up to that time had probably had only a very limited following and who had purportedly introduced written spells. According to a report in the possibly oldest biography of Chang Tao-ling, written by Ko Hung in the early fourth century, Lao-tzu himself is supposed to have procured him a "contract with innumerable spirits in the world."

As a result, he was able to heal illnesses and the number of his disciples increased so greatly, that he organized them into communities watched over by chi-chiu ("libationers"). At the same time, he established regulations and assessed natural levies in the form of millet, silk, utensils, paper, brushes, and firewood. He had his followers improve the roads. Anyone who refused, he punished with illness. He despised the system of punishment and taught the people modesty and shame. He had all sick people make a complete confession of all previous failings. Then a written contract with the spirits was drawn up, in which the patient pledged his life never to sin again. Thereupon the [notorious] criminals improved their lives and became good.²⁴

As Eichhorn has already recognized, the information on Chang Tao-ling must doubtless be seen as a projection of the state later founded by his purported grandson, Chang Lu.²⁵

Apparently authentic sources report that the mother of Chang Lu was also a practitioner of demonic medicine. By means of these abilities and her supposed beauty, she gained access to Liu Yen, the governor of I province, who awarded her son a military title. In addition, Liu commissioned Chang Lu and Chang Hsiu to eliminate the governor of the neighboring territory, Hang-chung. It is possible that Chang Lu became acquainted at this opportunity with the organization of the followers of his comrade, for he killed Chang Hsiu shortly after the successful conclusion of their mission, took over his cult, and proclaimed his own state in the strategically important and easily defended area of Han-ching. After he had the local representatives of the central government killed, Chang began a thirty-year reign (A.D. 186-216), during which the principles of religious medicine and the concept of "civic spirit" (kung) formed the ideological foundation of individual and collective action.

The entire system of Chang Lu was built upon a fear of the power of evil spirits and demons, who threatened human society from all sides and constantly strove to cause injury or even death. A comprehensive contract provided the supreme leader of the community with an instrument for protecting those who professed their loyalty to him from the evil influences of spirits and demons. He was the guarantor of the life and prosperity of his subjects, who lived under the constant threat of evil forces. This meant that unbelief and skepticism regarding the power of the spirits and demons were considered an attack on the basic authority of the state itself.²⁶

In comparison with demonic medicine, which, as we have already seen, was only an amoral, individualistic system of reference between individual men and individual demons, religious medicine contains the new element of a church-like organization, which establishes norms for individual conduct in the collective and thus confronts demons as a representative of this collective.

As an alternative to the traditional civil service of the Han dynasty, Chang Lu created a new hierarchy, which stretched from the "warriors against demons" (kuei-tsu) and "soldiers against immorality" (chien-ling), who were the lowest officials under the "libationers" (chi-chiu) mentioned

in the biography of Chang Tao-ling, up to the "district governors, grand libationers" (chih-t'ou ta chi-chiu) and ultimately the "master of masters" (shih-chün), Chang Lu himself. All of these officials were charged with supervising various-sized groups of the population. The objective of this tightly woven social control was to maintain an unquestioning belief in the magical powers of Chang Lu and, thus, enforce observance of social norms.

The so-called free hostels (i-she), presided over by the libationers, provided free lodging and meals to travellers. Moreover, each inhabitant of the state could partake of the food provided in front of the free hostels. Demons and spirits caused illness in anyone who abused these institutions. Secular authorities intervened only when someone had repeated a crime three times. Even then, the punishment, such as the obligation to repair one hundred feet of a street, was mostly symbolic in nature.

The sick were admitted to "chambers of silence" (ching-shih), where they had the necessary peace and leisure to reflect on the failings that underlay such bodily suffering. When the sins of the past were finally recognized, passages from the Tao-te ching were read aloud, prayers were directed to the spirits, and the three supreme powers—heaven, earth, and water—were placated by writing the misdeed on three pieces of paper, one of which was then placed at the top of a mountain, a second buried in the ground, and the third consigned to a river.²⁷ In addition, those who were cured in this manner, as had been the case under Chang Hsiu, were required to pay five pecks of rice or other crops to the libationers, who then added them to the supplies in the free hostels.

Not only were illnesses themselves treated but society was also admonished to carry out preventive measures. From time to time, the inhabitants would assemble for meditation, during which each individual would reflect upon his recent conduct so as to discover any unnoticed sins. If it then appeared necessary, on the basis of such self-contemplation, the individual could prevent punishment by spirits and thus physical illness by performing some voluntary community service, such as the collection of medicinal herbs.²⁸ This last aspect is significant, since it indicates that the use of medicinal plants was officially tolerated and, perhaps, even actively promoted.

Although, as Kaltenmark has shown, it is doubtful whether the entire T'ai-p'ing ching preserved in the Tao-tsang is identical with a text of the same title providing the ideological basis of Chang Lu's regime,²⁹ the Tao-tsang version, nevertheless, contains a rationale for the application of various therapeutic techniques in a religious context. After all, drugs, moxa, and needles appear to have been well-established curative means in the Chinese population by the time of the Han, and it might have been difficult for any group striving to gain political control over the masses by promising social and personal health to neglect these techniques entirely.

Herbal and animal substances were identified as being sent down to earth by celestial beings; it was believed that the bodies of birds contained some "divine celestial medicine," and that herbs and trees contained the tao and, consequently, the powers resulting from a realization of the tao.³⁰ Even the application of such seemingly straight-forward technical procedures as moxa-cauterization and acupuncture were legitimated on grounds of their moral nature, as the following excerpt from the Tao-tsang version of the T'ai-p'ing ching may indicate:

Cauterization and pricking are means to harmonize the 360 arteries, to provide passage for the yin and yang influences, and to eliminate suffering. The 360 arteries correspond to the 360 days of a year. Each day one of the arteries controls the affairs [of the organism]; their activities correspond to the four seasons and to the Five Phases. They come out to the body's surface, moving around it everywhere; above they unite at the top of the head, and internally they are tied to the depots; their depletion and repletion corresponds to the four seasons. If the movement [of the activities from one artery to the next] suffers from an illness, it does no longer correspond to the calendrical cycle. The sequence of the movement loses its order, resulting either in tie-ups or in injuries, [the movement] taking sometimes the proper, sometimes a contrary direction. This, then, must be treated.

Cauterization is the essence of the Great-yang, it is the brilliance of public spirit and truth. For this reason it discovers licentiousness and expels suffering and evil. The needles are the essence of the Minor-yin; they are the light of the Great-white. For this reason one makes use of their righteousness in order to subjugate any rebellion. One hundred therapies will yield one hundred successes; ten therapies will yield ten successes. All this is made possible through the receipt of the arteries-prophecy-writings from the celestial scriptures.³¹

In the year 215 or 216, Han-ching was occupied by a general and troops of the central government. Initially, Chang Lu fled to friendly Tibetans but surrendered shortly thereafter. Thus ended, after some thirty years, the most successful attempt in the long history of China to establish a theocracy. But the underlying world view, and thus religious medicine, survived in esoteric circles, secret societies, and among the broad masses of the population. The idea of deities who in heaven, or in the human body itself, watch over earthly conduct and dispense appropriate rewards or punishment in such forms as good health and illness, assumed numerous credible forms and has remained an important aspect of Chinese medicine up to the present day.³²

Unschuld's Footnotes (from Unschuld, 1985, p. 376).

1. Eichhorn 1955,1973; Welch 1972; Michaud 1958; Stein 1963; Bauer 1976, pp. 113ff.
2. Michaud 1958, pp. 69-72.
3. Ibid., pp. 61-62.
4. Ibid., pp. 63-64.
5. Eichhorn 1955, pp. 295-299.
6. Ibid., p. 304; Michaud 1958, p. 84.
7. Eichhorn 1973, p. 141.
8. Ibid.
9. Michaud 1958, p. 85; Kaltenmark 1979, pp. 19-20, 23.
10. Michaud 1958, p. 103.
11. Bauer 1976, pp. 113-116.
12. Eichhorn 1973, p. 144.
13. Mo Ti: "Against War," trans. Schmidt-Glintzer 1975, pp. 94-95.
14. Ibid., pp. 106-107.
15. Ibid., p. 111.
16. Lao-tzu Hsiang-erh chu chiao-chien, 1956, p. 78.
17. Pao-p'u-tzu, 1969, p. 27.
18. Ibid.
19. Lao-tzu Hsiang-erh chu chiao-chien, 1956, pp. 12, 13; cf. Eichhorn 1973, pp. 144-145.

20. Lao-tzu Hsiang-erh chu chiao-chien, 1956, p. 33; cf. Eichhorn 1973, p. 145.
21. Lao-tzu Hsiang-erh chu chiao-chien, 1956, pp. 29-30; cf. Eichhorn 1973, pp. 145-146.
22. Eichhorn 1973, p. 140.
23. Ibid., p. 315.
24. Eichhorn 1955, p. 314.
25. Ibid., p. 315.
26. Ibid., p. 323.
27. Eichhorn 1954, pp. 328-329.
28. Ibid., p. 331.
29. Kaltenmark 1979.
30. Cheng-t'ung tao-tsang, 1977, chap.50, Nr.70-71, pp.32592-32593.
31. Ibid., chap. 50, Nr. 74, p. 32596.
32. For further examples and literature, see Prunner 1973, pp. 59-67.