himself urged practical measures to improve the people's livelihood, to strengthen military defenses against the barbarian menace, to expand irrigation projects in order to increase agricultural production, and also to promote the study of mathematics and astronomy. In his school Hu Yuan set up two study halls, one for the classics and the other for practical studies, the latter including government, military affairs, water control, and mathematics. Hu warmly praised the special achievement in water conservation of one of his former students. Later this educational model, combining the humanities and practical sciences, was cited in two of Zhu Xi's most influential educational works, his *Elementary Learning* (*Xiaoxue*) and *Reflections on Things at Hand* (*Jinsi lu*). Thus, though Neo-Confucianism was strongly oriented toward the humanities, and less so to the natural or pure sciences, it was by no means averse to specialized, technological studies.

Hu Yuan remained a teacher and did not engage in the politics of the court. At court it was men like Fan Zhongyan and Ouyang Xiu who led the reform movement. The latter, a noted poet and historian, proved himself a mighty champion of Confucian orthodoxy who carried on Han Yu's struggle against the twin evils of Buddhist escapism and literary dilettantism. He insisted that "literary activity just benefits oneself, while political activity can affect the situation around us." In him also the Song school found a vigorous defender of the scholar's right to organize politically for the advancement of common principles. To him, then, we turn for a statement of the need for reform put in its most fundamental terms.

INSTITUTIONAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND MORAL REFORM IN THE SONG

OUYANG XIU: ESSAY ON FUNDAMENTALS (*BENLUN*)

Like Han Yu, Ouyang Xiu (1007–1070) saw China's ills as attributable to the forsaking of Confucian teachings in favor of Buddhism, which had corrupted the whole body politic. Nevertheless, outright suppression of Buddhism, as Han Yu had urged, seemed to Ouyang a futile policy. Only a positive program of fundamental reform would remove the underlying causes for the popularity of Buddhism. This called for a complete renovation of Chinese society, a reform especially of basic institutions to make them conform to the ancient ideal.

This essay was written in the 1040s, during the first blush of Song Confucian reformism. It combined institutional reforms through strong state policies (Part 1) with educational and moral reforms (Part 2). Later, as Ouyang came into strenuous opposition to Wang Anshi's aggressive exercise of state power by the central government, he no longer gave such high priority to central military and fiscal measures and deleted Part 1, which had pressed for them, from the essay. This shift in his thinking corre-

sponds to a similar shift on the part of Neo-Confucians later, when they likewise backed away from strong centralist policies, giving priority instead to educational and moral reform, while focusing more on voluntarism and cooperation under elite leadership in the local community.

The affairs of the empire have their trunks and their branches. The one who governs it puts certain things first and certain things after. . . .

The three kings knew well how to proceed from trunk to branch, knew what to put first and what after, and in doing this they had system and regularity. Among those who have gained the empire after them, who has not wanted to bring peace and govern well? Why is it that the more laborious their concern, the more unsuccessful their government, and that, while trembling lest disorder or defeat should touch them, they go headlong into it? It is because they have not proceeded from trunk to branch, have not known what to put first and what after. Now among the tasks of the present day, which have become a multitude, those to be put first are five. Two of these are known to those in authority, but to three they have given no thought.

To assure expenditures for the empire, nothing comes before revenue. In significance for the safety or endangerment of the empire, nothing comes before soldiers. These are what those in authority know. But even given revenue in abundance, if one takes it without limit and spends it without measure, then those below will be more and more resistant and those above will be more and more wearied. Even given soldiers in force, if one does not know what to use them for, then the soldiers will grow arrogant and breed disaster.

Of all the means for sparing revenue and employing soldiers, none comes before institutions. Once institutions are provided, soldiers are employable and revenue suffices for expenditures. Of all the means for sharing in the preservation of [institutions], none comes before delegating to [the right] men. Thus one equalizes revenues and controls troops, sets up laws to regulate them, delegates the preservation of the laws to the worthy, and honors fame in order to give the worthy incentive [to accept employment]. These five, used in conjunction, are the constant task of anyone who has gained the empire; [these are] what to put first in the present age and what those in charge overlook. . . .

Why is it that though the populace grows ever more multitudinous, the produce of the earth grows ever more extensive, and public expenditure grows ever more zealous, the four barbarians do not submit, China is not honored, and the empire is insecure? It is because these five are not provided.

Allow me to speak of one or two of them. At present the farmer's cultivating may be called laborious. The merchant's taking of resources [profit] from mountain and pond may be called diligent. The emperor's ministers who levy taxes on trade and on the profits of merchants may be called thoroughgoing and precise without omission. Yet when we encounter a single flood or drought, . . . public and private [spheres] throughout the empire are in want. This is

[because even] in this age of no crises, the people lack provision for a single year, and the state lacks several years' accumulation. From this one knows that revenue is insufficient.

In former days the disorder of the Five Dynasties[2] (907–960) was extreme. In fifty-three years they changed ruling houses five times and rulers thirteen times, and those who lost their states and were killed were eight. . . . The empire was divided into thirteen or fourteen parts. [Enemies on] four sides surrounded it, even squeezing their way into China. There were also rebellious generals and strong ministers who carved off pieces and occupied them. . . . The situation of the empire became like a broken-down dwelling: fix the main beam, and the corner gives way; repair the rafters, and the ridgepole falls down. Though you prop it up and support it so that it barely survives, how can you also have the leisure to follow a model, compass your circles, square your angles, and make a systematic plan? Thus soldiers were uncontrolled, revenue was unspared, the nation was without laws and regulations; all was helter-skelter.

As of the present day, Song has been Song for eighty years. Outside, usurpation and disorder are pacified, and there is no state [our] equal. Inside, the local garrisons are pared away, and there are no powerful and rebellious ministers. The empire is one. All within the seas is at peace. [We have] not been a state a short time. The empire is not of small extent. . . . Now, having inherited the founding enterprise of the three sages [the first three Song emperors], having acquired the honored name of a lord of ten thousand chariots, and thus having an empire that contains all within the four seas in one household, all paying in for the one above alone to take, one cannot say one lacks wealth. The six-foot soldiers, wielding halberds and bearing armor, strong enough to draw a five-*dan* crossbow or bend a two-*dan* [regular] bow, number a million, for the one above alone to control and direct; one cannot say one lacks troops. Of officials inner and outer, those in active posts are several thousand. . . . With one [civil service] examination every three years, those without office who come forward are more than ten thousand men, those tested at the Board of Rites seven or eight thousand, for the one above alone to select from; one cannot say one lacks worthy men. It has been almost forty years that the people have not seen military conflict. To brandish the military and drive away the barbarian without, to cultivate law and regulation and promote virtuous transformation within, are for the one above alone to do. One cannot say one has no time. . . .

But revenue is insufficient for expenditures above, while there is already ruin below; the soldiers are inadequate to provoke awe without but dare to be arrogant within; the institutions and regulations are not such as could be a model for ten thousand generations but grow daily more numerous and com-

2. The period of division that followed the fall of the Tang dynasty.

plicated. All is helter-skelter, much as in the time of the Five Dynasties. It is greatly to be lamented. This is what is called occupying the seat from which it could be accomplished, at the time when it could be accomplished, and with the resources by which to accomplish it; who then would long shrink from doing it? [—RH]

Part 2

Particularly noteworthy in this section of Ouyang's essay is that his brand of Confucian fundamentalism puts such strong emphasis on the rites, reaffirming the importance originally attaching to them in the classical tradition but in this context responding especially to the challenge of Buddhism. Also to be noted is his reiteration in both Part 1 and Part 2 of the courageous prophetic role of the individual scholar in reversing the evil tide and restoring the rites. This heroic moral stance became a defining mark of the Neo-Confucian civil ideal and the self-image of the educated literocratic elite.

The cult of Buddhism has plagued China for more than a thousand years. In every age men with the vision to see through its falseness and the power to do something about it have all sought to drive it out. But though they drove it out, it reappeared in greater force. . . . But is the situation really hopeless, or is it simply that we have not used the proper methods?

When a doctor treats a disease, he tries to ascertain the origin of the sickness and heal the source of the infection. When sickness strikes a man, it takes advantage of the weak spot in his vitality to enter there. For this reason a good doctor does not attack the disease itself but rather seeks to strengthen the patient's vitality, for when vitality has been restored, then the sickness will disappear as a natural consequence. . . .

In the age of Yao, Shun, and the Three Dynasties, kingly rule was practiced, government and the teachings of rites and rightness flourished in the world. At that time, although Buddhism existed, it was unable to penetrate into China. But some two hundred years after the Three Dynasties had fallen into decay, when kingly rule ceased, and rites and rightness were neglected, Buddhism came to China. It is clear, then, that Buddhism took advantage of this time of decay and neglect to come and plague us. . . .

In ancient times the governments of Yao, Shun, and the Three Dynasties set up the well-field system. They made a registry of all subjects, calculated the population, and distributed land to all. Then all men who were capable of farming had land to farm. One-tenth of the produce was taken as tax, while other levies were differentiated in order to discourage indolence and cause all men to devote their full efforts to agriculture and not allow them time for less worthy occupations. . . .

When they were at rest from the work of the fields, they were instructed in rites. Thus for hunting they learned the ceremonies of the spring and autumn

hunts, for taking a mate the rites of marriage, for death the rites of funeral and sacrifice, and for banquets and gatherings the rites of the village archery contest. . . .

In this way the rules for supporting the living and bidding farewell to the dead were all made to accord with the desires of the people. They were brightened with ceremonial objects and beautifully ordered so that they were a delight to the people and easy to carry out. They were in harmony with the nature and feelings of the people and imparted a restraint that prevented men from going to excess. Still fearing that this might not be enough, the rulers set up schools for the people to teach and enlighten them, so that from the courts of the emperor down to the smallest hamlet there was no place without its school where keen and intelligent men from among the people were sent to study, to discuss with each other, and to lead and encourage the indolent. Ah, how complete was this system of government of the Three Dynasties! . . .

But when the Zhou declined and the Qin conquered the world, it discarded the methods of the Three Dynasties and the Way of the former kings was cut off. . . . The well-field system was the first to be abolished, and there arose the evils of encroachment and idle landlordism. After this the rites of the spring and autumn hunts, marriage and funeral ceremonials, sacrifice and archery contests, and all the ways by which the people had been instructed, one by one fell into disuse. . . . Then Buddhism, entering at this juncture, trumpeted abroad its grand, fantastic doctrines to lead them, and the people could do no other than follow and believe. . . .

What then can be done? I say there is nothing so effective in overcoming it as practicing what is fundamental. Long ago, in the period of the Warring States, the teachings of Yang Zhu and Mozi were the cause of great confusion. Mencius was grieved at this and devoted himself to preaching humanity and rightness, for when the doctrine of humanity and rightness prevails then the teachings of Yang Zhu and Mozi will be abandoned.[3] In Han times all the schools of philosophy flourished side by side. Dong Zhongshu was concerned at this and retired to devote himself to the practice of Confucianism, for he knew that when the Way of Confucius was made clear the other schools would cease.[4] This is the effect of practicing what is fundamental in order to overcome Buddhism.

These days a tall warrior clad in armor and bearing a spear may surpass in bravery a great army, yet when he sees the Buddha he bows low, and when he hears the doctrines of the Buddha he is sincerely awed and persuaded. Why? Because though he is indeed strong and full of vigor, in his heart he is confused and has nothing to cling to. But when a scholar who is small and frail and

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3. See ch. 6, *Mencius* 3B:9.
4. See ch. 10.

afraid to advance hears the doctrines of Buddhism his rightness is revealed at once in his countenance, and not only does he not bow and submit, but he longs to rush upon them and destroy them. Why? It is simply because he is enlightened in learning and burns with a belief in rites and rightness, and in his heart he possesses something that can conquer these doctrines. Thus rites and rightness are the fundamental things whereby Buddhism may be defeated. If a single scholar who understands rites and rightness can keep from submitting to these doctrines, then we have but to make the whole world understand rites and rightness and these doctrines will, as a natural consequence, be wiped out. . . .

In ancient times Xunzi held the theory that man's nature is basically evil and wrote an essay to prove it. I used to favor this idea, but now as I see how the men of my day follow Buddhism, I know that Xunzi's theory is gravely mistaken. Man's nature is basically good, and those who follow Buddhism, abandoning their families and discarding their wives or husbands, are actually going much against this basic nature. Buddhism is a corruption that eats into and destroys men, and yet when the people lead each other on to follow it, it is only because they think that Buddhism teaches the way to do good. Alas, if we could but truly awaken our people to see that it is through rites and rightness that they may do good, then would they not lead each other on to follow these?

[From *Ouyang Wenzhong gong ji* (*SBCK*) 17:1a–4b —RH, BW]

ON PARTIES

As a leading official under the emperors Renzong (r. 1023–1063) and Yingzong (r. 1064–1067), Ouyang Xiu attempted to recruit and bring into the government able men inspired by Confucian ideals and sympathetic to the reforms he envisioned. Such an attempt to rally the serious scholars of the land in support of a new political program necessarily involved forming a group much like a political party, committed to working in a government composed of like-minded individuals.

Chinese political traditions did not allow for such a development, however. Rulers had always looked with suspicion on any political alignment that might bring pressure on the throne or threaten its security. Any organized opposition was likely to be regarded as a "faction" or "clique," bent on serving its own interests rather than those of the state. One of the main objectives of the civil service examination system was to prevent "packing" of offices with representatives of any single group or faction through favoritism in the recruitment of officials.

Thus the political movements inspired by the Confucian revival, insofar as they were assertive and well organized, were likely to stir up contention and become involved in factional struggles. Against such attacks Ouyang Xiu, in a memorial of 1045, sought to justify the existence of groups dedicated to the best interests of the state and its people, and not to the selfish advantage of their own members.

Your servant is aware that from ancient times there have been discussions on the worth of parties. It is only to be hoped that a ruler will distinguish between those of gentlemen and those of inferior men. In general, gentlemen join with other gentlemen in parties because of common principles, while inferior men join with other inferior men for reasons of common profit. This is quite natural. But your servant would contend that, in fact, inferior men have no parties, and that it is only gentlemen who are capable of forming them. Why is this? Inferior men love profit and covet material wealth. When the time seems to offer mutual advantages, they will temporarily band together to form a party, which is, however, essentially false. But when they reach the stage where they are actually competing among themselves for advantage, or when the advantages they have sought fail to materialize and they drift apart, then they turn about and begin to attack each other, and even the fact that a man is a brother or a relative does not spare him. Therefore your servant maintains that such men have no real parties and that those which they form on a temporary basis are essentially false. But this is not true of gentlemen, who abide by the Way and rightness, who practice loyalty and good faith, and care only for honor and integrity. When they employ these qualities in their personal conduct they share a common principle and improve each other, and when they turn them to the use of the state, they unite in common ideals and mutual assistance and from beginning to end act as one. These are the parties of gentlemen. Thus if the ruler will but put aside the false parties of inferior men and make use of the true parties of gentlemen, then the state may be ordered.

[From *Ouyang Wenzhong gong ji* (*SBCK*) 17:6b–8a —dB]

THE CONFUCIAN PROGRAM OF REFORM

The first steps in the government itself to implement a broad program of reform were taken by the statesman and general Fan Zhongyan (989–1052), who was among those defended by Ouyang Xiu when he submitted his memorial on political parties. Fan was an earnest student of the classics, as well as a man of practical affairs, who became known as a staunch upholder of the Confucian Way and a vigorous opponent of Buddhism. When a young man he adopted for himself the maxim "To be first in worrying about the world's worries and last in enjoying its pleasures,"[5] which expresses his high ideal of public service as a dedicated Confucian. During the reign of Renzong, Fan tried as prime minister to implement a ten-point program including administrative reforms to eliminate entrenched bureaucrats, official favoritism, and nepotism; examina-

5. Amusement parks and ball fields in Japan have drawn on this celebrated motto by incorporating it in their names, such as "Later Enjoyment Park" (*Kōraku-en*).