

*T'oegye's Letter to Kobong*

*The paragraph excerpted here was an almost incidental part of a letter on other topics T'oegye wrote to Ki Taesŭng (Kobong) in 1559. In his emendation to Chŏng Chiun's Diagram of the Heavenly Mandate, T'oegye had said: "The Four Beginnings are the issuance of principle; the Seven Feelings are the issuance of material force." Hearing of Kobong's critical discussion of this, he proffers a modification, and with this began the written interchange that was to become the central landmark in Korean Neo-Confucian thought.*

- A1a** Also, I have heard from scholar friends something of your discussion of my thesis regarding the Four Beginnings and Seven Feelings.<sup>1</sup> I was already dissatisfied myself with the imprecision of the wording, and, having gotten word of your helpful critique, I am even more aware of its error. So I have revised it to read: "The issuance of the Four Beginnings is purely a matter of principle and therefore involves nothing but good; the issuance of the Seven Feelings includes material force and therefore involves both good and evil." I am not sure whether or not this way of putting it is acceptable.