

PREFACE

The year in which this book is published is a memorable year in regard to the subject of its study. As tradition will have it, we are now in the 2500th year after China's greatest sage was born. There will no doubt be many, also in the China of to-day, who will solemnly celebrate this fact in reverent remembrance, and a book on Confucius should also be a contribution to this celebration.

I should like to stress the fact, however, that this book is published in the year of our Lord 1949. In the first place, this fact suggests that reverence is tempered by a critical attitude which is imperative in all scholarly work; and, in the second place, it is a recognition of the fact that the book has been written by a person who is conscious of being a "Westerner".

After this has been said, I wish to express my great indebtedness above all to the many Chinese scholars whose works have guided me in my studies. It is especially the Ch'ing scholars Fan Chia-hsiang and Sun Chih-tsu whom I recognize as my masters. Without the help of their researches this book could not have been written.

Japanese and Western studies, too, have been an invaluable aid in the preparation of this work; the former because of the high degree of erudition reached by their age-long sinological tradition, and the latter because no other studies could so well have introduced me into the problems of approaching Chinese culture with a critical mind.

Looking back over my years of training and preparation, I remember with gratitude the many hours spent with my friends and colleagues of the Sinological Institute, Leyden, especially during the dark years of the second world war.

I am greatly indebted to the Board of Trustees of the Sinological Institute, Leyden, for letting me profit of the funds made available to them through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. This enabled me to study at various sinological centres in the United States during the years 1946 and 1947.

My thanks are furthermore due to Professor S. Elisséeff of Harvard University, for reading with me some of the most important Japanese studies on which my work has been built up; to Professor Yang Lien-shêng of Harvard University, for his valuable suggestions regarding the translation of Wang Su's biography; to Dr. K'ai-ming Ch'iu, Librarian of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, for his enthusiastic help in the matter of bibliographical information, and for his kindness in having two Chinese works micro-filmed for me at Harvard; to Professor W. Hung of Yenching University, Professor H. H. Dubs, now of Oxford University, Professor L. C. Goodrich of Columbia University, Dr. C. S. Gardner of Cambridge, Mass., and Professor F. W. Cleaves of Harvard University, for their kind interest in the preparation of this work, and for their valuable advice and information. All these have immensely contributed in making my year's stay in the United States so highly instructive.

Professor G. Haloun of Cambridge University has put me under a great obligation by drawing my attention to a Tun-huang MS fragment of the Chia yü, of which I obtained a photographic copy through the kind cooperation of Dr. L. Giles of the British Museum.

My friends, Dr. Tjan Tjoe Som and Mr. A. F. P. Hulsewé, of the Sinological Institute, Leyden, and Mr. P. van der Loon, now of Cambridge University, have helped me in many ways, and this work has been considerably improved by their many suggestions and corrections.

I am greatly comforted by the thought that my faulty English has passed the scrutiny of one so experienced as Mrs. J. J. L. Duyvendak, who with patient care has read through the whole of my MS. However, any mistakes which remain are my own.

I am also very grateful to Miss A. G. G. Izaks for her willingness to type out large portions of my MS.

Furthermore, I feel bound to express my admiration for the way in which Messrs. E. J. Brill have acquitted themselves of the difficult task of printing this volume in so short a time.

That the Netherlands' Bible Society has made it possible for me to publish the results of my studies fills me with gratitude and with the determination to prove myself worthy of its confidence in the years of service which lie ahead.

My wife has had the largest share in the preparation of this book. It leaves me wondering that a man gets so much undeserved care, encouragement, help and stimulation.

Leyden, November 30, 1949