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Lao Tzu

道德经

Tao Te Ching



外语教学与研究出版社



(京)新登字 155 号

京权图字 01-97-1107

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

道德经：汉英对照/(春秋)老子著；(英)威利译. - 北京：外语教学与研究出版社, 1997. 12

(大师经典文库)

ISBN 7-5600-1372-4

I. 道… II. ①老… ②威… III. 老子-哲学-对照读物-汉、英
IV. H319.4:B

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(98)第 01427 号

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道德经

老子 著

Arthur Waley 译

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外语教学与研究出版社出版发行

(北京西三环北路 19 号)

北京外国语大学印刷厂印刷

新华书店总店北京发行所经销

开本 850×1168 1/32 6.5 印张

1998 年 7 月第 1 版 1998 年 7 月第 1 次印刷

印数：1—20000 册

* * *

ISBN 7-5600-1372-4

H·773

定价：7.90 元

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外语教学与研究出版社

1997年11月

道德经*

TAO TE CHING

*本书中文部分以河上公章句《老子道德经》为底本，主要参校王弼《老子注》，并参考了陈鼓应《老子注释及详介》相关章节。

老子道德经

PDG

第一章

道可道，非常道；名可名，非常名。
无名，天地之始；有名，万物之母。
故常无欲，以观其妙；常有欲，以观其徼。
此两者，同出而异名，同谓之玄。
玄之又玄，众妙之门。



Chapter 1

The Way that can be told of is not an Unvarying Way;
The names that can be named are not unvarying names.
It was from the Nameless that Heaven and Earth
sprang;

The named is but the mother that rears the ten
thousand creatures, each after its kind.

Truly, 'Only he that rids himself forever of desire can
see the Secret Essences';

He that has never rid himself of desire can see only the
Outcomes.

These two things issued from the same mould, but
nevertheless are different in name.

This 'same mould' we can but call the Mystery,
Or rather the 'Darker than any Mystery',
The Doorway whence issued all Secret Essences.



第二章

天下皆知美之为美，斯恶已；皆知善之为善，斯不善已。

故有无相生，难易相成，长短相形，高下相倾，音声相和，前后相随。

是以圣人处无为之事，行不言之教，万物作焉而不辞，生而不有，为而不恃，功成而弗居。夫唯弗居，是以不去。



Chapter 2

It is because every one under Heaven recognizes beauty as beauty, that the idea of ugliness exists.

And equally if every one recognized virtue as virtue, this would merely create fresh conceptions of wickedness.

For truly 'Being and Not-being grow out of one another;

Difficult and easy complete one another.

Long and short test one another;

High and low determine one another.

Pitch and mode give harmony to one another.

Front and back give sequence to one another'.

Therefore ¹ the Sage relies on actionless activity,

Carries on wordless teaching,

But the myriad creatures are worked upon by him; he does not disown them.

He rears them, but does not lay claim to them,

Controls them, but does not lean upon them,

Achieves his aim, but does not call attention ² to what he does;

And for the very reason that he does not call attention to what he does

He is not ejected from fruition of what he has done.

1 Because 'action' can only make one thing high at the expense of making something else low, etc.

2 literally, 'does not place (i.e. classify) himself as a victor'. cf. Mencius II, I; 2.

第三章

不尚贤，使民不争；不贵难得之货，使民不为盗；不见可欲，使民心不乱。

是以圣人之治，虚其心，实其腹；弱其志，强其骨。常使民无知无欲，使夫智者不敢为也。为无为，则无不治。



Chapter 3

If we stop looking for 'persons of superior morality' (*hsien*) to put in power, there will be no more jealousies among the people. If we cease to set store by products that are hard to get, there will be no more thieves. If the people never see such things as excite desire, their hearts will remain placid and undisturbed. Therefore the Sage rules

By emptying their hearts
And filling their bellies,
Weakening their intelligence¹
And toughening their sinews
Ever striving to make the people knowledgeless
and desireless.

Indeed he sees to it that if there be any who have knowledge, they dare not interfere. Yet through his actionless activity all things are duly regulated.

1 Particularly in the sense of 'having ideas of one's own'.



第四章

道冲而用之，或不盈。

渊兮，似万物之宗。（挫其锐，解其纷，和其光，同其尘。）湛兮，似或存。

吾不知谁之子，象帝之先。



Chapter 4

The Way is like an empty vessel
That yet may be drawn from
Without ever needing to be filled.
It is bottomless; the very progenitor of all things in
the world.
In it all sharpness is blunted,
All tangles untied,
All glare tempered,
All dust¹ smoothed.
It is like a deep pool that never dries.
Was it too the child of something else? We cannot
tell.
But as a substanceless image² it existed before the
Ancestor.³

- 1 Dust is the Taoist symbol for the noise and fuss of everyday life.
- 2 A *hsiang*, an image such as the mental images that float before us when we think.
- 3 The Ancestor in question is almost certainly the Yellow Ancestor who separated Earth from Heaven and so destroyed the Primal Unity, for which he is frequently censured in *Chuang Tzu*.

第五章

天地不仁，以万物为刍狗；圣人不仁，以百姓为刍狗。

天地之间，其犹橐籥乎！虚而不屈，动而愈出。
多言数穷，不如守中。



Chapter 5

Heaven and Earth are ruthless;
 To them the Ten Thousand Things are but as
 straw dogs.
 The Sage too is ruthless;
 To him the people are but as straw dogs.
 Yet¹ Heaven and Earth and all that lies between
 Is like a bellows
 In that it is empty, but gives a supply that never
 fails.
 Work it, and more comes out.
 Whereas the force of words² is soon spent.
 Far better is it to keep what is in the heart.³

1 Though ruthless nature is perpetually bounteous.

2 Laws and proclamations.

3 For *chung* as 'what is within the heart', see *Tso Chuan*, Yin Kung 3rd year and *Kuan Tzu*, 37, beginning. The comparison of Heaven and Earth to a bellows is also found in *Kuan Tzu* (P'ien 11, beginning).



第六章

谷神不死，是谓玄牝。
玄牝之门，是谓天地根。
绵绵若存，用之不勤。



Chapter 6

The Valley Spirit never dies.
It is named the Mysterious Female.
And the Doorway of the Mysterious Female
Is the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang.
It is there within us all the while;
Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry.¹

1 *Lieh Tzu* quotes these lines as coming from the *Book of the Yellow Ancestor*; but it does not follow that the *Tao Ching* is actually quoting them from this source. They may belong to the general stock of early Taoist rhymed teaching. For *ch'in* compare below, Chapter 52, line 9, and *Huai-nan Tzu* I, fol. 2.

第七章

天长地久。天地所以能长且久者，以其不自生，故能长生。

是以圣人后其身而身先，外其身而身存。非以其无私邪？故能成其私。



Chapter 7

Heaven is eternal, the Earth everlasting.
How come they to be so? Is it because they do not
foster their own lives;
That is why they live so long.
Therefore the Sage
Puts himself in the background; but is always to
the fore.
Remains outside; but is always there.
Is it not just because he does not strive for any
personal end
That all his personal ends are fulfilled?



第八章

上善若水，水善利万物而不争。处众人之所恶，故几于道。

居善地，心善渊，与善仁，言善信，正善治，事善能，动善时。

夫唯不争，故无尤。



Chapter 8

The highest good is like that of water. The goodness of water is that it benefits the ten thousand creatures; yet itself does not scramble, but is content with the places that all men disdain. It is this that makes water so near to the Way.

And if men think the ground the best place for building
a house upon,
If among thoughts they value those that are profound,
If in friendship they value gentleness,
In words, truth; in government, good order;
In deeds, effectiveness; in actions, timeliness –
In each case it is because they prefer what does not lead
to strife,¹
And therefore does not go amiss.

1 Even ordinary people realize the importance of the Taoist principle of 'water-like' behaviour, i.e. not striving to get on top or to the fore.

第九章

持而盈之，不如其已；揣而锐之，不可长保。
金玉满堂，莫之能守。富贵而骄，自遗其咎。
功遂身退，天之道也！

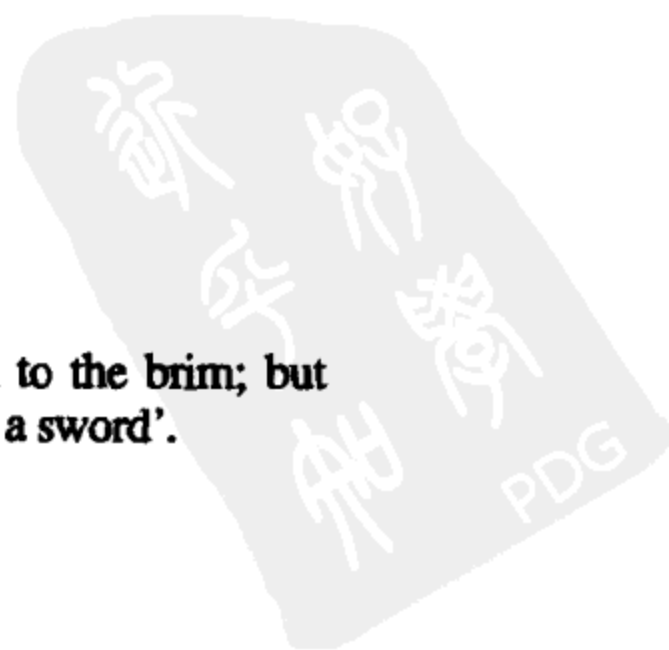


Chapter 9

Stretch a bow¹ to the very full,
And you will wish you had stopped in time;
Temper a sword-edge to its very sharpest,
And you will find it soon grows dull.
When bronze and jade fill your hall
It can no longer be guarded.
Wealth and place breed insolence
That brings ruin in its train.
When your work is done, then withdraw!
Such is Heaven's² Way.

1 The expression used can also apply to filling a vessel to the brim; but 'stretching a bow' makes a better parallel to 'sharpening a sword'.

2 as opposed to the Way of man.



第十章

载营魄抱一，能无离乎？

专气致柔，能婴儿乎？

涤除玄览，能无疵乎？

爱民治国，能无为乎？

天门开阖，能无雌乎？

明白四达，能无知乎？

(生之畜之，生而不有，为而不恃，长而不宰，是谓玄德。)



Chapter 10

Can you keep the unquiet physical-soul from straying,
hold fast to the Unity, and never quit it?

Can you, when concentrating your breath, make it soft
like that of a little child?

Can you wipe and cleanse your vision of the Mystery
till all is without blur?

Can you love the people and rule the land, yet remain
unknown?

Can you in opening and shutting the heavenly gates
play always the female part?

Can your mind penetrate every corner of the land, but
you yourself never interfere?

Rear them, then, feed them,

Rear them, but do not lay claim to them.

Control them, but never lean upon them;

Be chief among them, but do not manage them.

This is called the Mysterious Power.



第十一章

三十辐共一毂，当其无，有车之用。
埴埴以为器，当其无，有器之用。
凿户牖以为室，当其无，有室之用。
故有之以为利，无之以为用。



Chapter 11

We put thirty spokes together and call it a wheel;
But it is on the space where there is nothing that
the usefulness of the wheel depends.
We turn clay to make a vessel;
But it is on the space where there is nothing that
the usefulness of the vessel depends.
We pierce doors and windows to make a house;
And it is on these spaces where there is nothing
that the usefulness of the house depends.
Therefore just as we take advantage of what is, we
should recognise the usefulness of what is not.



第十二章

五色令人目盲，五音令人耳聋，五味令人口爽，
驰骋畋猎令人心发狂，难得之货令人行妨。

是以圣人为腹不为目，故去彼取此。



Chapter 12

The five colours confuse the eye,
The five sounds dull the ear,
The five tastes spoil the palate.
Excess of hunting and chasing
Makes minds go mad.
Products that are hard to get
Impede their owner's movements.
Therefore the Sage
Considers the belly not the eye.¹
Truly, 'he rejects that but takes this'.²

- 1 The belly in this instance means 'what is inside him', his own inner powers.
- 2 For this use of 'that' and 'this' (i.e. the world outside and the powers within oneself) cf. *Kuan Tzu*, 36, middle.

第十三章

宠辱若惊，贵大患若身。

何谓宠辱若惊？宠为下，得之若惊，失之若惊，是谓宠辱若惊。

何谓贵大患若身？吾所以有大患者，为吾有身；及吾无身，吾有何患？

故贵以身为天下，若可寄天下；爱以身为天下，若可托天下。



Chapter 13

'Favour and disgrace goad as it were to madness;¹ high rank hurts keenly as our bodies hurt.' What does it mean to say that favour and disgrace goad as it were to madness? It means that when a ruler's subjects² get it³ they turn distraught, when they lose it they turn distraught. That is what is meant by saying favour and disgrace goad as it were to madness. What does it mean to say that high rank hurts keenly as our bodies hurt? The only reason that we suffer hurt is that we have bodies; if we had no bodies, how could we suffer? Therefore we may accept the saying: 'He who in dealing with the empire regards his high rank as though it were his body is the best person to be entrusted with rule; he who in dealing with the empire loves his subjects as one should love one's body is the best person to whom one can commit the empire.'

1 see additional notes.

2 *Hsia*.

3 i.e. favour.



第十四章

视之不见名曰夷，听之不闻名曰希，搏之不得名曰微。此三者不可致诘，故混而为一。

其上不皦，其下不昧，绳绳不可名，复归于无物，是谓无状之状，无物之象，是谓惚恍。迎之不见其首，随之不见其后。

执古之道，以御今之有。能知古始，是谓道纪。



Chapter 14

Because the eye gazes but can catch no glimpse of it,
It is called elusive.

Because the ear listens but cannot hear it,¹

It is called the rarefied.

Because the hand feels for it but cannot find it,

It is called the infinitesimal.

These three because they cannot be further
scrutinized,

Blend into one.

Its rising brings no light;

Its sinking, no darkness.

Endless the series of things without name

On the way back to where there is nothing.

They are called shapeless shapes;

Forms without form;

Are called vague semblances.

Go towards them, and you can see no front;

Go after them and you see no rear.

Yet by seizing on the Way that was

You can ride² the things that are now.

For to know what once there was,³ in the
Beginning,

This is called the essence⁴ of the Way.

1 This is the traditional description of ghosts and spirits (cf. *Doctrine of the Mean*, paragraph 16) adopted as a description of the Way.

2 i.e. dominate.

3 Macrocosmically, in the Universe. Microcosmically, in oneself.

4 literally, main-thread.

第十五章

古之善为士者，微妙玄通，深不可识。夫唯不可识，故强为之容：

豫兮若冬涉川，犹兮若畏四邻，俨兮其若客，涣兮若冰之将释，敦兮其若朴，旷兮其若谷，浑兮其若浊，〔澹兮其若海，飏兮若无止。〕

孰能浊以静之徐清？孰能安以久动之徐生？保此道者不欲盈。夫唯不盈，故能弊而新成。



Chapter 15

Of old those that were the best officers of Court
Had inner natures subtle, abstruse, mysterious,
penetrating,

Too deep to be understood.

And because such men could not be understood
I can but tell of them as they appeared to the
world:

Circumspect they seemed, like one who in winter
crosses a stream,

Watchful, as one who must meet danger on every
side.

Ceremonious, as one who pays a visit;

Yet yielding, as ice when it begins to melt.

Blank as a piece of uncarved wood;

Yet receptive as a hollow in the hills.

Murky, as a troubled stream –

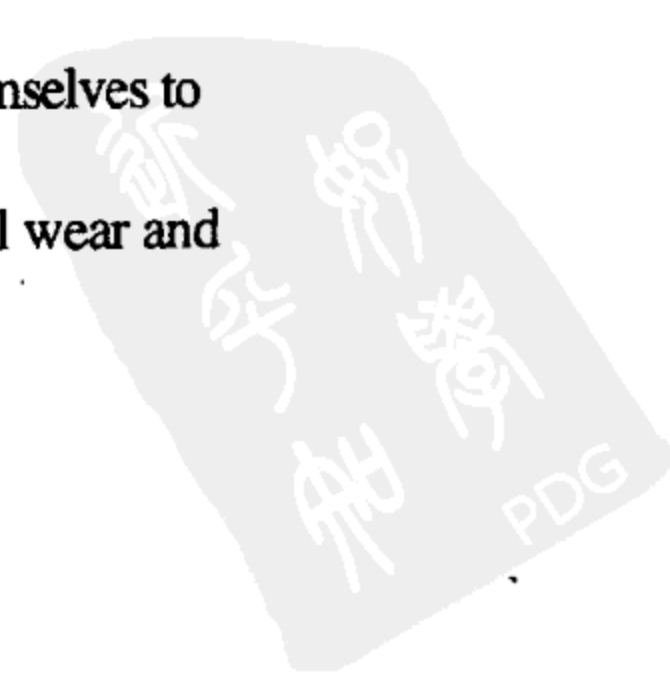
Which of you can assume such murkiness, to
become in the end still and clear?

Which of you can make yourself inert, to become
in the end full of life and stir?

Those who possess this Tao do not try to fill
themselves to the brim,

And because they do not try to fill themselves to
the brim

They are like a garment that endures all wear and
need never be renewed (?).



第十六章

致虚极，守静笃。万物并作，吾以观其复。

夫物芸芸，各复归其根。归根曰静，是谓复命；
复命曰常，知常曰明。不知常，妄作凶。知常容，容
乃公，公乃王，王乃天，天乃道，道乃久，没身不殆。



Chapter 16

Push far enough towards the Void,
Hold fast enough to Quietness,
And of the ten thousand things none but can be
worked on by you.

I have beheld them, whither they go back.
See, all things howsoever they flourish
Return to the root from which they grew.
This return to the root is called Quietness;
Quietness is called submission to Fate;
What has submitted to Fate has become part of the
always-so.

To know the always-so is to be Illumined;
Not to know it, means to go blindly to disaster.
He who knows the always-so has room in him for
everything;

He who has room in him for everything is without
prejudice.

To be without prejudice is to be kingly;
To be kingly is to be of heaven;
To be of heaven is to be in Tao.

Tao is forever and he that possesses it,
Though his body ceases, is not destroyed.



第十七章

太上，下知有之；其次，亲誉之；其次畏之，其次侮之。

信不足焉，有不信焉。

悠兮，其贵言。功成事遂，百姓皆谓：“我自然。”



Chapter 17

Of the highest¹ the people merely know that such
a one exists;

The next they draw near to and praise.

The next they shrink from, intimidated; but revile.

Truly, 'It is by not believing people that you turn
them into liars.'²

But from the Sage it is so hard at any price to get a
single word³

That when his task is accomplished, his work
done,

Throughout the country every one says 'It
happened of its own accord'.

1 i.e. most Taoist.

2 The same saying is quoted in Chapter 23. cf. Chapter 49: 'The truthful man I believe; but the liar I also believe, and so he (the liar) gets truthfulness.' Similarly it is 'lack' in the ruler which creates in the people every other fault and crime.

3 literally: 'How, reluctant, he raises the price of his words!'

第十八章

大道废，有仁义；智慧出，有大伪。
六亲不和，有教慈；国家昏乱，有忠臣。



Chapter 18

It was when the Great Way declined
 That human kindness and morality arose;
 It was when intelligence and knowledge
 appeared
 That the Great Artifice began.
 It was when the six near ones¹ were no
 longer at peace
 That there was talk of 'dutiful sons';²
 Nor till fatherland was dark with strife
 Did we hear of 'loyal slaves'.³

1 father, son, elder brother, younger brother, husband and wife.

2 read *tzu* 'son' not *tz'u* 'compassionate', as in the *Yung Lo Ta Tien* text.

3 as Ministers called themselves.



第十九章

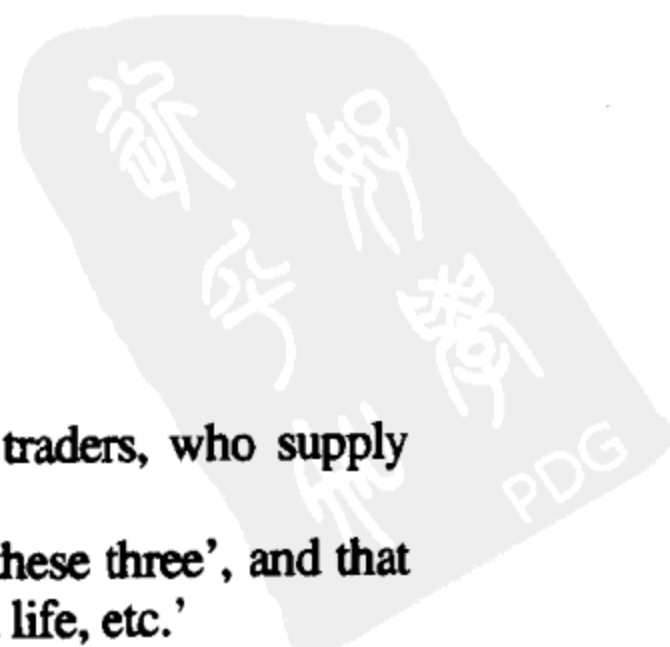
绝圣弃智，民利百倍；绝仁弃义，民复孝慈；绝巧弃利，盗贼无有。此三者以为文不足，故令有所属：见素抱朴，少私寡欲，〔绝学无忧。〕



Chapter 19

Banish wisdom, discard knowledge,
And the people will be benefited a hundredfold.
Banish human kindness, discard morality,
And the people will be dutiful and compassionate.
Banish skill, discard profit,¹
And thieves and robbers will disappear.
If when these three things are done² they find life
too plain and unadorned,
Then let them have accessories;
Give them Simplicity to look at, the Uncarved
Block to hold,
Give them selflessness and fewness of desires.

- 1 i.e. do away with skilful artisans and enterprising traders, who supply things likely to attract thieves.
- 2 I suspect that a negative has fallen out in front of 'these three', and that the original ran: 'If without these three . . . they find life, etc.'



第二十章

(绝学无忧。)

唯之与阿，相去几何？善之与恶，相去若何？人之所畏，不可不畏。

荒兮，其未央哉！

众人熙熙，如享太牢，如春登台。我独泊兮，其未兆；〔沌沌兮〕如婴儿之未孩，累累兮若无所归。

众人皆有余，而我独若遗。



Chapter 20

Banish learning,¹ and there will be no more
grieving.

Between *wai* and *o*

What after all is the difference?

Can it be compared to the difference between
good and bad?²

The saying 'what others avoid, I too must avoid'
How false and superficial it is!

All men, indeed, are wreathed in smiles,

As though feasting after the Great Sacrifice,

As though going up to the Spring Carnival.³

I alone am inert, like a child that has not yet given
sign;⁴

Like an infant that has not yet smiled.

I droop and drift, as though I belonged nowhere.

All men have enough and to spare;

I alone seem to have lost everything.

1 'Learning' means in particular learning the '3300 rules of etiquette'. *Wei* and *o* were the formal and informal words for 'yes', each appropriate to certain occasions. For 'learning' in the sense of knowing which words are taboo at which courts, see *Kuo Yü*, 15, fol. 3.

2 Good and bad in the Taoist sense, i.e. like and unlike the Way. This leads up to the description of the great gulf that separates the Taoist from other men. This description is in the form of a generalised *jung* (see Chapter 15, above) and cannot be taken as in any sense a self-portrait of the author. The sense of the first six lines is very doubtful.

3 see additional notes. I read *teng ch'un t'ai*.

4 A child 'gives sign' by stretching its hand towards some object. This is an important omen concerning its future.

我愚人之心也哉！

(沌沌兮) 俗人昭昭，我独昏昏；俗人察察，我独闷闷。(澹兮其若海，飏兮若无止。)

众人皆有以，而我独顽似鄙。我独异于人，而贵食母。

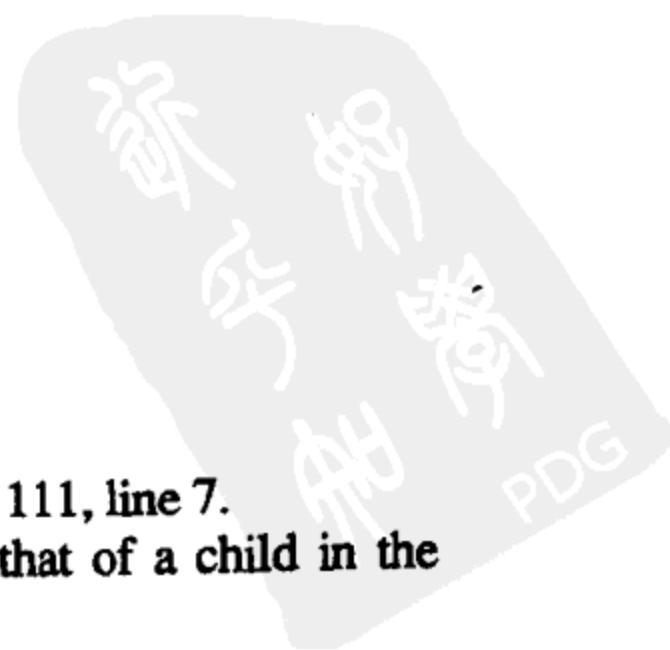


TAO TE CHING

Mine is indeed the mind of a very idiot,
 So dull am I.
 The world is full of people that shine;
 I alone am dark.
 They look lively and self assured;
 I alone, depressed.
 I seem unsettled⁵ as the ocean;
 Blown adrift, never brought to a stop.
 All men can be put to some use;
 I alone am intractable and boorish.
 But wherein I most am different from men
 Is that I prize no sustenance that comes not from
 the Mother's⁶ breast.

5 for this sense of *tan*, see *Lü Shih Ch'un Ch'iu*, *P'ien* 111, line 7.

6 i.e. the Way's. The image may equally well be that of a child in the womb, 'feeding on the mother'.



第二十一章

孔德之容，惟道是从。

道之为物，惟恍惟惚。惚兮恍兮，其中有象；恍兮惚兮，其中有物。窈兮冥兮，其中有精；其精甚真，其中有信。

自古及今，其名不去，以阅众甫。吾何以知众甫之状哉？以此。



Chapter 21

Such the scope of the All-pervading Power
 That it alone can act through the Way.
 For the Way is a thing impalpable,
 incommensurable.
 Incommensurable, impalpable.
 Yet latent in it are forms;¹
 Impalpable, incommensurable
 Yet within it are entities.
 Shadowy it is and dim;
 Yet within it there is a force,
 A force that though rarefied
 Is none the less efficacious.
 From the time of old till now
 Its charge² has not departed
 But cheers onward the many warriors.
 How do I know that the many warriors are so?
 Through this.³

1 thought-images, ideas.

2 see additional notes.

3 through inward knowledge, intuition.



第二十二章

曲则全，枉则直，洼则盈，敝则新，少则得，多则惑。
是以圣人抱一为天下式。不自见，故明；不自是，
故彰；不自伐，故有功；不自矜，故长。

夫唯不争，故天下莫能与之争。古之所谓“曲则全”者，岂虚言哉！诚全而归之。



Chapter 22

'To remain whole, be twisted!
To become straight, let yourself be bent.
To become full, be hollow.
Be tattered, that you may be renewed.
Those that have little, may get more,
Those that have much, are but perplexed.
Therefore the Sage
Clasps the Primal Unity,
Testing by it everything under heaven.
He does not show himself; therefore he is seen
everywhere.
He does not define himself, therefore he is distinct.
He does not boast of what he will do, therefore he
succeeds.
He is not proud of his work, and therefore it
endures.
He does not contend,
And for that very reason no one under heaven can
contend with him.
So then we see that the ancient saying "To remain
whole, be twisted!" was no idle word; for true
wholeness can only be achieved by return.¹

1 to the Way.

第二十三章

希言自然。

故飘风不终朝，骤雨不终日。孰为此者？天地。天地尚不能久，而况于人乎！

故从事于道者同于道，德者同于德，失者同于失。同于道者，道亦乐得之；同于德者，德亦乐得之；同于失者，失亦乐得之。

（信不足焉，有不信焉。）



Chapter 23

To be always talking is against nature. For the same reason a hurricane never lasts a whole morning, nor a rainstorm all day. Who is it that makes the wind and rain? It is Heaven-and-Earth.¹ And if even Heaven-and-Earth cannot blow or pour for long, how much less in his utterance should man? Truly, if one uses the Way² as one's instrument, the results will be like the Way; if one uses the 'power' as one's instrument, the results will be like the power. If one uses what is the reverse of the 'power', the results will be the reverse of the 'power'. For to those who have conformed themselves to the Way, the Way readily lends its power. To those who have conformed themselves to the power, the power readily lends more power. While to those who conform themselves to inefficacy, inefficacy readily lends its ineffectiveness. 'It is by not believing in people that you turn them into liars.'³

1 'Nature', as we should say.

2 The text is here somewhat confused; but the general meaning is clear.

3 see above, Chapter 17. If one uses disbelief as one's instrument of government, the result will be a nation of liars.

第二十四章

企者不立，跨者不行；自见者不明，自是者不彰；
自伐者无功，自矜者不长。

其于道也，曰余食赘行。物或恶之，故有道者不
处。



Chapter 24

'He who stands on tip-toe, does not stand firm;
He who takes the longest strides, does not walk the
fastest.'

He who does his own looking sees little,
He who defines himself is not therefore distinct.
He who boasts of what he will do succeeds in
nothing;

He who is proud of his work, achieves nothing
that endures.

Of these, from the standpoint of the Way, it is said:

'Pass round superfluous dishes to those that have
already had enough,

And no creature but will reject them in disgust.'

That is why he that possesses Tao does not linger.¹

1 over the scene of his successes, thus calling attention to them.
cf. Chapter 2.



第二十五章

有物混成，先天地生。寂兮寥兮，独立不改，周行而不殆，可以为天下母。吾不知其名，字之曰“道”，强为之名曰“大”。大曰逝，逝曰远，远曰反。

故道大，天大，地大，王亦大。域中有四大，而王居其一焉。

人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然。



Chapter 25

There was something formless yet complete,
 That existed before heaven and earth;
 Without sound, without substance,
 Dependent on nothing, unchanging,
 All pervading, unfailing.
 One may think of it as the mother of all things
 under heaven.

Its true name¹ we do not know;
 'Way' is the by-name that we give it.
 Were I forced to say to what class of things it
 belongs I should call it Great (*ta*).
 Now *ta* also means passing on,
 And passing on means going Far Away,
 And going far away means returning.²

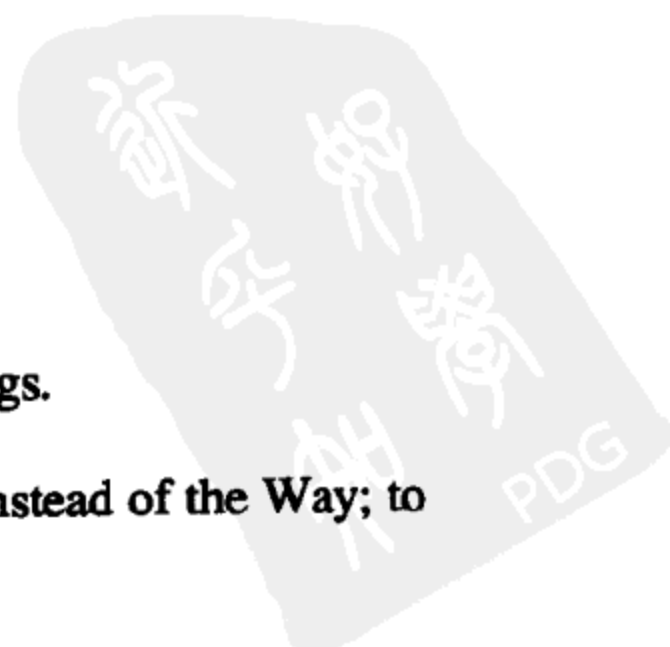
Thus just as Tao³ has 'this greatness' and as earth has it and as heaven has it, so may the ruler also have it. Thus 'within the realm there are four portions of greatness', and one belongs to the king. The ways of men are conditioned by those of earth. The ways of earth, by those of heaven. The ways of heaven by those of Tao, and the ways of Tao by the Self-so.⁴

1 i.e. we do not know to what class of things it belongs.

2 returning to 'what was there in the Beginning'.

3 Henceforward I shall use the Chinese word Tao instead of the Way; to do so avoids many inconveniences.

4 the 'unconditioned'; the 'what-is-so-of-itself'.



第二十六章

重为轻根，静为躁君。

是以圣人终日行，不离辘重。虽有荣观，燕处超然。奈何万乘之主，而以身轻天下？

轻则失本，躁则失君。



Chapter 26

As the heavy must be the foundation of the light,
 So quietness is lord and master of activity.
 Truly, 'A man of consequence'¹ though he travels
 all day
 Will not let himself be separated from his baggage-
 wagon,²
 However magnificent the view, he sits quiet and
 dispassionate'.
 How much less, then, must the lord of ten
 thousand chariots
 Allow himself to be lighter³ than ~~these~~ he rules!
 If he is light, the foundation is lost;
 If he is active, the lord and master⁴ is lost.

1 reading *Chün-tzu*, which has considerable ancient support; cf. Ma Hsiün's *Lao Tzu Fu Ku*.

2 literally, 'his covered heavy', 'heavy' being the Chinese name for carts as opposed to light travelling carriages. There is a play on the two senses of 'heavy'. This is a patrician proverb, a maxim of the *chün-tzu*, 'gentlemen'.

3 i.e. more easily moved.

4 i.e. quietness, the magical passivity that is also called *wu-wei*. There is a secondary meaning: 'His lordship is lost'.

第二十七章

善行无辙迹，善言无瑕谪，善数不用筹策，善闭无关键而不可开，善结无绳约而不可解。

是以圣人常善救人，故无弃人；常善救物，故无弃物。是谓袭明。

故善人者，不善人之师；不善人者，善人之资。不贵其师，不爱其资，虽智大迷，是谓要妙。



Chapter 27

Perfect activity leaves no track behind it;
 Perfect speech is like a jade-worker whose tool leaves
 no mark.
 The perfect reckoner needs no counting-slips;¹
 The perfect door has neither bolt nor bar,
 Yet cannot be opened.
 The perfect knot needs neither rope nor twine,
 Yet cannot be untied.
 Therefore the Sage
 Is all the time in the most perfect way helping men,
 He certainly does not turn his back on men;
 Is all the time in the most perfect way helping creatures,
 He certainly does not turn his back on creatures.
 This is called resorting to the Light.²
 Truly, 'the perfect man is the teacher of the imperfect;
 But the imperfect is the stock-in-trade³ of the perfect
 man'.
 He who does not respect his teacher,
 He who does not take care of his stock-in-trade,
 Much learning though he may possess, is far astray.
 This⁴ is the essential secret.

1 slips of bamboo thrown into little bowls; forerunner of the abacus.

2 'Light' has been defined above as self-knowledge. 'This' means the way in which the Sage saves the world, though apparently shunning it.

3 cf. *Chuang Tzu*, I, 4.

4 The power to influence mankind through Tao. The commonest charge brought against Taoists was that of being merely interested in self-perfection without regard for the welfare of the community as a whole. The present chapter is devoted to rebutting that charge.

第二十八章

知其雄，守其雌，为天下溪。为天下溪，常德不离，复归于婴儿。

知其白，守其黑，为天下式。为天下式，常德不忒，复归于无极。

知其荣，守其辱，为天下谷。为天下谷，常德乃足，复归于朴。

朴散则为器，圣人用之，则为官长，故大制不割。



Chapter 28

'He who knows the male, yet cleaves to what is female
Becomes like a ravine, receiving all things under
heaven,'¹

And being such a ravine

He knows all the time a power that he never calls upon
in vain.

This is returning to the state of infancy.

He who knows the white, yet cleaves to the black
Becomes the standard by which all things are tested;

And being such a standard

He has all the time a power that never errs,

He returns to the Limitless.

He who knows glory, yet cleaves to ignominy

Becomes like a valley that receives into it all things
under heaven,

And being such a valley

He has all the time a power that suffices;

He returns to the state of the Uncarved Block.

Now when a block is sawed up it is made into
implements;²

But when the Sage uses it, it becomes Chief of all
Ministers.

Truly, 'The greatest carver³ does the least cutting'.

1 adapted from a Lao Tan saying. See *Chuang Tzu*, XXXIII, 5.

2 play on the double sense of this word which also means 'a subordinate', 'an instrument of government'.

3 play on *chih* 'to cut', 'to carve', and *chih* 'to rule'. The secondary meaning is that the greatest ruler does the least chopping about.

第二十九章

将欲取天下而为之，吾见其不得已。天下神器，不可为也，〔不可执也。〕为者败之，热者失之。〔是以圣人无为故无败，无执故无失。〕

故物，或行或随，或歔或吹，或强或羸，或载或隳。是以圣人去甚，去奢，去泰。



Chapter 29

Those that would gain what is under heaven ¹ by tampering with it – I have seen that they do not succeed. For that which is under heaven is like a holy vessel, dangerous to tamper with.

Those that tamper with it, harm it.

Those that grab at it, lose it.

For among the creatures of the world some go in front,
some follow;

Some blow hot when others would be blowing cold.

Some are feeling vigorous just when others are worn
out.

Some are loading just when others would be tilting out.

Therefore the Sage 'discards the absolute, the all-
inclusive,² the extreme'.

1 i.e. empire.

2 *Shê* means (1) spread out (2) dissipated. It is the first meaning which is appropriate here. The author is however certainly adapting a maxim that was aimed against dissipation, luxury etc. cf. *Han Fei Tzu*, P'ien 8, beginning.

第三十章

以道佐人主者，不以兵强天下。其事好还。师之所处，荆棘生焉；大军之后，必有凶年。

善有果而已，不敢以取强。果而勿矜，果而勿伐，果而勿骄，果而不得已，果而勿强。

物壮则老，是谓不道，不道早已。



Chapter 30

He who by Tao purposes to help a ruler of men
 Will oppose all conquest by force of arms;
 For such things are wont to rebound.¹
 Where armies are, thorns and brambles grow.
 The raising of a great host
 Is followed by a year of dearth.²
 Therefore a good general effects his purpose and then stops;
 he does not take further advantage of his victory.
 Fulfils his purpose and does not glory in what he has done;
 Fulfils his purpose and does not boast of what he has done;
 Fulfils his purpose, but takes no pride in what he has done;
 Fulfils his purpose, but only as a step that could not be
 avoided.³
 Fulfils his purpose, but without violence;
 For what has a time of vigour also has a time of decay.
 This⁴ is against Tao,
 And what is against Tao will soon perish.

1 literally: 'To be reversed'. He who overcomes by violence will himself be overcome by violence.

2 This does not only refer to direct destruction, but also to the curse that war brings upon herds and crops by its intrinsic 'balefulness'.

3 For the construction compare *Chuang Tzu* XXIII, 6: 'To move only when movement cannot be avoided, that is the true power.' This principle of *pu tē i*, 'action as a last resort' was preached by the 4th century Quietist Shên Tao, and pervades *Chuang Tzu*.

4 violence.

第三十一章

夫佳兵者，不祥之器，物或恶之，故有道者不处。

君子居则贵左，用兵则贵右。兵者不祥之器，非君子之器，不得已而用之，恬淡为上。胜而不美，而美之者，是乐杀人。夫乐杀人者，则不可以得志于下矣。

吉事尚左，凶事尚右。偏将军居左，上将军居右。言以丧礼处之。杀人之众，以哀悲泣之。战胜，以丧礼处之。



Chapter 31

Fine¹ weapons are none the less ill-omened things. That is why, among people of good birth,² in peace the left-hand side³ is the place of honour, but in war this is reversed and the right-hand side is the place of honour. The Quietist,⁴ even when he conquers, does not regard weapons as lovely things. For to think them lovely means to delight in them, and to delight in them means to delight in the slaughter of men. And he who delights in the slaughter of men will never get what he looks for out of those that dwell under heaven. A host that has slain men is received with grief and mourning; he that has conquered in battle is⁵ received with rites of mourning.

- 1 *Chia* also means 'auspicious', e.g. *chia jih*, 'a lucky day'. I see no reason to tamper with the text.
- 2 of good birth, and consequently of good manners.
- 3 see additional notes.
- 4 for this expression cf. *Han Fei Tzu*, P'ien 51, near end and *Chuang Tzu* X, end.
- 5 Whether such a custom actually existed we do not know; but we learn from *Huai-nan Tzu* (15, end) that the general, having received his marching orders, cuts his nails (as was done by mourners before a funeral), dresses in mourning garb and leaves the city by a 'gate of ill-omen' constructed for the purpose.

第三十二章

道常无名，朴，虽小，天下莫能臣也。侯王若能守之，万物将自宾。

天地相合，以降甘露，民莫之令而自均。

始制有名，名亦既有，夫亦将知止，知止可以不殆。

譬道之在天下，犹川谷之于江海。



Chapter 32

Tao is eternal, but has no fame (name);
 The Uncarved Block,¹ though seemingly of small
 account,
 Is greater than anything that is under heaven.²
 If kings and barons would but possess themselves
 of it,
 The ten thousand creatures would flock to do
 them homage;
 Heaven-and-earth would conspire
 To send Sweet Dew,³
 Without law or compulsion, men would dwell in
 harmony.
 Once the block is carved,⁴ there will be names,⁵
 And so soon as there are names
 Know that it is time to stop.
 Only by knowing when it is time to stop can
 danger be avoided.
 To Tao⁶ all under heaven will come
 As streams and torrents flow into a great river or
 sea.

1 see Chapter 28.

2 literally: 'under Heaven no one dares regard it as an inferior.'

3 'Sweet Dew tastes like barley-sugar or honey; it falls only when a kingdom is at complete peace.' *Lun Hêng* XIX, 2. See also *Kuan Tzu*, P'ien 20, fol. 16 and *Lü Shih Ch'un Ch'iu* 115, end.

4 secondary meaning 'Once there is government'.

5 categories, distinctions. Things depending on contrast with something else; as opposed to Tao which 'is so of itself'.

6 i.e. to the possessor of Tao. The last two lines resume the thought of lines 4 and 5.

第三十三章

知人者智，自知者明。

胜人者有力，自胜者强。

知足者富，强行者有志。

不失其所者久，死而不亡者寿。

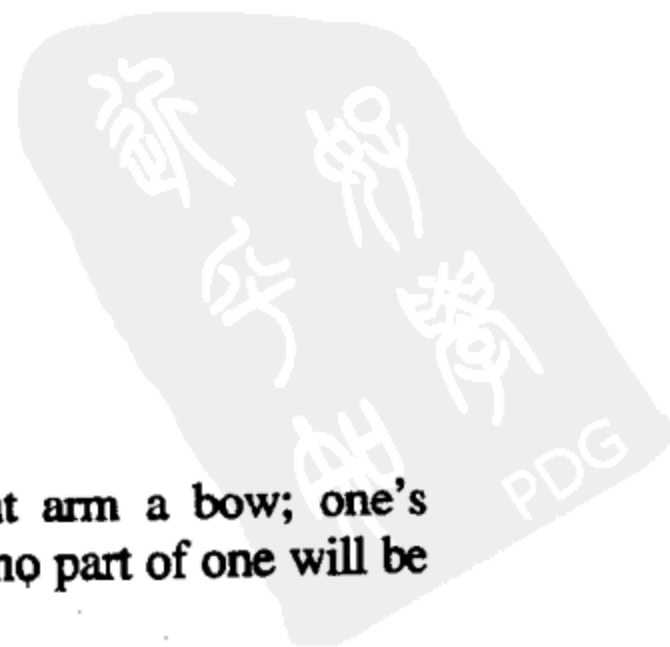
Chapter 33

To understand others is to have knowledge;
 To understand oneself is to be illumined.
 To conquer others needs strength;
 To conquer oneself is harder still.
 To be content with what one has is to be rich.
 He that works through¹ violence may get his way;
 But only what stays² in its place
 Can endure.
 When one dies one is not lost;³ there is no other
 longevity.

1 the word *hsing* implies movement as well as action.

2 as, for example, mountains.

3 One's left arm may become a cock; one's right arm a bow; one's buttocks wheels (*Chuang Tzu* VI, 6). In any case, no part of one will be lost.



第三十四章

大道泛兮，其可左右。万物恃之而生而不辞，功成不名有。衣养万物而不为言，(常无欲)可名于小；万物归焉而不为主，可名为大。

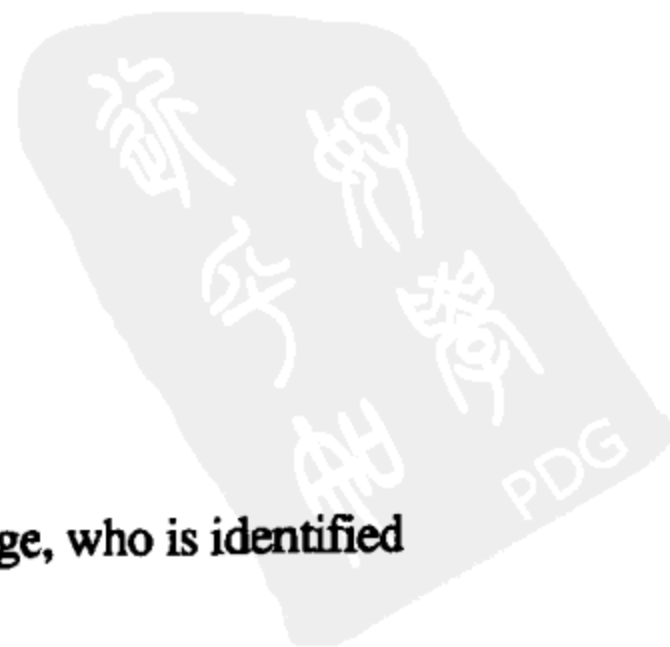
以其终不自为大，故能成其大。



Chapter 34

Great Tao is like a boat that drifts;
It can go this way; it can go that.
The ten thousand creatures owe their existence to
it and it does not disown them;
Yet having produced them, it does not take
possession of them.¹
Tao, though it covers the ten thousand things like
a garment,
Makes no claim to be master over them,
And asks for nothing from them.
Therefore it may be called the Lowly:
The ten thousand creatures obey it,
Though they know not that they have a master;
Therefore it is called the Great.
So too the Sage just because he never at any time
makes a show of greatness in fact achieves
greatness.

1 cf. Chapter 2 where similar words are used of the Sage, who is identified with Tao.



第三十五章

执大象，天下往。往而不害，安平太。

乐与饵，过客止。道之出口，淡乎其无味，视之不足见，听之不足闻，用之不足既。



Chapter 35

He who holding the Great Form goes about his
work in the empire
Can go about his work, yet do no harm.
All is peace, quietness and security.
Sound of music, smell of good dishes
Will make the passing stranger pause.
How different the words that Tao gives forth!
So thin, so flavourless!
If one looks for Tao, there is nothing solid to see;
If one listens for it, there is nothing loud enough to
hear.
Yet if one uses it, it is inexhaustible.



第三十六章

将欲翕之，必固张之；将欲弱之，必固强之；将欲废之，必固兴之；将欲夺之，必固与之。是谓微明，柔弱胜刚强。

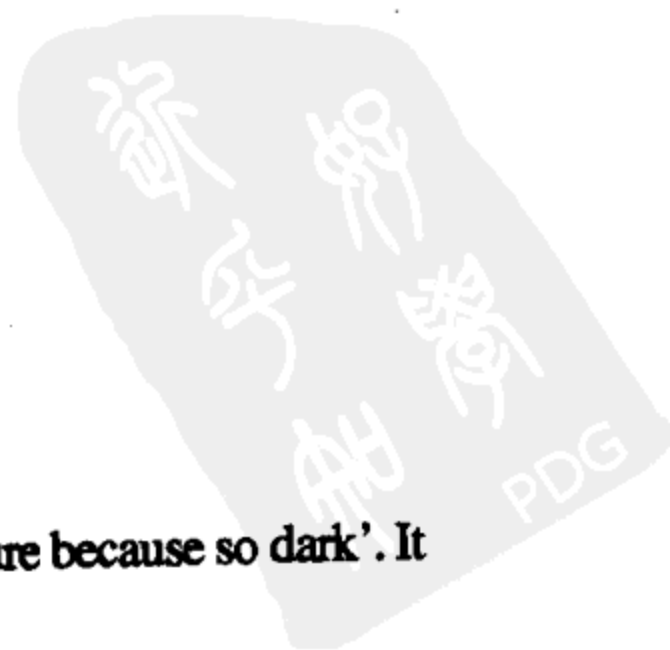
鱼不可脱于渊，国之利器不可以示人。



Chapter 36

What is in the end to be shrunk
 Must first be stretched.
 Whatever is to be weakened
 Must begin by being made strong.
 What is to be overthrown
 Must begin by being set up.
 He who would be a taker
 Must begin as a giver.
 This is called 'dimming' one's light.¹
 It is thus that the soft overcomes the hard
 And the weak, the strong.
 'It is best to leave the fish down in his pool;
 Best to leave the State's sharpest weapons
 where none can see them.'

1 *Wei* means (1) 'obscure because so small', (2) 'obscure because so dark'. It is etymologically connected with *mei* 'dark'.



第三十七章

道常无为而无不为。

侯王若能守，万物将自化。化而欲作，吾将镇之以无名之朴。无名之朴，夫亦将不欲。不欲以静，天下将自定。



Chapter 37

Tao never does;
Yet through it all things are done.
If the barons and kings would but possess
themselves of it,
The ten thousand creatures would at once be
transformed.
And if having been transformed they should desire
to act
We must restrain them by the blankness¹ of the
Unnamed.
The blankness of the Unnamed
Brings dispassion;
To be dispassionate is to be still,
And so,² of itself, the whole empire will be at rest.

1 literally, 'the uncarven-wood-quality'.

2 if the Sage is 'still'.



第三十八章

上德不德，是以有德；下德不失德，是以无德。

上德无为而无以为，下德为之而有以为，上仁为之而无以为，上义为之而有以为，上礼为之而莫之应，则攘臂而扔之。

故失道而后德，失德而后仁，失仁而后义，失义而后礼。



Chapter 38

The man of highest 'power' does not reveal himself as a
 possessor of 'power';
 Therefore he keeps his 'power'.
 The man of inferior 'power' cannot rid it of the appearance of
 'power';
 Therefore he is in truth without 'power'.
 The man of highest 'power' neither acts¹ nor is there any who
 so regards him;²
 The man of inferior 'power' both acts and is so regarded.³
 The man of highest humanity, though he acts, is not so
 regarded;
 Whereas a man of even the highest morality both acts and is so
 regarded.
 While even he who is best versed in ritual not merely acts, but
 if people fail to respond
 Then he will pull up his sleeves and advance upon them.
 That is why it is said:⁴ 'After Tao was lost, then came the
 "power";
 After the "power" was lost, then came human kindness.
 After human kindness was lost, then came morality.
 After morality was lost, then came ritual.
 Now ritual is the mere husk⁵ of loyalty and promise-keeping

- 1 Does not act separately and particularly but only applies the power in a general way.
- 2 Regards him as a possessor of power. Compare *Kuan Tzu*, P'ien 5, paragraph 2.
- 3 i.e. is regarded as a possessor of *tê*.
- 4 the same saying is quoted by *Chuang Tzu*, XXII, i.
- 5 or 'attenuated form'; but it balances *hua* ('flower', as opposed to fruit) and it is better to indicate the vegetable metaphor.

夫礼者，忠信之薄，而乱之首。前识者，道之华，而愚之始。

是以大丈夫处其厚，不居其薄；处其实，不居其华。故去彼取此。



And is indeed the first step towards brawling.
Foreknowledge⁶ may be the 'flower of doctrine',
But it is the beginning of folly.
Therefore the full-grown-man⁷ takes his stand upon the solid
substance and not upon the mere husk,
Upon the fruit and not upon the flower.
Truly, 'he rejects that and takes this'.

6 see additional notes.

7 'full-grown' in Tao.



第三十九章

昔之得一者：天得一以清，地得一以宁，神得一以灵，谷得一以盈，万物得一以生，侯王得一以为天下贞，其致之，一也。

天无以清将恐裂，地无以宁将恐发，神无以灵将恐歇，谷无以盈将恐竭，万物无以生将恐灭，侯王无以贵高将恐蹶。

故贵以贱为本，高必以下为基。



Chapter 39

As for the things that from of old have understood the
Whole –

The sky through such understanding remains limpid,

Earth remains steady,

The spirits keep their holiness,¹

The abyss is replenished,

The ten thousand creatures bear their kind,

Barons and princes direct their people.

It is the Whole that causes it.

Were it not so limpid, the sky would soon get torn.

Were it not for its steadiness, the earth would soon tip
over.

Were it not for their holiness, the spirits would soon
wither away.

Were it not for this replenishment, the abyss would
soon go dry.

Were it not that the ten thousand creatures can bear
their kind,

They would soon become extinct.

Were the barons and princes no longer directors of their
people and for that reason honoured and exalted,
they would soon be overthrown.

Truly 'the humble is the stem upon which the mighty
grows,

The low is the foundation upon which the high is laid.'

1 Their *ling*, which is to spirits (or objects and animals 'possessed' by spirits) what *té* is to man. It is cognate to words meaning life, name, command, etc.

是以侯王自谓孤寡不穀，此非以贱为本耶？非乎？故致数與无與，不欲琇琇如玉，珞珞如石。



That is why barons and princes refer to themselves as
'The Orphan', 'The Needy', 'The Ill-provided'. Is
this not indeed a case of might rooting itself upon
humility?

True indeed are the sayings:

'Enumerate the parts of a carriage, and you still have not explained
what a carriage is', and 'They² did not want themselves to tinkle like
jade-bells, while others resounded like stone-chimes.'



第四十章

反者道之动，弱者道之用。
天下万物生于有，有生于无。



Chapter 40

In Tao the only motion is returning;¹
The only useful quality, weakness.
For though all creatures under heaven are the
products of Being,
Being itself is the product of Not-being.

1 cf. Chapter 25, line 12.



第四十一章

上士闻道，勤而行之；中士闻道，若存若亡；下士闻道，大笑之。不笑不足以为道。故建言有之：

明道若昧，进道若退，夷道若类，上德若谷，大白若辱，广德若不足，建德若偷，质真若渝，大方无隅，大器晚成，大音希声，大象无形。

道隐无名。夫唯道，善贷且成。



Chapter 41

When the man of highest capacities hears Tao
 He does his best to put it into practice.
 When the man of middling capacity hears Tao
 He is in two minds about it.
 When the man of low capacity hears Tao
 He laughs loudly at it.
 If he did not laugh, it would not be worth the name of Tao.
 Therefore the proverb has it:
 'The way¹ out into the light often looks dark,
 The way that goes ahead often looks as if it went back.'
 The way that is least hilly often looks as if it went up
 and down,
 The 'power' that is really loftiest looks like an abyss,
 What is sheerest white looks blurred.
 The 'power' that is most sufficing looks inadequate,
 The 'power' that stands firmest looks flimsy.
 What is in its natural, pure state looks faded;
 The largest square has no corners,
 The greatest vessel takes the longest to finish,²
 Great music has the faintest³ notes,
 The Great Form⁴ is without shape.
 For Tao is hidden and nameless.
 Yet Tao alone supports⁵ all things and brings them to
 fulfilment.

1 Tao.

2 Metaphorical meaning, 'The greatest capacities develop latest'.

3 'most rarefied.' cf. Chapter 14.

4 cf. Chapter 35.

5 a commercial metaphor. Literally 'backs financially'.

第四十二章

道生一，一生二，二生三，三生万物。万物负阴而抱阳，冲气以为和。

人之所恶，唯孤寡不穀，而王公以为称。故物或损之而益，或益之而损。人之所教，我亦教之。强梁者不得其死，吾将为教父。



Chapter 42

Tao gave birth to the One; the One gave birth successively to two things, three things, up to ten thousand.¹ These ten thousand creatures cannot turn their backs to the shade without having the sun on their bellies,² and it is on this blending of the breaths³ that their harmony⁴ depends. To be orphaned, needy, ill-provided is what men most hate; yet princes and dukes style themselves so. Truly, 'things are often increased by seeking to diminish them and diminished by seeking to increase them.' The maxims that others use in their teaching I too will use in mine. Show me a man of violence that came to a good end, and I will take him for my teacher.

1 i.e. everything.

2 Which symbolises the fact that they are themselves a mixture of light and dark, hard and soft, water and fire, etc.

3 the warm 'breath' of the sun and the cold 'breath' of the shade. Hence 'breath' comes to mean a 'state of the atmosphere' in a wider sense.

4 or 'balance', as we should say.

第四十三章

天下之至柔，驰骋天下之至坚。无有人无间，吾是以知无为之有益。

不言之教，无为之益，天下希及之。



Chapter 43

What is of all things most yielding¹
Can overwhelm that which is of all things
most hard.²
Being substanceless it can enter even where
there is no space;
That is how I know the value of action that is
actionless.
But that there can be teaching without words,
Value in action that is actionless,
Few indeed can understand.

1 water.

2 rock.



第四十四章

名与身孰亲？身与货孰多？得与亡孰病？
是故甚爱必大费，多藏必厚亡。
知足不辱，知止不殆，可以长久。



Chapter 44

Fame or one's own self, which matters to one most?
 One's own self or things bought, which should count
 most?

In the getting or the losing, which is worse?¹
 Hence he who grudges expense pays dearest in the end;
 He who has hoarded most will suffer the heaviest loss.²
 Be content with what you have and are, and no one
 can despoil you;
 Who stops in time nothing can harm.
 He is forever safe and secure.

- 1 i.e. which is better, to get fame and wealth but injure oneself, or to lack fame and wealth and save oneself?
- 2 He drives people to such exasperation that they attack him and help themselves. For *ai* in the sense 'grudge' compare *I Chou Shu* 54, 'He who is stingy about rewards and gifts is called *ai*'. The primary meaning of *ai* is 'to want to keep to oneself'. Hence the commoner meaning 'to love', which would here be out of place.

第四十五章

大成若缺，其用大弊；大盈若冲，其用不穷。
大直若屈，大巧若拙，大辩若讷。
躁胜寒，静胜热，清静为天下正。



Chapter 45

What is most perfect seems to have something
missing;

Yet its use is unimpaired.¹

What is most full seems empty:

Yet its use will never fail.²

What is most straight seems crooked;

The greatest skill seems like clumsiness,

The greatest eloquence like stuttering.³

Movement overcomes cold;

But staying still overcomes heat.

So he⁴ by his limpid calm

Puts right everything under heaven.

1 metaphor of a pot or vessel; applied to Tao.

2 it can be drawn upon indefinitely.

3 cf. Confucius *Analects* IV, 24.

4 the Sage.



第四十六章

天下有道，却走马以粪；天下无道，戎马生于郊。
(罪莫大于可欲，) 祸莫大于不知足，咎莫大于欲得。故知足之足常足矣。



Chapter 46

When there is Tao in the empire
 The galloping¹ steeds are turned back to fertilize
 the ground by their droppings.
 When there is not Tao in the empire
 War horses will be reared even on the sacred
 mounds² below the city walls.
 No lure³ is greater than to possess what others
 want,
 No disaster greater than not to be content with
 what one has,
 No presage of evil greater than that men should be
 wanting to get more.
 Truly: 'He who has once known the contentment
 that comes simply through being content, will
 never again be otherwise than contented'.

- 1 i.e. carriage-horses, used not for war but for travelling. Every one will be contented where he is.
- 2 see additional notes. They are reared, of course, as a preparation for offensive war, i.e. for 'getting more'.
- 3 i.e. incitement to evil doers. See additional notes.

第四十七章

不出户，知天下；不窥牖，见天道。其出弥远，其知弥少。

是以圣人不行而知，不见而名，无为而成。

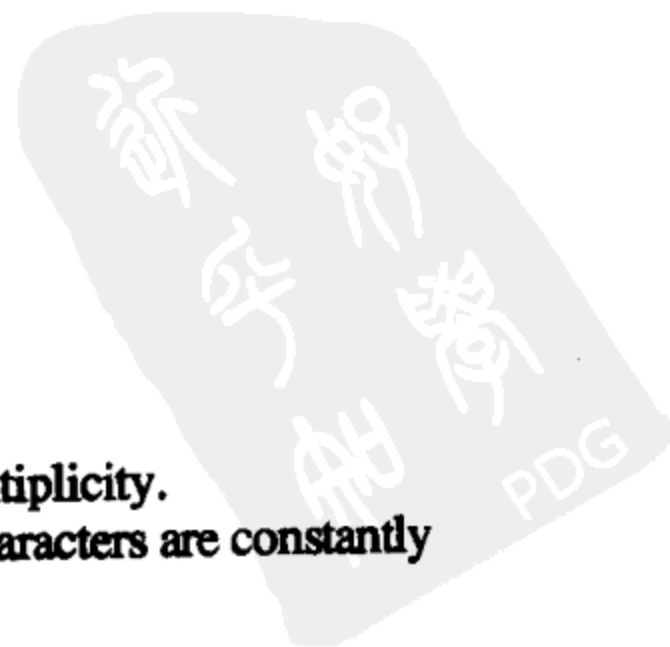


Chapter 47

Without leaving his door
He knows everything under heaven.
Without looking out of his window
He knows all the ways of heaven.
For the further one travels¹
The less one knows.
Therefore the Sage arrives without going,
Sees all² without looking,
Does nothing, yet achieves everything.

1 away from Tao; away from the Unity into the Multiplicity.

2 read *ming* 'illuminated', not *ming* 'name'. The two characters are constantly interchanged in old texts.



第四十八章

为学日益，为道日损。损之又损，以至于无为，无为而无不为。

取天下常以无事，及其有事，不足以取天下。



Chapter 48

Learning consists in adding to one's stock day
by day;

The practice of Tao consists in 'subtracting
day by day,

Subtracting and yet again subtracting

Till one has reached inactivity.

But by this very inactivity

Everything can be activated.'¹

Those who of old won the adherence of all
who live under heaven

All did so by not interfering.

Had they interfered,

They would never have won this adherence.

1 cf. *Chuang Tzu* XXII, 1.



第四十九章

圣人无常心，以百姓心为心。

善者，吾善之；不善者，吾亦善之；德善。

信者，吾信之；不信者，吾亦信之；德信。

圣人在天下，歛歛为天下浑其心，百姓皆注其耳目，圣人皆孩之。



Chapter 49

The Sage has no heart¹ of his own;
 He uses the heart of the people as his heart.
 Of the good man I² approve,
 But of the bad I also approve,
 And thus he gets goodness.
 The truthful man I believe, but the liar I also
 believe,
 And thus he gets truthfulness.³
 The Sage, in his dealings with the world,
 seems like one dazed with fright;
 For the world's sake he dulls his wits.
 The Hundred families all the time strain their
 eyes and ears,
 The Sage all the time sees and hears no more
 than an infant sees and hears.

1 ,makes no judgments of his own.

2 i.e. the Sage.

3 cf. Chapter 17 and 23.



第五十章

出生入死。生之徒十有三，死之徒十有三，人之生，动之死地亦十有三。夫何故？以其生生之厚。

盖闻善摄生者，陆行不遇兕虎，人军不被甲兵；兕无所投其角，虎无所措其爪，兵无所容其刃。夫何故？以其无死地。



Chapter 50

He who aims at life achieves death. If the 'companions of life'¹ are thirteen, so likewise are the 'companions of death' thirteen. How is it that the 'death-spots'² in man's life and activity are also thirteen? It is because men feed life too grossly. It is said that he who has a true hold on life, when he walks on land³ does not meet tigers or wild buffaloes; in battle he is not touched by weapons of war. Indeed, a buffalo that attacked him would find nothing for its horns to butt, a tiger would find nothing for its claws to tear, a weapon would find no place for its point to enter in.⁴ And why? Because such men have no 'death-spot' in them.

1 The four limbs and nine apertures that constitute the human apparatus.

2 a military expression.

3 One would expect this to balance a clause about what happens when he is on the water.

4 cf. *Chuang Tzu*, XVII, i, end.

第五十一章

道生之，德畜之，物形之，势成之。是以万物莫不尊道而贵德。

道之尊，德之贵，夫莫之命而常自然。

故道生之，德畜之；长之育之，亭之毒之，养之覆之。生而不有，为而不恃，长而不宰，是谓玄德。



Chapter 51

Tao gave them birth;
The 'power' of Tao reared them,
Shaped them according to their kinds,
Perfected them, giving to each its strength.¹

of the things that are? there is not one that



第五十二章

天下有始，以为天下母。既知其母，既知其母，复知其子。既知其子，复守其母，没身不殆。

塞其兑，闭其门，终身不勤。开其兑，济其事，终身不救。

见小曰明，守柔曰强。用其光，复归其明。无遗身殃，是谓习常。



Chapter 52

That which was the beginning of all things under
 heaven
 We may speak of as the 'mother' of all things.
 He who apprehends the mother ¹
 Thereby knows the sons.²
 And he who has known the sons
 Will hold all the tighter to the mother,
 And to the end of his days suffer no harm:
 'Block the passages, shut the doors,
 And till the end your strength shall not fail.
 Open up the passages, increase your doings,
 And till your last day no help shall come to you.'
 As good sight means seeing what is very small
 So strength means holding on to what is weak.³
 He who having used the outer-light ⁴ can return to
 the inner-light
 Is thereby preserved from all harm.
 This is called resorting to the always-so.

1 Tao, the One, the Whole.

2 the Many, the universe.

3 i.e. Tao.

4 this corresponds to 'knowing the sons'. *Ming* ('inner light') is self-knowledge.



第五十三章

使我介然有知，行于大道，唯施是畏。大道甚夷，而民好径。

朝甚除，田甚芜，仓甚虚；服文彩，带利剑，厌饮食，财货有余；是谓道夸，非道也哉！



Chapter 53

He who has the least scrap¹ of sense, once he has got started on the great highway has nothing to fear so long as he avoids turnings. For great highways are safe and easy.

But men love by-paths.²

So long as the Court is in order

They are content to let their fields run to weed

And their granaries stand empty.

They wear patterns and embroideries,

Carry sharp swords, glut themselves with drink and food, have more possessions than they can use.

These are the riotous ways of brigandage;³ they are not the Highway.

1 see additional notes.

2 All this is of course metaphorical. The highway is Tao; the bypaths, the Confucian virtues. 'Loving by-paths' implies also neglecting the essential and pursuing the secondary.

3 compare the riotous ways of the Robber Chê in *Chuang Tzu*.

第五十四章

善建者不拔，善抱者不脱，子孙以祭祀不辍。

修之于身，其德乃真；修之于家，其德乃余；修之于乡，其德乃长；修之于国，其德乃丰；修之于天下，其德乃普。

故以身观身，以家观家，以乡观乡，以国观国，以天下观天下，何以知天下之然哉？以此。



Chapter 54

What Tao¹ plants cannot be plucked,

What Tao clasps, cannot slip.

By its virtue alone can one generation after another carry on
the ancestral sacrifice.²

Apply it to yourself and by its power you will be freed from dross.

Apply it to your household and your household shall thereby
have abundance.

Apply it to the village, and the village will be made secure.

Apply it to the kingdom, and the kingdom shall thereby be
made to flourish.

Apply it to an empire, and the empire shall thereby be extended.

Therefore just as through³ oneself one may contemplate Oneself,

So through the household one may contemplate the Household,⁴

And through the village, one may contemplate the Village,

And through the kingdom, one may contemplate the Kingdom,

And through the empire, one may contemplate the Empire.

How do I know that the empire is so?

By this.⁵

1 literally 'what is well planted', i.e. planted by Tao.

2 The 'power' of the ancestor's Tao carries the family on.

3 By delving back through the successive stages of one's own consciousness one gets back to the Unity of the Whole which is one's Tao. cf. the *Maitri Upanishad* 'having seen the Self through oneself one becomes selfless'.

4 i.e. the Tao of the household. When one has had vision of the Tao (underlying essence) of a thing, one can control it. This catena (self-household-village, etc) is found in every branch of Chinese philosophy, applied in a variety of ways. It originated I think with the Yang Chu theory that to perfect a family one must perfect the individual members of it, to perfect a village one must perfect each several family, etc.

5 what is inside me.

第五十五章

含德之厚，比于赤子。蜂虿虺蛇不螫，猛兽不据，攫鸟不搏。骨弱筋柔而握固。未知牝牡之合而媵作，精之至也。终日号而不嘎，和之至也。

知和曰常，知常曰明，益生曰祥，心使气曰强。物壮则老，谓之不道，不道早已。



Chapter 55

The impunity of things fraught with the 'power'
 May be likened to that of an infant.
 Poisonous insects do not sting it,
 Nor fierce beasts seize it,
 Nor clawing birds maul it.
 Its bones are soft, its sinews weak: but its grip is strong.
 Not yet to have known the union of male and female,
 but to be completely formed,
 Means that the vital force is at its height;
 To be able to scream all day without getting hoarse
 Means that harmony¹ is at its perfection.
 To understand such harmony² is to understand the
 always-so.
 To understand the always-so is to be illumined.
 But to fill life to the brim is to invite omens.³
 If the heart makes calls upon the life-breath,⁴ rigidity
 follows.
 Whatever has a time of vigour also has a time of decay.
 Such⁵ things are against Tao,
 And whatever is against Tao is soon destroyed.

1 of hot and cold, soft and hard, etc.

2 cf. *Analects*, I, 12.

3 Here, as in the Short Preface to the *Book of History* and *Shih Chi*, Chapter III, fol. 6, *hsiang* means a bad omen. It originally meant a portent of any kind, whether good or bad. In current Chinese it is, of course, only used in the favourable sense.

4 The emotions were thought by the Chinese to make call upon and use up the original supply of breath which was allotted to a man at birth and constituted his life-spirit.

5 filling to the brim, calling upon the life-breath, having a time of 'vigour'. cf. Chapter 30.

第五十六章

知者不言，言者不知。

塞其兑，闭其门，挫其锐，解其纷，和其光，同其尘，是谓玄同。

故不可得而亲，不可得而疏；不可得而利，不可得而害；不可得而贵，不可得而贱。故为天下贵。



Chapter 56

Those who know do not speak;
 Those who speak do not know.
 Block the passages,
 Shut the doors,
 Let all sharpness be blunted,
 All tangles untied,
 All glare tempered.
 All dust smoothed.¹
 This is called the mysterious levelling.²
 He who has achieved it cannot either be drawn
 into friendship or repelled,
 Cannot be benefited, cannot be harmed,
 Cannot either be raised or humbled,
 And for that very reason is highest of all creatures
 under heaven.

1 cf. Chapter 4.

2 In which there is a general perception not effected through particular senses. See *Lieh Tzu* II, 3. 'Henceforward my eyes were one with my ears, my ears with my nose, my nose with my mouth . . .'

第五十七章

以正治国，以奇用兵，以无事取天下。吾何以知其然哉？以此：

天下多忌讳，而民弥贫；人多利器，国家滋昏；人多伎巧，奇物滋起；法令滋彰，盗贼多有。

故圣人云：“我无为，而民自化；我好静，而民自正；我无事，而民自富；我无欲，而民自朴。”



Chapter 57

'Kingdoms can only be governed if rules are kept;
Battles can only be won if rules are broken.'¹

But the adherence of all under heaven can only be won by
letting-alone.

How do I know that it is so? By this.²

The more prohibitions there are, the more ritual avoidances,

The poorer the people will be.

The more 'sharp weapons'³ there are,

The more benighted will the whole land grow.

The more cunning craftsmen there are,

The more pernicious contrivances⁴ will be invented.

The more laws are promulgated,

The more thieves and bandits there will be.

Therefore a sage has said:

So long as I 'do nothing' the people will of themselves be
transformed.

So long as I love quietude, the people will of themselves go
straight.

So long as I act only by inactivity the people will of
themselves become prosperous.

So long as I have no wants the people will of themselves
return to the 'state of the Uncarved Block'.

- 1 A military maxim, to the pattern of which the author proceeds to fit his Taoist formula. *Ch'i* means unexpected manoeuvres. *Chêng* 'rules kept' is not here used in its technical military sense of 'open attack'.
- 2 see Chapter 12. Through what I have found inside myself, 'in the belly'; through the light of my inner vision.
- 3 i.e. clever people.
4. cf. the story in *Chuang Tzu* (XII, ii) about the man in whom the idea of a simple labour-saving contrivance inspired feelings similar to those aroused in Wordsworth by the sight of a railway train.

第五十八章

其政闷闷，其民醇醇；其政察察，其民缺缺。

祸兮福之所倚，福兮祸之所伏。孰知其极？其无正。
正复为奇，善复为讪。人之迷，其日固久。

是以圣人方而不割，廉而不刿，直而不肆，光而不耀。

Chapter 58

When the ruler looks depressed¹ the people will
be happy and satisfied;

When the ruler looks lively and self-assured² the
people will be carping and discontented.

'It is upon bad fortune that good fortune leans,
upon good fortune that bad fortune rests.'³

But though few know it, there is a bourn where
there is neither right nor wrong;⁴

In a realm where every straight is doubled by a
crooked, and every good by an ill, surely
mankind has gone long enough astray?

Therefore the Sage

Squares without cutting,

Shapes the corners without lopping,

Straightens without stretching,

Gives forth light without shining.⁵

1 as the Taoist is described as doing in Chapter 20.

2 like the people of the world in Chapter 20.

3 Such are the maxims that pass as wisdom. The author is here manifestly satirizing a passage in the *Lü Shih Ch'un Ch'iu* (Pi'en 29, beginning): 'It is upon bad fortune that good fortune leans, upon good fortune that bad fortune rests. The Sage alone perceives this. How should ordinary men reach such a bourn (of wisdom)?' To the Taoist the real 'bourn of wisdom' lies far beyond the world of contraries and antinomies.

4 *Hsieh*, omitted by some versions of the Wang Pi text, should be retained.

5 Through Tao he reaches his *ends* without the use of *means*. To translate 'shines without dazzling' is to misunderstand the whole sequence. The Confucians as their 'means' use the virtues of 'squareness', i.e. rectitude and 'angularity' i.e. incorruptibility.

第五十九章

治人事天莫若嗇。

夫唯嗇，是谓早服，早服谓之重积德，重积德则无不克，无不克则莫知其极，莫知其极可以有国，有国之母可以长久。是谓深根固柢长生久视之道。

Chapter 59

You cannot rule men nor serve heaven unless you have
laid up a store;

This 'laying up a store' means quickly absorbing.

And 'quickly absorbing' means doubling one's garnered
'power'.

Double your garnered power and it acquires a strength
that nothing can overcome.

If there is nothing it cannot overcome, it knows no
bounds,

And only what knows no bounds

Is huge enough to keep a whole kingdom in its grasp.

But only he who having the kingdom goes to the
Mother

Can keep it long.

This¹ is called the art of making the roots strike deep by
fencing the trunk, of making life long by fixed
staring.

1 i.e. going to Tao the Mother.



第六十章

治大国，若烹小鲜。

以道莅天下，其鬼不神。非其鬼不神，其神不伤人。非其神不伤人，圣人亦不伤人。夫两不相伤，故德交归焉。



Chapter 60

Ruling a large kingdom is indeed like cooking small fish.¹ They who by Tao ruled all that is under heaven did not let an evil spirit within them display its powers. Nay, it was not only that the evil spirit did not display its powers, neither was the Sage's good spirit used to the hurt of other men. Nor was it only that his good spirit was not used to harm other men, the Sage himself was thus saved from harm. And so, each being saved from harm, their 'powers' could converge towards a common end.

1 the less one handles them the better.



第六十一章

大国者下流，天下之交，天下之牝。牝常以静胜牡，以静为下。

故大国以下小国，则取小国；小国以下大国，则取大国。故或下以取，或下而取。大国不过欲兼畜人，小国不过欲入事人。夫两者各得其所欲，大者宜为下。



Chapter 61

A large kingdom must be like the low ground towards which all streams flow down. It must be a point towards which all things under heaven converge. Its part must be that of the female in its dealings with all things under heaven. The female by quiescence conquers the male; by quiescence gets underneath.¹ If a large kingdom can in the same way succeed in getting underneath a small kingdom then it will win the adherence of the small kingdom; and it is because small kingdoms are by nature in this way underneath large kingdoms that they win the adherence of large kingdoms. The one must get underneath in order to do it; the other is underneath and therefore does it. What large countries really need is more inhabitants; and what small countries need is some place where their surplus inhabitants can go and get employment. Thus² each gets what it needs. That is why I say the large kingdom must 'get underneath'.

1 literally: 'becomes underneath', i.e. induces the male to mount her.

2 i.e. if the large kingdom 'gets underneath'. It is assumed that the population of the large kingdom will be relatively sparse; that of the small kingdom relatively dense.

第六十二章

道者，万物之奥，善人之宝，不善人之所保。

美言可以市尊，美行可以加人。人之不善，何弃之有？故立天子，置三公，虽有拱璧以先駟马，不如坐进此道。

古之所以贵此道者何？不曰求以求得，有罪以免邪？故为天下贵。



Chapter 62

Tao in the Universe is like the south-west corner¹ in the house.

It is the treasure of a good man,

The support of the bad.

There is a traffic in speakers of fine words;

Persons of grave demeanour are accepted as gifts;

Even the bad let slip no opportunity to acquire them.

Therefore² on the day of the Emperor's enthronement

Or at the installation of the three officers of State

Rather than send a team of four horses, preceded by a disc of jade,

Better were it, as can be done without moving from one's seat, to send this Tao.

For what did the ancients say of this Tao, how did they prize it? Did they not say of those that have it: 'Pursuing, they shall catch; pursued, they shall escape?' They thought it, indeed, most precious of all things under heaven.

- 1 Where family worship was carried on; the pivotal point round which the household centred.
- 2 i.e. if things other than presents in kind are not only accepted as gifts, but even purchased at high price.

第六十三章

为无为，事无事，味无味。

大小多少，（报怨以德。）图难于其易，为大于其细；天下难事必作于易，天下大事必作于细。是以圣人终不为大，故能成其大。

夫轻诺必寡信，多易必多难。是以圣人犹难之，故终无难矣。



Chapter 63

It acts without action, does without doing, finds
flavour in what is flavourless,¹

Can make the small great and the few many,

'Requites injuries with good deeds,

Deals with the hard while it is still easy,

With the great while it is still small.'²

In the governance of empire everything difficult
must be dealt with while it is still easy,

Everything great must be dealt with while it is still
small.

Therefore the Sage never has to deal with the
great; and so achieves greatness.

But again 'Light assent inspires little confidence

And "many easies" means many a hard.'

Therefore the Sage knows too how to make the
easy difficult, and by doing so avoid all
difficulties!

1 in Chapter 35 Tao itself is said to be 'flavourless'.

2 compare *Han Fei Tzu*, 38. The saying originally merely meant 'attend to troubles in time, before they get out of hand'.



第六十四章

其安易持，其未兆易谋。其脆易泮，其微易散。
为之于未有，治之于未乱。

合抱之木，生于毫末；九层之台，起于累土；千里之行，始于足下。

（为者败之，执者失之，是以圣人无为故无败，无执故无失。）

民之从事，常于几成而败之。慎终如始，则无败事。

是以圣人欲不欲，不贵难得之货；学不学，复众

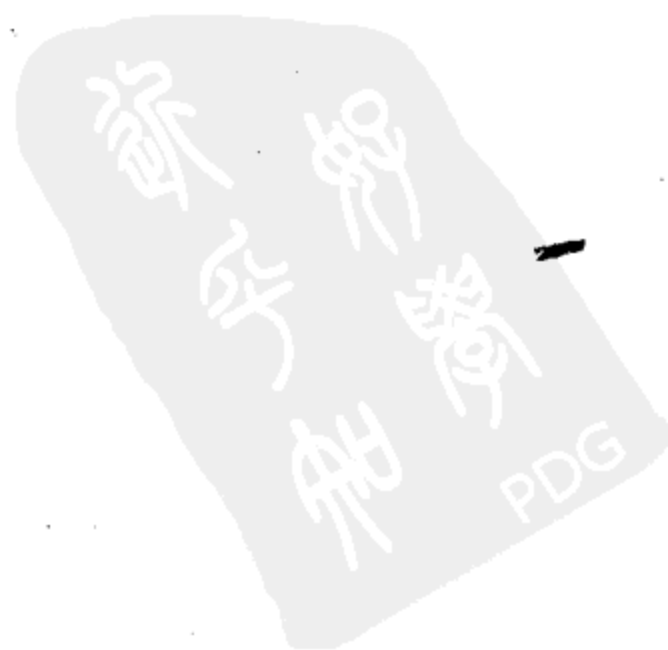


Chapter 64

'What stays still is easy to hold;
 Before there has been an omen it is easy to lay plans.
 What is tender is easily torn,¹
 What is minute is easy to scatter.'
 Deal with things in their state of not-yet-being,
 Put them in order before they have got into confusion.
 For 'the tree big as a man's embrace began as a tiny
 sprout,
 The tower nine storeys high began with a heap of earth,
 The journey of a thousand leagues began with what was
 under the feet'.
 He who acts, harms; he who grabs, lets slip.
 Therefore the Sage does not act, and so does not harm;
 Does not grab, and so does not let slip.
 Whereas the people of the world, at their tasks,
 Constantly spoil things when within an ace of
 completing them.
 'Heed the end no less than the beginning,
 And your work will not be spoiled.
 Therefore² the Sage wants only things that are
 unwanted,
 Sets no store by products difficult to get;

- 1 Reading *p'an* with the 'knife' determinative; or 'What is soft is easily melted', if we keep the 'water' determinative.
- 2 Because the 'end' (the world around us) is as important as the 'beginning' (the primal state, the One, the Whole). The Sage does not only work through Tao; he also shows the world the degree to which ordinary life can be moulded to the pattern of Tao.

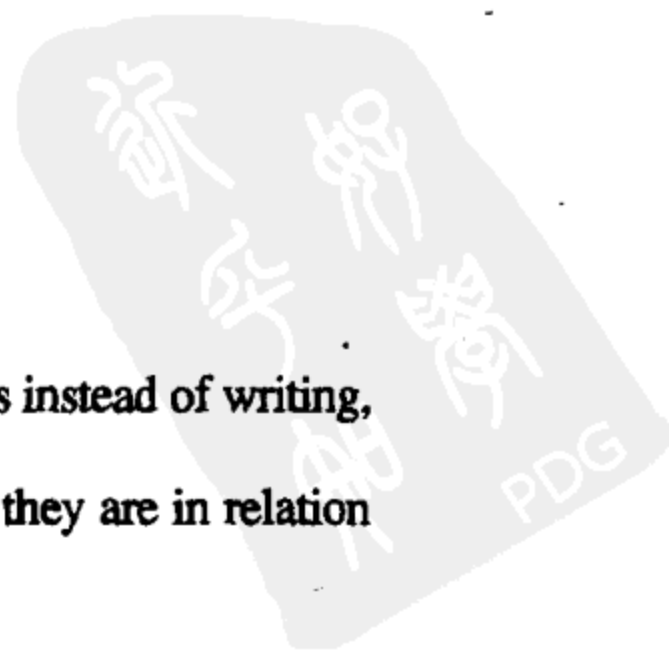
人之所过，以物万物之自然而不敢为。



And so teaches things untaught,
Turning all men back to the things they have left
behind,³
That the ten thousand creatures may be restored to their
Self-so⁴
This he does; but dare not act.

3 Such as walking instead of riding, using knotted ropes instead of writing, etc. See Chapter 80.

4 To what they are of themselves, as opposed to what they are in relation to other things.



第六十五章

古之善为道者，非以明民，将以愚之。

民之难治，以其智多。故以智治国，国之贼；不以智治国，国之福。

知此两者亦稽式。常知稽式，是谓玄德。玄德深矣，远矣，与物反矣，然后乃至大顺。



Chapter 65

In the days of old those who practised Tao with success did not, by means of it, enlighten the people, but on the contrary sought to make them ignorant.

The more knowledge people have, the harder they are to rule.

Those who seek to rule by giving knowledge
Are like bandits preying on the land.

Those who rule without giving knowledge
Bring a stock of good fortune to the land.

To have understood the difference between these
two things is to have a test and standard.

To be always able to apply this test and standard
Is called the mysterious 'power',

The mysterious 'power', so deep-penetrating,
So far-reaching,

That can follow things back –

All the way back to the Great Concordance.¹

1 cf. *Chuang Tzu*, XII, 8.



第六十六章

江海所以能为百谷王者，以其善下之，故能为百谷王。

是以圣人欲上民，必以言下之；欲先民，必以身后之。是以圣人处上而民不重，处前而民不害。是以天下乐推而不厌。以其不争，故天下莫能与之争。



Chapter 66

How did the great rivers and seas get their kingship
over the hundred lesser streams?

Through the merit of being lower than they; that
was how they got their kingship.

Therefore the Sage

In order to be above the people

Must speak as though he were lower than the
people.

In order to guide them

He must put himself behind them.

Only thus can the Sage be on top and the people
not be crushed by his weight.

Only thus can he guide, and the people not be led
into harm.

Indeed in this way everything under heaven will be glad to
be pushed by¹ him and will not find his guidance irksome.
This he does by not striving; and because he does not
strive, none can contend with him.

1 'from behind'.



第六十七章

天下皆谓我道大，似不肖。夫唯大，故似不肖。若肖，久矣其细也夫。

我有三宝，持而保之。一曰慈，二曰俭，三曰不敢为天下先。

慈故能勇，俭故能广，不敢为天下先，故能成器长。

今舍慈且勇，舍俭且广，舍后且先，死矣。

夫慈，以战则胜，以守则固。天将救之，以慈卫之。



Chapter 67

Every one under heaven says that our Way is greatly like folly. But it is just because it is great, that it seems like folly. As for things that do not seem like folly¹ – well, there can be no question about *their* smallness!

Here are my three treasures.² Guard and keep them! The first is pity; the second, frugality; the third, refusal to be 'foremost of all things under heaven'.

For only he that pities is truly able to be brave;
 Only he that is frugal is truly able to be profuse.
 Only he that refuses to be foremost of all things
 Is truly able to become chief of all Ministers.³

At present your bravery is not based on pity, nor your profusion on frugality, nor your vanguard on your rear,⁴ and this is death. But pity cannot fight without conquering or guard without saving. Heaven arms with pity those whom it would not see destroyed.⁵

1 literally: 'that seem normal'.

2 The three rules that formed the practical, political side of the author's teaching (1) abstention from aggressive war and capital punishment, (2) absolute simplicity of living, (3) refusal to assert active authority.

3 The phrase has exactly the same meaning as the *kuan-ch'ang* of Chapter 28.

4 i.e. your eminence on self-effacement. This is as perilous as to leave one's line of communication undefended.

5 Such is the sense that our author gives to the saying. It is probable, however that it is simply a couplet from some old ritual-song (like those in the last part of the *Book of Odes*) and means 'Heaven deigned to help them; in its pity it protected them'.

第六十八章

善为士者不武，善战者不怒，善胜敌者不与，善用人者为之下。是谓不争之德，是谓用人之力，是谓配天，古之极。



Chapter 68

The best charioteers do not rush ahead;
The best fighters do not make displays of wrath.¹
The greatest conqueror wins without joining issue;
The best user of men acts as though he were their
inferior.
This is called the power that comes of not
contending,
Is called the capacity to use men,
The secret of being mated to heaven, to what was
of old.

1 *Nu* is anger shown outwardly, as by glaring, grimacing or the like.



第六十九章

用兵有言：吾不敢为主而为客，不敢进寸而退尺。
是谓行无行，攘无臂，扔无敌，执无兵。
祸莫大于轻敌，轻敌几丧吾宝。
故抗兵相加，哀者胜矣。



Chapter 69

The strategists have the sayings: 'When you doubt your ability to meet the enemy's attack, take the offensive yourself', and 'If you doubt your ability to advance an inch, then retreat a foot'.

This latter is what we call to march without moving,
To roll the sleeve, but present no bare arm,
The hand that seems to hold, yet has no weapon in it,
A host that can confront, yet presents no battle-front.
Now the greatest of all calamities is to attack and find
no enemy.

I can have no enemy only at the price of losing my
treasure.

Therefore when armies are raised and issues joined it is
he who does not delight in war that wins.



第七十章

吾言甚易知，甚易行。天下莫能知，莫能行。
言有宗，事有君。夫唯无知，是以不我知。
知我者希，则我者贵。是以圣人被褐怀玉。



Chapter 70

My words are very easy to understand and very easy to put into practice. Yet no one under heaven understands them; no one puts them into practice. But my words have an ancestry, my deeds have a lord;¹ and it is precisely because men do not understand this that they are unable to understand me.

Few then understand me; but it is upon this very fact that my value depends. It is indeed in this sense² that 'the Sage wears hair-cloth on top, but carries jade underneath his dress'.

- 1 To have 'neither ancestors nor lord' was to be a wild man, a savage. This is a metaphorical way of saying that all the Sage did and said was related to a definite system of thought.
- 2 In this sense, and not in the sense that he flies in panic from the horrors of the world. Rich people, in times of tumult, dressed up as peasants and hid their jade treasures under their clothes. Metaphorically 'to wear haircloth' etc., came to mean 'to hide one's light under a bushel', 'to keep one's knowledge to oneself'.

第七十一章

知不知，上；不知知，病。

夫唯病病，是以不病。圣人不病，以其病病，是以不病。



Chapter 71

'To know when one does not know is best.
To think one knows when one does not know is a dire
disease.
Only he who recognizes this disease as a disease
Can cure himself of the disease.'
The Sage's way of curing disease
Also consists in making people recognize their diseases
as diseases and thus ceasing to be diseased.



第七十二章

民不畏威，则大威至！

无狎其所居，无厌其所生。夫唯不厌，是以不厌。
是以圣人自知不自见，自爱不自贵，故去彼取此。



Chapter 72

Never mind if the people are not intimidated by your authority. A Mightier Authority¹ will deal with them in the end. Do not narrow their dwellings² or harass their lives;³ and for the very reason that you do not harass them, they will cease to turn from⁴ you. Therefore the Sage knows himself⁵ but does not show himself. Knows his own value, but does not put himself on high. Truly, 'he rejects that but takes this'.⁶

1 heaven. cf. *I Chou Shu*, P'ien 67.

2 i.e. put them in prison.

3 literally: 'that whereby they live', their livelihoods. The author is thinking of heavy taxation and the like.

4 There is a pun on 'harass' and 'turn from'. The root means originally 'to press down from above'. Hence (1) to oppress (2) to have food crammed into one, to be 'fed up', to turn away in disgust.

5 i.e. knows his own power, but does not display it.

6 see Chapter 12.

第七十三章

勇于敢则杀，勇于不敢则活。此两者，或利或害。天之所恶，孰知其故？（是以圣人犹难之。）

天之道，不争而善胜，不言而善应，不召而自来，
绰然而善谋。天网恢恢，疏而不失。



Chapter 73

He whose braveness lies in daring, slays.
 He whose braveness lies in not daring,¹ gives life.
 Of these two, either may be profitable or unprofitable.
 But 'Heaven hates what it hates;
 None can know the reason why'.²
 Wherefore the Sage too disallows it.
 For it is the way of Heaven not to strive but none the
 less to conquer,
 Not to speak, but none the less to get an answer,
 Not to beckon; yet things come to it of themselves.
 Heaven is like one who says little, yet none the less has
 laid his plans.
 Heaven's net is wide;
 Coarse are the meshes, yet nothing slips through.

1 i.e. in not daring to slay.

2 Heaven hates the shedding of blood (i.e. it is 'against nature'), and those who ignore the will of Heaven are bound to be trapped at last in the meshes of Fate. This is the traditional pacifist argument of the Mo Tzu school, which our author is here able to utilize by identifying Heaven with Tao. For 'Heaven hates what it hates . . .' cf. *Lieh Tzu* VI, 5.

第七十四章

民不畏死，奈何以死惧之？若使民常畏死，而为奇者，吾得执而杀之，孰敢？

常有司杀者杀，夫代司杀者杀，是谓代大匠斫。夫代大匠斫者，希有不伤其手矣。



Chapter 74

The people are not frightened of death. What then is the use of trying to intimidate them with the death-penalty? And even supposing people were generally frightened of death and did not regard it as an everyday thing, which of us would dare to seize them and slay them?¹ There is the Lord of Slaughter² always ready for this task, and to do it in his stead is like thrusting oneself into the master-carpenter's place and doing his chipping for him. Now 'he who tries to do the master-carpenter's chipping for him is lucky if he does not cut his hand'.³

1 i.e. even supposing the death-penalty really had the effect of scaring people and keeping down crime, is it fair to ask anyone to undertake such a task?

2 i.e. heaven or its agents (pestilence, famine, lightning, earthquake, etc.).

3 adaptation of a proverb meaning 'let every man stick to his task'.

第七十五章

民之饥，以其上食税之多，是以饥。
民之难治，以其上之有为，是以难治。
民之轻死，以其上求生之厚，是以轻死。
夫唯无以生为者，是贤于贵生。



Chapter 75

The people starve because those above them eat too much tax-grain. That is the only reason why they starve. The people are difficult to keep in order because those above them interfere. That is the only reason why they are so difficult to keep in order. The people attach no importance to death, because those above them are too grossly absorbed in the pursuit of life. That is why they¹ attach no importance to death. And indeed, in that their hearts are so little set on life they are superior to those who set store by life.²

1 the people.

2 i.e. are superior to their rulers; so that there is no chance of the state being well governed.



第七十六章

人之生也柔弱，其死也坚强；万物草木之生也柔脆，其死也枯槁。

故坚强者死之徒，柔弱者生之徒。

是以兵强则不胜，木强则折；强大处下，柔弱处上。



Chapter 76

When he is born, man is soft and weak; in death he becomes stiff and hard. The ten thousand creatures and all plants and trees while they are alive are supple and soft, but when they are dead they become brittle and dry. Truly, what is stiff and hard is a 'companion of death'; what is soft and weak is a 'companion of life.'¹ Therefore 'the weapon that is too hard² will be broken, the tree that has the hardest wood will be cut down'. Truly, the hard and mighty are cast down; the soft and weak set on high.

1 cf. Chapter 50.

2 The proverb exists in several forms and the text has been tampered with, so that the exact reading is uncertain. But the general sense is quite clear. cf. *Lieh Tzu* II, 16.

第七十七章

天之道，其犹张弓与？高者抑之，下者举之；有余者损之，不足者补之。

天之道，损有余而补不足。人之道则不然，损不足以奉有余。

孰能有余以奉天下，唯有道者。

是以圣人为而不恃，功成而不处，其不欲见贤。



Chapter 77

Heaven's way is like the bending of a bow.¹ When a bow is bent the top comes down and the bottom-end comes up. So too does Heaven take away from those who have too much, and give to those that have not enough. But if it is Heaven's way to take from those who have too much and give to those who have not enough, this is far from being man's way. He takes away from those that have not enough in order to make offering to those who already have too much. One there is and one only, so rich that he can afford to make offerings to all under heaven. Who is this? It is the possessor of Tao. If, then, the Sage 'though he controls does not lean, and when he has achieved his aim does not linger',² it is because he does not wish to reveal himself as better than others.

- 1 Not in the act of stringing it but in the act of shooting an arrow from it.
- 2 over the scene of his triumph. cf. Chapter 2. If he leaned the people would know who it was that was controlling them; if he lingered they would recognise who it was that had done the work. They would regard him as 'better', 'superior'; and to allow oneself to be so regarded is to sin against 'Heaven's way' and so lose one's power.

第七十八章

天下莫柔弱于水，而攻坚强者莫之能胜，以其无以易之。

弱之胜强，柔之胜刚，天下莫不知，莫能行。

是以圣人云：“受国之垢，是谓社稷主；爱国不祥，是谓天下王。”正言若反。



Chapter 78

Nothing under heaven is softer or more yielding than water;¹ but when it attacks things hard and resistant there is not one of them that can prevail. For they can find no way of altering² it. That the yielding conquers the resistant and the soft conquers the hard is a fact known by all men, yet utilised by none. Yet it is in reference to this that the Sage³ said 'Only he who has accepted the dirt of the country can be lord of its soil-shrines;⁴ only he who takes upon himself the evils of the country can become a king among those that dwell under heaven.' Straight words seem crooked.⁵

1 cf. Chapter 12; also 43.

2 i.e. damaging.

3 Lao Tan. cf. *Chuang Tzu*, XXXIII, 5.

4 Reference to a custom similar to the 'seizin' of medieval Europe, whereby a new tenant took a clod of earth in his hand to symbolize possession of the soil. The Chinese expression *han hou*, generally used in this connection, suggests that the clod was originally held by the new feudal lord or tenant between his teeth – a sort of symbolic eating. Thus he absorbed the 'virtue' of the soil.

5 seem, as we should say, to be paradoxes.

第七十九章

和大怨，必有余怨。〔报怨以德，〕安可以为善。
是以圣人执左契，而不责于人。有德司契，无德
司彻。

天道无亲，常与善人。

Chapter 79

To allay the main discontent, but only in a manner that will certainly produce further discontents can hardly be called successful. Therefore the Sage behaves like the holder of the left-hand tally, who stays where he is and does not go round making claims on people. For he who has the 'power' of Tao is the Grand Almoner; he who has not the 'power' is the Grand Perquisitor. 'It is Heaven's way, without distinction of persons, to keep the good perpetually supplied.'¹

¹ see additional notes.



第八十章

小国寡民。使有什伯之器而不用，使民重死而不远徙。虽有舟舆，无所乘之；虽有甲兵，无所陈之。使民复结绳而用之。

甘其食，美其服，安其居，乐其俗。邻国相望，鸡犬之声相闻，民至老死，不相往来。



Chapter 80

Given a small country with few inhabitants,¹ he could bring it about that though there should be among the people contrivances requiring ten times, a hundred times less labour,² they would not use them. He could bring it about that the people would be ready to lay down their lives and lay them down again³ in defence of their homes, rather than emigrate. There might still be boats and carriages, but no one would go in them; there might still be weapons of war but no one would drill with them. He could bring it about that 'the people should have no use for any form of writing save knotted ropes,⁴ should be contented with their food, pleased with their clothing, satisfied with their homes, should take pleasure in their rustic tasks. The next place might be so near at hand that one could hear the cocks crowing in it, the dogs barking; but the people would grow old and die without ever having been there.'⁵

- 1 i.e. no need for a large country and many inhabitants which was what the princes of the world pined for.
- 2 cf. *Shang Tzu* I, 1, and *Chan Kuo Ts'ê* VI, 26, where the principle is laid down that new mechanical contrivances may be accepted if they are ten times more efficient than the old. For the Taoist objection to mechanical contrivances see *Chuang Tzu* XII, 11, already quoted.
- 3 For *ch'ung-ssu* in the sense of 'die twice over' compare *Lü Shih Ch'un Ch'iu*, 131, end: 'Every one has to die once, but it may be truly said that Ch'ing Fêng died twice over.'
- 4 One knots ropes as an aid to one's own memory (compare our 'tying a knot in one's handkerchief'); whereas one writes contracts down in order to make other people fulfil them. That I think is why 'knotting' belongs to the Golden Age.
- 5 The passage in inverted commas occurs (with trifling differences) in *Chuang Tzu* (X, 3) as a description of life under the rule of the legendary agricultural Sage Shên-nung. The whole chapter can be understood in the past, present or future tense, as the reader desires.

第八十一章

信言不美，美言不信。

善者不辩，辩者不善。

知者不博，博者不知。

圣人不积，既以为人，己愈有；既以与人，己愈多。天之道，利而不害，圣人之道，为而不争。

Chapter 81

True words are not fine-sounding;
 Fine-sounding words are not true.
 The good man does not prove by argument;
 And he who proves by argument¹ is not good.
 True wisdom is different from much learning;
 Much learning means little wisdom.
 The Sage has no need to hoard;
 When his own last scrap has been used up on
 behalf of others,
 Lo, he has more than before!
 When his own last scrap has been used up in
 giving to others,
 Lo, he has more than before!
 When his own last scrap has been used up in
 giving to others,
 Lo, his stock is even greater than before!²
 For Heaven's way is to sharpen without cutting,³
 And the Sage's way is to act without striving.

1 i.e. the 'sophist'.

2 adaptation of a saying that occurs in several forms cf. *Chuang Tzu XXI*, end.

3 to achieve the end without using the material means.

