SUMMARY

After Mencius, Xunzi is another eminent Confucianist at the end of the period of Warring States in Chinese history. Xunzi wrote more upon political philosophy than other areas of philosophy, he was a great politician. Those Confucianists who have put excessive emphasis on moral values have little to say about political philosophy, as they think a good government can be achieved by cultivating and improving individuals’ moral qualities. This, however, is not enough in political terms. The governing of a state is a complex matter, so it is necessary to maintain an effective political system.

As a Confucianist, Xunzi has his political thought based on Confucius's concept of “li” (礼), with the emphasis more on “li” and “fa” (法) than on moral principles. He is one of the few who have made the effort to really put the Confucian ethics into practice. His contribution to Confucianism, especially to the Confucian notion of statesmanship, lies in his demonstration of the practicability of ‘being a sage inside and a king outside’, as advocated by Confucianism.

The objective of this dissertation is to find out the structure and the concept of statesmanship in Xunzi, in an attempt to prove that Xunzi does make contributions to the development of the Confucianist idea of statesmanship.

This dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapters one and two discuss the historical background in relation to Xunzi’s political philosophy. Chapter three explores the theoretical foundation of the political thought expressed in Xunzi. Chapter four discusses the concept of “true king”. Chapter five focuses primarily on the policy for the governing of a country as
put forth in Xunzi. The last chapter examines the studies made by other scholars on Xunzi. In addition, the dissertation gives an assessment and evaluation of Xunzi's strengths and limits.