# Sources of Chinese Tradition

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by Confucius with the utmost gravity. For they were the outward embodiment of the wisdom and virtue of their creators, the expression of reverence and perfect hierarchical order in society. And by the careful observance of these rites, the thoughtful contemplation of this music and its meaning, one could recreate in oneself the wisdom and virtue of the ancients and discipline oneself to the perfect order which they had intended. All the ills of his day Confucius attributed to the fact that the leaders of society had neglected the old rites, were performing them incorrectly, or usurping rites and ceremonies to which they were not entitled. For as a correct observance of the rites was a sign of perfect social order and the source of all spiritual enlightenment, so their neglect and abuse must be no more than the reflection of a deeper moral chaos and the beginning of spiritual darkness. To abuse the forms of the rites was to abuse the reality, the moral order which they represented. It was this abuse of the rites and titles of the social order, and the inner spiritual disorder which it represented, that Confucius deplored. Hence his call for a "rectification of names," that men might be in reality what they claimed to be in title, and his insistence upon a careful and reverent attention to the spirit and letter of the rites.

This emphasis upon ritual—an insistence upon it sometimes even when its original meaning was lost—must strike us as excessively conservative and formalistic, as indeed Confucianism in its later days often became. Yet implicit in this view was an idealization of the past that set a high standard for the present, and provided more of an impetus to reform, than to maintain, the status quo. Confucius' own life is sufficient evidence of his reformist spirit. He sought to conserve or restore what was good, while changing what was bad. Thus more fundamental to him than either conservatism or reformism in itself was a clear sense of moral values, expressed in his warm humanity, optimism, humility, and good sense. Confucius lived in a feudal society and conceived of society in terms of the feudal hierarchy. The common people were to be led, cared for, cherished, even taught, by the rulers; but their position at the base of the social hierarchy should not be modified, indeed, could not be without upsetting the whole vertical order.

Confucius' teachings were for the *chün-tzu,* the gentleman, the potential or actual ruler of society who alone possessed the vision to see beyond personal profit and material interest to the broader interests of the

strate with them. If he sees that they are not inclined to follow his suggestion, he should resume his reverential attitude but not abandon his purpose. If he is belabored, he will not complain." [IV:18]

59. The Duke of She observed to Confucius: "Among us there was an upright man called Kung who was so upright that when his father appropriated a sheep, he bore witness against him." Confucius said: "The upright men among us are not like that. A father will screen his son and a son his father—yet uprightness is to be found in that." [XIII:18]

60. Tsai Wo questioned the three years' mourning and thought one year was long enough: "If the gentlemen for three years abstain from the practice of ritual, ritual will decay; if for three years they make no music, music will go to ruin. In one year the old crops are exhausted and the new crops have come up, the friction-sticks have made the several seasonal fires—one year should be enough." Confucius said: "Would you then feel at ease in eating polished rice and wearing fineries?" "Quite at ease," was the reply. Confucius continued: "If you would really feel at ease, then do so. When a gentleman is in mourning, he does not relish good food if he eats it, does not enjoy music if he hears it, and does not feel at ease in a comfortable dwelling. Hence he abstains from these things. But now since you would feel at ease, then you can have them." When Tsai Wo had gone out, Confucius said: "What lack of humanity in Yü [Tsai Wo]! Only when a child is three years old does it leave its parents' arms. The three years' mourning is the universal observance in the world. And Yü—did he not enjoy the loving care of his parents for three years?" [XVII:21]

### *Rites and Music*

For Confucius the term *li,* which basically means "rites," embraced all those traditional forms which provided an objective standard of conduct. Thus, while *li* may in given instances refer to "rites," "ceremonial," or "rules of conduct," it has the general meaning of "good form" or "decorum." Confucius insisted, however, that the observance of *li* should be neither perfunctory nor rigid and inflexible, but should be in keeping with circumstances and also with that spirit of reverence and respect for others which the ceremonies or rules of conduct were meant to embody. By showing their intrinsic significance, he attempted to reassert the value of these traditional forms at a time when they were increasingly neglected or performed as mere pretense. Where

the external form is indicated by *li* we shall render it "rites"; where the inward spirit, "decorum."

61. Tzu Kung proposed to do away with the sacrificial lamb offering at the announcement of each new moon. Confucius said: "Tz'u! You love the lamb, but I love the rite." [III:17]

62. Confucius said: "Courtesy without decorum becomes tiresome. Cautiousness without decorum becomes timidity, daring becomes insubordination, frankness becomes effrontery." [VIII:2]

63. Confucius said: "Rites, rites! Does it mean no more than jades and silks? Music, music! Does it mean no more than bells and drums?" [XVII:11]

64. Confucius said: "A man who is not humane, what has he to do with rites? A man who is not humane, what has he to do with music?" [III:3]

65. Lin Fang asked about the fundamental principle of rites. Confucius replied: "You are asking an important question! In rites at large, it is always better to be too simple rather than too lavish. In funeral rites, it is more important to have the real sentiment of sorrow than minute attention to observances." [III:4]

66. Confucius said: "If a ruler can administer his state with decorum (*li*) and courtesy—then what difficulty will he have? If he cannot administer it with decorum and courtesy, what has he to do with rites (*li*)?" [IV:13]

*Religious Sentiment*

67. Tzu Lu asked about the worship of ghosts and spirits. Confucius said: "We don't know yet how to serve men, how can we know about serving the spirits?" "What about death," was the next question. Confucius said: "We don't know yet about life, how can we know about death?" [XI:11]

68. Fan Ch'ih asked about wisdom. Confucius said: "Devote yourself to the proper demands of the people, respect the ghosts and spirits but keep them at a distance—this may be called wisdom." [VI:20]

69. Po-niu was ill and Confucius went to inquire about him. Having grasped his hand through the window, Confucius said: "It is killing him.

It is the will of Heaven, alas! That such a man should have such a malady! That such a man should have such a malady!" [VI:8]

70. Though his food might be coarse rice and vegetable broth, Confucius invariably offered a little in sacrifice, and always with solemnity. [X:8]

71. When Confucius observed sacrificial fasting, his clothing was spotlessly clean, his food was different from the ordinary, and in his dwelling his seat was changed to another place. [X:7]

72. Confucius said: "He who sins against Heaven has none to whom he can pray." [III:13]

73. When Confucius was very ill, Tzu Lu asked that prayers be offered. Confucius asked: "Is there such a thing?" Tzu Lu replied: "Yes, there is. In one of the Eulogies it is said: 'A prayer has been offered for you to the spirits of Heaven and earth.'" Confucius said: "Ah, my praying has been for a long time." [VII:34]

74. Tzu Kung said: "The Master's views on culture and refinement we can comprehend. But his discourses about man's nature and the ways of Heaven none of us can comprehend." [V:12]

75. Confucius said: "I wish I did not have to speak at all." Tzu Kung said: "But if you did not speak, Sir, what should we disciples pass on to others?" Confucius said: "Look at Heaven there. Does it speak? The four seasons run their course and all things are produced. Does Heaven speak?" [XVII:19]

76. Confucius sacrificed [to the dead] as if they were present. He sacrificed to the spirits as if they were present. He said: "I consider my not being present at the sacrifice as if I did not sacrifice." [III:12]

77. The Master did not talk about weird things, physical exploits, disorders, and spirits. [VII:20]

*The Gentleman*

78. Confucius said: "When nature exceeds art you have the rustic. When art exceeds nature you have the clerk. It is only when art and nature are harmoniously blended that you have the gentleman." [VI:16]

79. Confucius said: . . . "If a gentleman departs from humanity, how can he bear the name? Not even for the lapse of a single meal does a gentleman ignore humanity. In moments of haste he cleaves to it; in seasons of peril he cleaves to it." [IV:5]

80. Confucius said: "The gentleman occupies himself with the Way and not with his livelihood. One may attend to farming, and yet may sometimes go hungry. One may attend to learning and yet may be rewarded with emolument. What the gentleman is anxious about is the Way and not poverty." [XV:31]

81. Ssu-ma Niu asked about the gentleman. Confucius said: "The gentleman has neither anxiety nor fear." Ssu-ma Niu rejoined: "Neither anxiety nor fear—is that what is meant by being a gentleman?" Confucius said: "When he looks into himself and finds no cause for self-reproach, what has he to be anxious about; what has he to fear?" [XII:4]

82. Confucius said: "The way of the gentleman is threefold. I myself have not been able to attain any of them. Being humane, he has no anxieties; being wise, he has no perplexities; being brave, he has no fear." Tzu Kung said: "But, Master, that is your own way." [XIV:30]

83. Confucius said: "You may be able to carry off from a whole army its commander-in-chief, but you cannot deprive the humblest individual of his will." [IX:25]

84. Tzu Kung asked about the gentleman. Confucius said: "The gentleman first practices what he preaches and then preaches what he practices." [II:13]

85. Confucius said: "The gentleman reaches upward; the inferior man reaches downward." [XIV:23]

86. Confucius said: "The gentleman is always calm and at ease; the inferior man is always worried and full of distress." [VII:36]

87. Confucius said: "The gentleman understands what is right; the inferior man understands what is profitable." [IV:16]

88. Confucius said: "The gentleman cherishes virtue; the inferior man cherishes possessions. The gentleman thinks of sanctions; the inferior man thinks of personal favors." [IV:11]

89. Confucius said: "The gentleman makes demands on himself; the inferior man makes demands on others." [XV:20]

90. Confucius said: "The gentleman seeks to enable people to succeed in what is good but does not help them in what is evil. The inferior man does the contrary." [XII:16]

91. Confucius said: "The gentleman is broad-minded and not partisan; the inferior man is partisan and not broad-minded." [II:14]

92. Confucius said: "There are three things that a gentleman fears:

he fears the will of Heaven, he fears great men, he fears the words of the sages. The inferior man does not know the will of Heaven and does not fear it, he treats great men with contempt, and he scoffs at the words of the sages." [XVI:8]

93. Once when Confucius was in Ch'en, the supply of food was exhausted, and some of his followers became so weak that they could not stand up. Tzu Lu came to the Master in disgust, saying: "Then even a gentleman can be reduced to such straits?" Confucius said: "A gentleman may indeed be so reduced. But when an inferior man is in straits he is apt to do anything." [XV:1]

*Government by Personal Virtue*

94. Chi K'ang Tzu asked Confucius about government. Confucius said: "To govern (*cheng*) is to set things right (*cheng*).[5] If you begin by setting yourself right, who will dare to deviate from the right?" [XII:17]

95. Confucius said: "If a ruler himself is upright, all will go well without orders. But if he himself is not upright, even though he gives orders they will not be obeyed." [XIII:6]

96. Tzu Lu asked about the character of a gentleman [man of the ruling class]. Confucius said: "He cultivates himself in reverential attention." Tzu Lu asked: "Is that all there is to it?" Confucius said: "He cultivates himself so as to be able to bring comfort to other people." Tzu Lu asked again: "Is that all?" Confucius said: "He cultivates himself so as to be able to bring comfort to the whole populace. He cultivates himself so as to be able to bring comfort to the whole populace—even [sage-kings] Yao and Shun were dissatisfied with themselves about this." [XIV:45]

97. Confucius said: "Lead the people by laws and regulate them by penalties, and the people will try to keep out of jail, but will have no sense of shame. Lead the people by virtue and restrain them by the rules of decorum, and the people will have a sense of shame, and moreover will become good." [II:3]

98. Chi K'ang Tzu asked Confucius about government, saying: "Suppose I were to kill the lawless for the good of the law-abiding, how

[5] This is more than just a pun. Confucius was trying to get at the root of the matter by getting at the root of the word.

## *Selections from the Mo Tzu*

### CHAPTER II: IDENTIFICATION WITH THE SUPERIOR (PART I)

Mo Tzu said: In the ancient beginning of human life, when there was yet no law or government, the dictum was, "every one according to his own standard of right and wrong." Hence, if there was one man, there was one standard; if two, two standards; if ten, ten standards—the more the people, the more the standards. Everyone upheld his own standard and condemned those of the others, and so there was mutual condemnation among men. Even father and son and brother and brother entertained mutual dislike and dissatisfaction, and were kept apart by disagreements rather than united in harmony. People in the world tried to undermine each other with water, fire, and poison. When there was unspent energy it was not exerted for mutual aid; when there were surplus goods they were allowed to rot without being shared; those who knew the excellent way would keep it secret and would not instruct others. The world was in great disorder; men were like birds and beasts.

The cause of all this disorder lay simply in the want of a ruler. Therefore [Heaven] chose the most worthy in the empire and established him as the Son of Heaven [i.e., the ruler]. Feeling the insufficiency of his capability, the Son of Heaven chose the next most worthy in the empire and installed them as the three ministers. Seeing the vastness of the empire and the difficulty of attending to matters of right and wrong and benefit and harm among the peoples of far countries, the three ministers divided the empire into feudal states and assigned them to the feudal lords. Feeling the insufficiency of their capability, the feudal lords, in turn, chose the most worthy in their states and appointed them as their officials.

When the rulers were all installed, the emperor issued a mandate to all the people, saying: "Upon hearing good report or evil, one shall inform one's superior. What the superior considers to be wrong all shall consider to be wrong. When the superior is at fault there shall be good counsel; when the subordinates have achieved virtue there shall be popular commendation. To identify one's self with the superior and not to unite one's self with the subordinates—this is what deserves reward from above and praise from below. On the other hand, if upon hearing good

report or evil, one should not inform one's superior; if what the superior considers to be right one should not consider to be right; if what the superior considers to be wrong one should not consider to be wrong; if when the superior is at fault there should be no good counsel; if when the subordinates have achieved virtue there should be no popular commendation; if there should be common cause with subordinates but no identification with the superior—this is what deserves punishment from above and condemnation from below." The ruler made this the basis of reward and punishment. He was clear-sighted and won the confidence of his people.

Now the head of the village was the most humane man of the village. He proclaimed to the people of the village, saying: "Upon hearing good report or evil, you shall inform the head of the district. What the head of the district considers to be right, all shall consider to be right. What he considers to be wrong, all shall consider to be wrong. Put away your evil speech and learn his good speech. Remove your evil conduct and learn his good conduct." How then can there be disorder in the district? . . .

Now, how is order brought about in the empire? There was order in the empire because the emperor could unify the standards in the empire. If, however, the people all identify themselves with the Son of Heaven but not with Heaven itself, then the jungle is still unremoved. Now, the frequent visitations of hurricanes and torrential rains are nothing but the punishments from Heaven upon the people for their failure to identify their standards with the will of Heaven.

### CHAPTER 9: EXALTATION OF THE WORTHY (PART II)

Mo Tzu said: Now, in ruling the people, administering the state, and governing the country, the rulers desire to have their authority last a long time. Why then do they not realize that exaltation of the worthy is the foundation of government? How do we know that exaltation of the worthy is the foundation of government? When the honorable and wise govern the ignorant and humble, there is order. But when the ignorant and humble govern the honorable and wise, there is disorder. Therefore, we know that exaltation of the worthy is the foundation of government.

The ancient sage-kings greatly emphasized the exaltation of the worthy and the employment of the capable, without showing any favoritism to

their relatives, to the rich and honored, or to the good-looking. The worthy were exalted and promoted, enriched and honored, and made governors and officials. The unworthy were rejected and banished, dispossessed and degraded, and made laborers and servants. Thereupon people were all encouraged by rewards and deterred by punishments, and strove one with another after virtue. Thus the worthy multiplied and the unworthy diminished in number. It was in this way that the worthy were exalted. Thereupon the sage-kings listened to their words and observed their conduct, discovered their capabilities and carefully assigned them their offices. It was in this way that the capable were employed. . . .

When the worthy man rules the state, he starts the day early and retires late, judging lawsuits and attending to the government. As a result, the state is well-governed and the laws are fairly administered. When the worthy man administers the court, he retires late and wakes up early, collecting taxes from passes, markets, and on products from mountains and woods, waters and land to fill the treasury. As a result, the treasury is filled and wealth is not dissipated. When the worthy man manages a district, he sets out before sunrise and comes back after sunset, plowing and sowing, planting and cultivating, and gathering harvests of grain. As a result, grain is in abundance and the people are sufficiently supplied with food. Therefore when the country is well-governed the laws are justly administered, and when the treasury is filled the people are well-to-do. For the higher sphere, the rulers have the wherewithal to make clean wine and cakes for sacrifice and libation to Heaven and the spirits. For the surrounding countries they have the wherewithal to furnish the furs and money to befriend the neighboring feudal lords. For the people within [the state], they have the wherewithal to feed the hungry and give rest to the tired, thus to nurture the multitude and cherish the worthy. Therefore from above, Heaven and the spirits enrich them; from without, the feudal lords associate with them; from within, the people show them affection, and the worthy are attracted to them. Hence they will succeed in what they plan and accomplish what they propose to do. In defense they are strong, and in attack victorious. Now the Way that enabled the sage-kings of the Three Dynasties, Yao, Shun, Yü, T'ang, Wen, and Wu, to subdue the empire and take precedence over the feudal lords was nothing else than this [principle of exaltation of the worthy].

However, if there is only the principle while the method of its application is not known, then success would still seem to be uncertain. Therefore there should be laid down three axioms. What are the three axioms? They are: 1) when the rank of the worthy is not high, people will not show them respect; 2) when their emoluments are not liberal, people will not place confidence in them; 3) when their orders are not final, people will not stand in awe before them. So the ancient sage-kings placed them high in rank, gave them liberal emoluments, entrusted them with important charges, and decreed their orders to be final. Was all this done merely to reward the subordinates? It was done to assure successful government. . . .

And when the worthy do not come to the side of the rulers, the unworthy will be found at their right and left. . . . At home the unworthy are not filial to their parents, and abroad they are not respectful to the elders of the community. They move about without restraint and disregard the rules of decorum between the sexes. When entrusted with the administration of the treasury, they steal; when made to defend a city, they raise an insurrection. When their lord is in trouble, they do not stick by him until death; when the lord has to flee the country, they do not accompany him in banishment. . . . Now, the reason that the wicked kings of the Three Dynasties, Chieh, Chou, Yu, and Li, misruled the country and upset their empires was nothing else than this [employment of the unworthy].

Why do the rulers do this? Because they understand petty affairs but are ignorant about weighty matters. When the rulers have a suit of clothes which they cannot fit by themselves, they will employ capable tailors. When they have an ox or a sheep they cannot kill themselves, they will employ capable butchers. In these two instances they know that they should exalt the worthy and employ the capable for getting things done. But when it comes to the disorder of the country and danger of the state, they fail to realize that they should exalt the worthy and employ the capable to attend to them. Instead, they employ their relatives, they employ the rich without merit, and the good-looking. If the relatives, the rich without merit, and the good-looking are employed, will they necessarily prove themselves wise and intelligent? To let them rule the country is to let the unwise and unintelligent rule the country. And we can be sure that disorder in the country will result.

CHAPTER 16: UNIVERSAL LOVE (PART III)

Mo Tzu said: Humane men are concerned about providing benefits for the world and eliminating its calamities. Now among all the current calamities, which are the worst? I say that the attacking of small states by large states, the making of inroads on small houses by large houses, the plundering of the weak by the strong, the oppression of the few by the many, the deception of the simple by the cunning, the disdain of the noble towards the humble—these are some of the calamities in the world. Again, the want of kindness on the part of the ruler, the want of loyalty on the part of the ruled, the want of affection on the part of the father, the want of filial piety on the part of the son—these are some further calamities in the world. Added to these, the mutual injury and harm which the vulgar people do to one another with weapons, poison, water, and fire is still another kind of calamity in the world.

When we come to inquire about the cause of all these calamities, whence have they arisen? Is it out of people's loving others and benefiting others? We must reply that it is not so. We should say that it is out of people's hating others and injuring others. If we should classify one by one all those who hate others and injure others, should we find them to be universal or partial [1] in their love? Of course, we should say they are partial. Now, since partiality among one another is the cause of the major calamities in the world, then partiality is wrong.

Mo Tzu continued: He who criticizes others must have something to offer in replacement. Criticism without an alternative proposal is like trying to stop flood with flood and put out fire with fire. It will surely be worthless.

Therefore Mo Tzu said: Partiality is to be replaced by universality. But how is partiality to be replaced by universality? Now, when everyone regards the states of others as he regards his own, who would attack the other's state? One would regard others as one's self. When everyone regards the cities of others as he regards his own, who would seize the others' cities? One would regard others as one's self. When everyone regards the houses of others as he regards his own, who would disturb

[1] Mo Tzu is critical of the Confucian idea of love according to the degree of relationship. He calls it partial love or the principle of partiality, as against his own universal love or principle of universality.

the others' houses? One would regard others as one's self. Now when the states and cities do not attack and seize each other, and when the clans and individuals do not disturb and harm one another—is this a calamity or a benefit to the world? Of course it is a benefit.

When we come to inquire about the cause of all these benefits, whence have they arisen? Is it out of men's hating and injuring others? We must reply that it is not so. We should say that it is out of men's loving and benefiting others. If we should classify one by one all those who love others and benefit others, should we find them to be partial or universal in their love? Of course we should say they are universal. Now, since universal love is the cause of the major benefits in the world, therefore Mo Tzu proclaims that universal love is right. . . .

Yet the objections from the gentlemen of the world are never exhausted. It is asked: It may be a good thing, but can it be of any use?

Mo Tzu replies: If it were not useful, I myself would disapprove of it. But how can there be anything that is good but not useful? Let us consider the matter from both sides. Suppose there are two men. Let one of them hold to partiality and the other universality. Then the advocate of partiality would say to himself: "How could I be expected to take care of my friend as I do of myself, how could I be expected to take care of his parents as my own?" Therefore when he finds his friend hungry he would not feed him, and when he finds him cold he would not clothe him. In his illness he would not minister to him, and when he is dead he would not bury him. Such is the word and such is the deed of the advocate of partiality. The advocate of universality is quite unlike this either in word or in deed. He would say to himself: "I have heard that to be a superior man one should take care of his friend as he does of himself, and take care of his friend's parents as he does his own." Therefore when he finds his friend hungry he would feed him, and when he finds him cold he would clothe him. In his sickness he would minister to him, and when he is dead he would bury him. Such is the word and such is the deed of the advocate of universality.

These two persons, then, are opposed to each other in word and also in deed. Suppose both of them are sincere in word and decisive in deed so that their word and deed are made to agree like the two parts of a tally, every word being expressed in deed. Then let us ask: Suppose here is a battlefield, and one is in armor and helmet, ready to go into combat,

and life and death hang in the balance. Or suppose one is sent as an emissary by the ruler to such far countries as Pa, Yüeh, Ch'i, and Ching, and one cannot be certain as to one's safe arrival and return. Now let us inquire, upon whom would one (under such circumstances) lay the trust of one's family and parents, wife, and children? Would it be upon the friend whose code of conduct is universality, or upon him whose code is partiality? It seems to me, on occasions like these, there are no fools in the world. Even though he be a person who objects to universal love himself, he would lay the trust upon the friend believing in universal love all the same. This is rejection of the principle in word but acceptance of it in actually making a choice—this is contradiction between one's word and deed. It is incomprehensible, then, why the gentlemen of the world should object to universal love when they hear of it.

Yet the objections from the gentlemen of the world are never exhausted. It is objected: Perhaps it is a good criterion by which one may choose among ordinary men, but it would not apply to the choice of rulers.

Let us again consider the matter from both sides. Suppose there are two rulers. Let one of them hold to partiality and the other universality. Then the "partial" ruler would say to himself: "How could I be expected to take care of the people as I do of myself? This would be quite contrary to the nature of things. A man's life on earth is of short duration; it is like a galloping horse rushing past a crack in the wall." Therefore when he finds his people hungry he would not feed them, and when he finds them cold he would not clothe them. When they are sick he would not minister to them, and upon their death he would not bury them. Such is the word and such is the deed of the "partial" ruler. The "universal" ruler is quite unlike this either in word or in deed. He would say to himself: "I have heard that to be an intelligent ruler of the empire one should attend to his people before he attends to himself." Therefore when he finds his people hungry he would feed them, and when he finds them cold he would clothe them. In their sickness he would minister to them, and upon their death he would bury them. Such is the word and such is the deed of the "universal" ruler.

These two rulers, then, are opposed to each other in word and also in deed. Suppose both of them are sincere in word and decisive in deed so that their word and deed are made to agree like the two parts of a tally, every word being expressed in deed. Then let us ask: Suppose, now,

that there is a disastrous pestilence, that most people are in misery and privation, and that many lie dead in ditches. Now, let us inquire, if a person could choose between the two rulers, which would he prefer? It seems to me on such occasions as these there are no fools in the world. Even though he be a person who objects to universal love himself, he would choose the "universal" ruler. This is rejection of the principle in word but acceptance of it in actually making a choice—this is contradiction between one's word and deed. It is incomprehensible, then, why the gentlemen of the world should object to universal love when they hear of it.

Yet the objections from the gentlemen of the world are never exhausted. It is pointed out that universal love may be humane and righteous, but is it meant to be put into practice? Universal love is as possible as picking up Mount T'ai and leaping over rivers with it. So, then, universal love is but a pious wish, and how can anyone expect it to be materialized? Mo Tzu replied: To pick up Mount T'ai and leap over the rivers is a feat that has never been accomplished since the existence of man. But universal love and mutual aid have been personally practiced by the great ancient sage-kings.

How do we know that they have practiced it?

Mo Tzu said: I am no contemporary of theirs; neither have I heard their voices nor seen their countenances. The sources of our knowledge lie in what is written on bamboo and silk, what is engraved in metal and stone, and what is cut in the vessels that have been handed down to posterity. . . .

Yet the objections from the gentlemen of the world are never exhausted. The question is raised: When one does not pay special attention to the welfare of one's parents, is not harm done to the virtue of filial piety?

Mo Tzu replied: Now let us inquire into the way the filial sons take care of their parents. I may ask, in caring for their parents, whether they desire to have others love their parents, or hate them? Judging from the whole doctrine [of filial piety], it is certain that they desire to have others love their parents. Now, then, what should I do first in order to attain this? Should I first love others' parents in order that they would love my parents in return, or should I first hate others' parents in order that they would love my parents in return? Assuredly I should first love others' parents in order that they would love my parents in return. Hence, is it

not evident that those who desire to see others filial to their own parents, had best proceed first by loving and benefiting others' parents? . . . It is then quite incomprehensible why the gentlemen of the world should object to universal love when they hear of it.

Is it because they deem it so difficult and inpracticable? But there have been instances of much harder tasks that have been accomplished. Formerly, Lord Ling of the state of Ching was fond of slender waists. During his life time, the Ching people ate not more than once a day. They could not stand up without support, and could not walk without leaning against the wall. Now, limited diet is quite hard to endure, and yet it was endured, because Lord Ling encouraged it. . . .

Now, as to universal love and mutual aid, they are incalculably more beneficial and less difficult. It seems to me that the only trouble is that there is no ruler who will encourage them. If there were a ruler who would encourage them, bringing to bear the lure of reward and the threat of punishment, I believe the people would tend toward universal love and mutual aid like fire tending upward and water downwards—nothing in the world could stop them.

CHAPTER 28: THE WILL OF HEAVEN (PART III)

Mo Tzu said: What is the reason for the disorder in the world? It is that the gentlemen of the world understand only trifles but not things of importance. How do we know they understand trifles but not things of importance? Because they do not understand the will of Heaven. How do we know they do not understand the will of Heaven? By observing the way people conduct themselves in the family. When a man commits an offense in the family, he might still escape to some other family for refuge. Yet, father reminds son, elder brother reminds younger brother, saying: "Beware, be careful! If one is not cautious and careful in his conduct in the family, how is he to get along in the state?" When a man commits an offense in the state, he might still escape to some other state for refuge. Yet father reminds son and elder brother reminds younger brother, saying: "Beware, be careful! One cannot get along in a state if he is not cautious and careful." Now all men live in the world and serve Heaven. When a man sins against Heaven he has nowhere to escape for refuge. On this point, however, people fail to caution and warn each other. Thus I know that they do not understand things of importance.

And Mo Tzu said: Beware, be careful! Be sure to do what Heaven desires and forsake what Heaven abominates. Now, what does Heaven desire and what does Heaven abominate? Heaven desires righteousness and abominates unrighteousness. How do we know that this is so? Because righteousness is the proper standard. How do we know righteousness is the proper standard? Because when righteousness prevails in the world, there is order; when righteousness ceases to prevail in the world, there is chaos. So, I know righteousness is the proper standard.

Now a standard is never given by a subordinate to a superior, it is always given by the superior to the subordinate. Hence the common people may not take any standard they please; there are the scholars to give them the standard. The scholars may not take any standard they please; there are the ministers to give them the standard. The ministers may not take any standard they please; there are the feudal lords to give them the standard. The feudal lords may not take any standard they please; there are the three ministers to give them the standard. The three ministers may not take any standard they please; there is the Son of Heaven to give them the standard. The Son of Heaven may not take any standard he pleases; there is Heaven to give him the standard. The gentlemen of the world all can see that the Son of Heaven gives the standard to the empire, but they fail to see that Heaven gives the standard to the Son of Heaven. The sages of old, explaining this, said: "When the Son of Heaven has done good, Heaven rewards him. When the Son of Heaven has committed wrong, Heaven punishes him. When the Son of Heaven is unfair in dispensing reward and punishment and not impartial in judging lawsuits, the empire is visited with disease and calamity, and frost and dew will be untimely." Thereupon the Son of Heaven will have to fatten the oxen and sheep and dogs and pigs, and prepare clean cakes and wine to offer prayer to Heaven and invoke its blessing. I have not yet heard of Heaven praying and invoking the Son of Heaven for blessing. Thus I know that Heaven is more honorable and wise than the Son of Heaven.

Therefore, righteousness does not issue from the ignorant and humble, but from the honorable and wise. Who is the most honorable? Heaven is the most honorable. Who is the most wise? Heaven is the most wise. And so righteousness assuredly issues from Heaven. Then the gentlemen of the world who desire to do righteousness cannot but obey the will of Heaven.

What is the will of Heaven that we should all obey? It is to love all men universally. How do we know it is to love all men universally? Because [Heaven] accepts sacrifices from all. How do we know Heaven accepts sacrifices from all? Because from antiquity to the present day, there is no distant or isolated country but that it fattens the oxen and sheep and dogs and pigs, and prepares clean cakes and wine, reverently to do sacrifice to the Lord-on-High, and the spirits of hills and rivers. Hence we know Heaven accepts sacrifices from all. Accepting sacrifice from all, Heaven must love them all. . . .

That Heaven loves all the people in the world is evidenced not only by this. In all the countries in the world and among all the peoples who live on grain, the murder of one innocent individual is invariably followed by a calamity. Now, who is it that murders the innocent individual? It is man. Who is it that sends forth the calamity? It is Heaven. If Heaven really did not love the people, why should Heaven send forth calamities upon the murder of the innocent?

Furthermore, Heaven loves the people dearly, Heaven loves the people inclusively. This we know. How do we know that Heaven loves the people? Because the worthy [Heaven] invariably rewards the good and punishes the evil. How do we know the worthy [Heaven] invariably rewards the good and punishes the evil. We know this from the record of the sage-kings of the Three Dynasties. Of old, the sage-kings of the Three Dynasties, Yao, Shun, Yü, T'ang, Wen, and Wu, loved the world universally and sought to benefit it. They influenced the minds of the people and led them in the worship of the Lord-on-High, and the spirits of hills and rivers. Heaven was pleased because they loved those whom it loved and benefited those whom it would benefit. And Heaven bestowed reward upon them, placing them on the throne, making them Sons of Heaven, upholding them as models for all men, and calling them sage-kings. Here we have the proof of Heaven's reward of the good. Of old, the wicked kings of the Three Dynasties, Chieh, Chou, Yu, and Li, hated all the people in the world and sought to oppress them. They influenced the minds of the people, and led them in blasphemy against the Lord-on-High, and the spirits of hills and rivers. Heaven was offended because they hated those whom Heaven loved, and oppressed those whom Heaven would benefit. And Heaven decreed punishment upon them, letting fathers and sons be scattered, their empire be

put to an end, their state be lost to them, and capital punishment fall upon them. Thereupon, the multitude condemned them, the condemnation lasting through countless generations and the people calling them the lost kings. Here we have the proof of Heaven's punishment of the evil.

The gentlemen of the world who desire to do righteousness have no other recourse than to obey the will of Heaven. One who obeys the will of Heaven will practice universal love; one who opposes the will of Heaven will practice partial love. According to the doctrine of universality the standard of conduct is righteousness; according to the doctrine of partiality the standard is force. What is it like when righteousness is the standard of conduct? The great will not attack the small, the strong will not plunder the weak, the many will not oppress the few, the cunning will not deceive the simple, the noble will not disdain the humble, the rich will not mock the poor, and the young will not encroach upon the old. And the states in the empire will not harm each other with water, fire, poison, and weapons. Such a regime will be auspicious to Heaven above, to the spirits in the middle sphere, and to the people below. Being auspicious to these three, it is beneficial to all. This is called the disposition of Heaven. He who follows it is sagacious and wise, humane and righteous, kind as a ruler and loyal as a minister, affectionate as a father and filial as a son, and all such good names in the world are gathered and attributed to him. Why? Because such conduct is in accordance with the will of Heaven.

Now, what is it like when force becomes the standard of conduct? The great will attack the small, the strong will plunder the weak, the many will oppress the few, the cunning will deceive the simple, the noble will disdain the humble, the rich will mock the poor, and the young will encroach upon the old. And the states in the empire will ruin each other with water, fire, poison, and weapons. Such a regime will not be auspicious to Heaven above, to the spirits in the middle sphere, or to the people below. Not being auspicious to these three, it is not beneficial to anyone. This is called the violation of Heaven. He who follows it is a robber and a thief, not humane and not righteous, unkind as a ruler and disloyal as a minister, unaffectionate as a father, and unfilial as a son, and all such evil names in the world are gathered and attributed to him. Why? Because such conduct is in opposition to the will of Heaven.

scholar who abandons human society in search of a mystic harmony with the world of nature.

The style of the *Lao Tzu* is quite unlike that of the works of the other schools. The text appears to be a combination of very old adages or cryptic sayings, often in rhyme, extended passages of poetry, and sections of prose interpretation and commentary. There is extensive use of parallel constructions and neatly balanced phrases; the statements are laconic and paradoxical, intended not to convince the mind by reasoning but to startle and capture it through poetic vision. The writer makes striking use of symbols such as water, the symbol of a humble, self-effacing force that is in the end all-powerful, or the female and the mother, symbol of passivity and creation. It is this symbolism, this paradoxical, poetic view of life which have won for the work the tremendous popularity and influence which it has exercised through the centuries of Chinese literature, and these same appealing qualities that have made it the Chinese work most often translated into foreign languages.

## *Selections from the Lao Tzu (or Tao-te Ching)*

I

The Tao [Way] that can be told of
  Is not the eternal Tao;
The name that can be named
  Is not the eternal name.
Nameless, it is the origin of Heaven and earth;
Namable, it is the mother of all things.

Always nonexistent,
  That we may apprehend its inner secret;
Always existent,
  That we may discern its outer manifestations.
These two are the same;
Only as they manifest themselves they receive different names.

That they are the same is the mystery.
Mystery of all mysteries!
The door of all subtleties!

. . . .

3

Refrain from exalting the worthy,
So that the people will not scheme and contend;
Refrain from prizing rare possessions,
So that the people will not steal;
Refrain from displaying objects of desire,
So that the people's hearts will not be disturbed.

Therefore a sage rules his people thus:
He empties their minds,
And fills their bellies;
He weakens their ambitions,
And strengthens their bones.

He strives always to keep the people innocent of knowledge and desires, and to keep the knowing ones from meddling. By doing nothing that interferes with anything (*wu-wei*), nothing is left unregulated.

4

The Tao is empty [like a bowl],
It is used, though perhaps never full.
It is fathomless, possibly the progenitor of all things.
It blunts all sharpness,
It unties all tangles;
It is in harmony with all light,
It is one with all dust.
Deep and clear it seems forever to remain.
I do not know whose son it is,
A phenomenon that apparently preceded the Lord.

5

Heaven and earth are not humane:
To them all things are as straw-dogs.
The sage is not humane:
To him all the people are as straw-dogs.

. . . .

8

The highest good is like water. Water benefits all things generously and is without strife. It dwells in the lowly places that men disdain. Thus it comes near to the Tao.
The highest good loves the [lowly] earth for its dwelling.
It loves the profound in its heart,
It loves humanity in friendship,
Sincerity in speech, order in government,
Effectiveness in deeds, timeliness in action.
Since it is without strife,
It is without reproach.

. . . .

10

In keeping your soul and embracing unity,
  Can you forever hold fast to the Tao?
In letting out your vital force to achieve gentleness,
  Can you become as the new-born babe?
In cleansing and purifying your mystic vision,
  Can you be free from all dross?
In loving the people and governing the land,
  Can you practice nonaction (*wu-wei*)?
In opening and shutting the gates of Heaven,
  Can you play the part of the female?
In perceiving all and comprehending all,
  Can you renounce all knowledge?

To beget, to nourish,
  To beget but not to claim,
  To achieve but not to cherish,
  To be leader but not master—
This is called the Mystic Virtue (*te*).

. . . .

14

You look at it, but it is not to be seen;
  Its name is Formless.
You listen to it, but it is not to be heard;

Its name is Soundless.
You grasp it, but it is not to be held;
Its name is Bodiless.
These three elude all scrutiny,
And hence they blend and become one.

Its upper side is not bright;
Its under side is not dim.
Continuous, unceasing, and unnamable,
It reverts to nothingness.

It is called formless form, thingless image;
It is called the elusive, the evasive.
Confronting it, you do not see its face;
Following it, you do not see its back.

Yet by holding fast to this Tao of old,
You can harness the events of the present,
You can know the beginnings of the past—
Here is the essence of the Tao.

. . . .

16

Attain utmost vacuity;
Hold fast to quietude.
While the myriad things are stirring together,
I see only their return.
For luxuriantly as they grow,
Each of them will return to its root.

To return to the root is called quietude,
Which is also said to be reversion to one's destiny.
This reversion belongs with the eternal:
To know the eternal is enlightenment;
Not to know the eternal means to run blindly to disaster.

He who knows the eternal is all-embracing;
He who is all-embracing is impartial,

To be impartial is to be kingly,
To be kingly is to be heavenly,
To be heavenly is to be one with the Tao,
To be one with the Tao is to endure forever.
Such a one, though his body perish, is never exposed to danger.

17

The best [government] is that whose existence only is known by the people. The next is that which is loved and praised. The next is that which is despised. . . .

18

It was when the Great Tao declined,
That there appeared humanity and righteousness.
It was when knowledge and intelligence arose,
That there appeared much hypocrisy.
It was when the six relations lost their harmony,
That there was talk of filial piety and paternal affection.
It was when the country fell into chaos and confusion,
That there was talk of loyalty and trustworthiness.

19

Banish sageliness, discard wisdom,
And the people will be benefited a hundredfold.
Banish humanity, discard righteousness,
And the people will return to filial piety and paternal affection.
Banish skill, discard profit,
And thieves and robbers will disappear.

These three are the ill-provided adornments of life,
And must be subordinated to something higher:—
See the simple, embrace primitivity;
Reduce the self, lessen the desires.

. . . .

21

The expression of Vast Virtue (*te*)
Is derived from the Tao alone.
As to the Tao itself,

It is elusive and evasive.
Evasive, elusive,
Yet within it there are images.
Elusive, evasive,
Yet within it there are things.
Shadowy and dim,
Yet within it there is a vital force.
The vital force is very real,
And therein dwells truth.

From the days of old till now,
Its name has never ceased to be,
And it has witnessed the beginning of all things.
How do I know the shape of the beginning of all things?
Through it.

. . . .

25

There was something nebulous yet complete,
Born before Heaven and earth.
Silent, empty,
Self-sufficient and unchanging,
Revolving without cease and without fail,
It acts as the mother of the world.

I do not know its name,
And address it as "Tao."
Attempting to give it a name, I shall call it "Great."
To be great is to pass on.
To pass on is to go further and further away.
To go further and further away is to return.

Therefore Tao is great, Heaven is great, earth is great,
And the king is also great.
These are the Great Four in the universe,
And the king is one of them.
Man follows the ways of earth,
Earth follows the ways of Heaven;

Heaven follows the ways of Tao;
Tao follows the ways of itself.

. . . .

28

He who knows the masculine but keeps to the feminine,
Becomes the ravine of the world.
Being the ravine of the world,
He dwells in constant virtue,
He returns to the state of the babe.

He who knows the white but keeps to the black,
Becomes the model of the world.
Being the model of the world,
He rests in constant virtue,
He returns to the infinite.

He who knows glory but keeps to disgrace,
Becomes the valley of the world.
Being the valley of the world,
He finds contentment in constant virtue,
He returns to the uncarved block.[1]

The cutting up of the uncarved block results in vessels,
Which, in the hands of the sage, become officers.
Truly, "A great cutter does not cut."

. . . .

32

Tao is eternal, nameless. Though the uncarved block seems small, it may be subordinated to nothing in the world. If kings and barons can preserve it, all creation would of itself pay homage, Heaven and earth would unite to send sweet dew, and the people would of themselves achieve peace and harmony.

Once the block is cut, names appear. When names begin to appear, know then that there is a time to stop. It is by this knowledge that danger may be avoided.

[1] The "uncarved block" is a favorite figure used by the author of the *Lao Tzu* in referring to the original state of complete simplicity which is his highest ideal.

[The spontaneous working of] the Tao in the world is like the flow of the valley brooks into a river or sea.

. . . .

34

The great Tao flows everywhere:
It can go left; it can go right.

The myriad things owe their existence to it,
And it does not reject them.

When its work is accomplished,
It does not take possession.
It clothes and feeds all,
But does not pose as their master.

Ever without ambition,
It may be called small.
All things return to it as to their home,
And yet it does not pose as their master,
Therefore it may be called Great.

Because it would never claim greatness,
Therefore its greatness is fully realized.

. . . .

37

Tao invariably does nothing (*wu-wei*),
And yet there is nothing that is not done.

If kings and barons can preserve it,
All things will go through their own transformations.
When they are transformed and desire to stir,
We would restrain them with the nameless primitivity.

Nameless primitivity will result in the absence of desires,
Absence of desires will lead to quietude;
The world will, of itself, find its equilibrium.

. . . .

40

Reversal is the movement of the Tao;
Weakness is the use of the Tao.
All things in the world come into being from being;
Being comes into being from nonbeing.

. . . .

42

Tao gave birth to One; One gave birth to Two; Two gave birth to Three; Three gave birth to all the myriad things. The myriad things carry the yin [2] on their backs and hold the yang in their embrace, and derive their harmony from the permeation of these forces.

To be "orphaned," "lonely," and "unworthy" is what men hate, and yet these are the very names by which kings and dukes call themselves. Truly, things may increase when they are diminished, but diminish when they are increased.

What others teach I also teach: "A man of violence will come to a violent end." [3] This I shall regard as the parent of all teachings.

43

The most yielding of things outruns the most unyielding.
Having no substance, they enter into no-space.
Hence I know the value of nonaction (*wu-wei*). The instructiveness of silence, the value of nonaction—few in the world are up to this.

. . . .

48

To seek learning one gains day by day;
To seek the Tao one loses day by day.
Losing and yet losing some more,
Till one has reached doing nothing (*wu-wei*).
Do nothing and yet there is nothing that is not done.
To win the world one must attend to nothing.
When one attends to this and that,
He will not win the world.

. . . .

[2] Yin is the passive, negative, or female principle of the universe; yang is the active, positive, or male principle.

[3] An ancient saying.

51

Tao gives them birth;
  Virtue (*te*) rears them.
They are shaped by their species;
  They are completed by their environment.
Therefore all things without exception exalt Tao and honor Virtue.
Tao is exalted and Virtue is honored,
  Not by anyone's command, but invariably and spontaneously.

Therefore it is Tao that gives them birth;
It is Virtue that rears them, makes them grow, fosters them, shelters them.

To give life but not to own,
To achieve but not to cherish,
To lead but not to be master—
  This is the Mystic Virtue!

. . . .

65

The ancient masters in the practice of the Tao did not thereby try to enlighten the people but rather to keep them in ignorance. If the people are difficult to govern, it is because they have too much knowledge. Those who govern a country by knowledge are the country's curse. Those who do not govern a country by knowledge are the country's blessing. To know these two rules is also to know the ancient standard. And to be able to keep the standard constantly in mind is called the Mystic Virtue.

Penetrating and far-reaching is Mystic Virtue! It is with all things as they run their course of reversal, until all reach Great Harmony.

. . . .

67

All the world says that my Tao is great, yet it appears impertinent. But it is just because it is great that it appears impertinent. Should it appear pertinent, it would have been petty from the start.

Here are my three treasures. Keep them and cherish them. The first is mercy; the second is frugality; the third is never to take the lead over the whole world. Being merciful, one has courage; being frugal, one has

abundance; refusing to take the lead, one becomes the chief of all vessels. If one abandons mercy in favor of courage, frugality in favor of abundance, and humility in favor of prominence, he will perish.

Mercy will be victorious in attack and invulnerable in defense. Heaven will come to the rescue of the merciful one and with mercy will protect him.

. . . .

78

Of all things yielding and weak in the world,
None is more so than water.
But for attacking what is unyielding and strong,
Nothing is superior to it,
Nothing can take its place.

That the weak overcomes the strong,
And the yielding overcomes the unyielding,
Everyone knows this,
But no one can translate it into action.

Therefore the sage says:
"He who takes the dirt of the country,
Is the lord of the state;
He who bears the calamities of the country,
Is the king of the world."
Truth sounds paradoxical!

. . . .

80

Let there be a small country with a few inhabitants. Though there be labor-saving contrivances, the people would not use them. Let the people mind death and not migrate far. Though there be boats and carriages, there would be no occasion to ride in them. Though there be armor and weapons, there would be no occasion to display them.

Let people revert to the practice of rope-knotting [instead of writing], and be contented with their food, pleased with their clothing, satisfied with their houses, and happy with their customs. Though there be a

sand years, and whose autumn lasted eight thousand years. This is long life. And yet, P'eng-tsu [who lived 800 years] is still renowned for his longevity, and so many men wish to match him—isn't that a pity?

In Chi's answers to the questions put by T'ang, there is a statement as follows: "In the barren north, there is a sea, the Celestial Lake. In it there is a fish, several thousand *li* in width, and no one knows how many *li* in length. It is called the leviathan. There is also a bird, called the roc, with a back like Mount T'ai and wings like clouds across the sky. Upon a whirlwind it soars up to a height of ninety thousand *li*. Beyond the clouds and atmosphere, with only the blue sky above it, it then turns south to the southern ocean.

"A quail laughs at it, saying, 'Where is that bird trying to go? I spurt up with a bound, and I drop after rising a few yards. I just flutter about among the brushwood and the bushes. This is also the perfection of flying. Where is that bird trying to go?' " This is the difference between the great and the small.

Similarly, a man may possess enough knowledge for the duties of some office and his conduct may benefit his limited neighborhood, or his virtue may be comparable to that of the ruler and he may even win the confidence of the whole country—when such a man passes judgment upon himself he is pretty much like the quail. But Sung Yung Tzu [4] would regard him with a contented smile. If the whole world applauded Sung Yung Tzu, he would not be encouraged; if the whole world denounced him, he would not be discouraged. He held fast to the difference between the internal and the external, and he distinguished clearly the boundary of honor and shame, and that was all. In the world such a man is rare, yet there is still something which he did not achieve. Now Lieh Tzu could ride upon the wind and pursue his way, lightly and at ease, staying away as long as fifteen days. Among those who attained happiness, such a man is rare. Yet, although he was able to dispense with walking, he still had to depend upon something. But suppose there is one who chariots on the normality of the universe, rides upon the transformation of the six elemental forces, and thus makes an excursion into the infinite,

[4] Sung Yung Tzu also appears in the *Mencius* (VIB:4) as Sung K'eng and in the *Hsün Tzu* (ch. 6) as Sung Hsing or Sung Chien. He was close to Mo Tzu's school and taught that men's desires should be few.

what does he have to depend upon? Therefore, it is said: the perfect man has no self; the spiritual man has no achievement; the true sage has no name.

[The sage-king] Yao wished to abdicate in favor of Hsu-yü, saying: "When the sun and moon have come forth, if the torches continue to burn, would it not be difficult for them to shine? When the seasonal rains have come down, if one persists in watering the fields, would this not be a waste of effort? Now, you, sir, just stand before the throne, and the empire will be in order. Since I am here occupying the position, I can see how wanting I am. So I beg to proffer to you the empire."

"You, sir, govern the empire," said Hsu-yü, "and it is already in order. Were I to take your place, would I be doing it for the name? Name is but an accessory of reality; and should I trouble myself for an accessory? The tit, building its nest in the mighty forest, occupies but a single twig. The tapir, slaking its thirst from the river, drinks no more than the fill of its belly. Relax and forget it, my friend. I have no use for the empire. Even though the cook were not attending to his kitchen, the impersonator of the dead [at the ancestral rites] and the priest of prayer would not step over the cups and dishes to do the work for him."

Chien-wu said to Lien-shu: "I heard a tale from Chieh-yü which is extravagant and improbable, in which he lets imagination completely run away with him. It struck me that his extravagance is as boundless as the Milky Way and so improbable that it touches human experience not at all."

"What did he say?" Lien-shu asked.

"He told me that in the Miao-ku-she Mountain there lives a divine man whose skin is as white as ice and snow and whose loveliness is like that of a maiden, that he eats not the five grains but lives only on air and dew, that mounted on a flying dragon he rides above the clouds and wanders beyond the four seas, and that his spirit is such that by concentrating its power he can stay the natural process of decay and insure plentiful harvests. To me these claims are entirely beyond credulity."

"I am not surprised," Lien-shu said. "The blind cannot appreciate beauty of line and depth, the deaf cannot appreciate the beauty of drums and bells. But there is not only blindness and deafness of the body but of understanding as well. This applies to you. For the virtue of the divine man you heard about is such that he aims at the fusion of all beings into

one. Why should he concern himself with the affairs of the world, troubled though it is? Nothing external can harm this being. He will not drown in a flood that rises up to heaven, he will not be burned in a drought that melts metal and stone and consumes whole mountains. Out of his very dust and siftings one can mold a Yao or Shun. Why should he concern himself with external things?"

A man of the Sung state came with a stock of ceremonial caps to the Yüeh state. But the men of Yüeh were accustomed to cutting their hair short and tattooing their bodies, and so they had no use for such caps. So, Yao ruled the people of the empire, and maintained the government within the four seas. After he had paid a visit to the four sages of the Miao-ku-she Mountain and returned to his capital north of the Fen River, he had a mysterious look and forgot his empire.

Hui Tzu[5] said to Chuang Tzu: "The King of Wei gave me some seeds from his huge gourds. I planted them and they bore a fruit the size of five bushels. I used it as a vessel for holding water, but it was not strong enough to hold it. I cut it in two for ladles, but each of these was too shallow to hold anything. It looked huge all right, but it was so useless that I smashed it to pieces."

Chuang Tzu said: "You are certainly not very clever at turning large things to account. There was a man of Sung who had a recipe for salve for chapped hands, his family having been silk washers for generations. A stranger heard of this and offered him one hundred ounces of gold for the recipe. His clansmen all came together to consider this proposal and agreed, saying: 'We have been washing silk for generations. What we have gained is but a few ounces of gold. Now in one morning we can sell this technique for one hundred ounces. Let the stranger have it.' So the stranger got it and spoke of it to the King of Wu. When Wu and Yüeh were at war, the King of Wu gave him the command of the fleet.

"In the winter he had a naval engagement with Yüeh, in which the latter was totally defeated. The stranger was rewarded with a fief and a title. Thus while the efficacy of the salve to cure the chapped hands was the same, yet in the one case a man thereby gained for himself a title, while in the other, those silk-washers had to keep on washing silk with its help. This was due to the difference in the use of the thing. Now, you,

[5] Hui Tzu or Hui Shih was a renowned logician and a friendly critic of Chuang Tzu. (See selection below from chapter 33 of *Chuang Tzu*.)

Sir, since you had this five-bushel gourd on your hands, why did you not make of it a great buoy whereby you could float about in rivers and lakes? Instead of this, you regretted that ladles made from it would not hold anything. Isn't your mind a bit wooly?"

Hui Tzu said to Chuang Tzu: "I have a large tree, which men call the ailanthus. Its trunk is so gnarled and knotty that a carpenter cannot apply his marking-line to it. Its branches are so bent and twisted that the square and compass cannot be used on them. Though it is standing right by the roadside, no carpenter will look at it. Now your words, Sir, are also grandiose but useless, and not wanted by anybody."

Chuang Tzu said: "Have you not seen a wild cat or a weasel? It lies, crouching down, in wait for its prey. Hither and thither it leaps about, not hindered by either what is high or what is low, until it is caught in a trap or dies in a net. Then, there is the yak, large as a cloud across the sky. It is huge all right, but it cannot catch mice. Now you have a large tree and are worried about its uselessness. Why do you not plant it in the realm of Nothingness, in the expanse of Infinitude, so that you may wander by its side in Nonaction (*wu-wei*), and you may lie under it in Blissful Repose? There it will not be harmed by bill or ax and nothing will do it any injury. Being of no use—why should anything be troubled by that?"

### CHAPTER 2: THE EQUALITY OF THINGS AND OPINIONS

Whereby is the Tao vitiated that there should be a distinction of true and false? Whereby is speech vitiated that there should be a distinction of right and wrong? How could the Tao depart and be not there? And how could there be speech and yet it be not appropriate? The Tao is vitiated by petty virtues. Speech is vitiated by flowery eloquence. So it is that we have the contentions between the Confucianists and the Mo-ists, each affirming what the other denies and denying what the other affirms. But if we are to decide on their several affirmations and denials, there is nothing better than to employ the light of reason.

Everything is its own self; everything is something else's other. Things do not know that they are other things' other; they only know that they are themselves. Thus it is said, the other arises out of the self, just as the self arises out of the other. This is the theory that self and other give rise

to each other. Besides, where there is life, there is death;[6] and where there is death, there is life. Where there is impossibility, there is possibility; and where there is possibility, there is impossibility. It is because there is right, that there is wrong; it is because there is wrong, that there is right. This being the situation, the sages do not approach things at this level, but reflect the light of nature. Thereupon the self is also the other; the other is also the self. According to the other, there is one kind of right and wrong. According to the self there is another kind of right and wrong. But really are there such distinctions as the self and the other, or are there no such distinctions? When the self and the other [or the this and the that] lose their contrariety, there we have the very essence of the Tao. Only the essence of the Tao may occupy the center of the circle, and respond therefrom to the endless opinions from all directions. Affirmation [of the self] is one of the endless opinions; denial [of the other] is another. Therefore it is said that there is nothing better than to employ the light of reason.

Using[7] an attribute to illustrate the point that attributes are not attributes in and of themselves is not so good as using a nonattribute to illustrate the point.[8] Using a horse to illustrate the point that a (white) horse is not a horse (as such) is not so good as using nonhorses to illustrate the point.[9] Actually the universe is but an attribute; all things are but a horse.

The possible is possible; the impossible is impossible. The Tao operates and things follow. Things are what they are called. What are they? They are what they are. What are they not? They are not what they are not. Everything is what it is, and can be what it can be. There is nothing that is not something, and there is nothing that cannot be something. Therefore, for instance, a stalk and a pillar, the ugly and the beautiful, the

[6] This clause occurs also in the 4th of Hui Shih's ten paradoxes. In that context our translation runs, "The creature born is the creature dying." (See selection below from chapter 33 of *Chuang Tzu*.)

[7] This short paragraph is a brief refutation of Kung-sun Lung Tzu's logic. The double reference to the attribute and the horse makes the identification certain. See Chapter V.

[8] The title of chapter 3 of the *Kung-sun Lung Tzu* is "Discourse on Things and Their Attributes," and the opening sentence runs, "Things consist of nothing but their attributes. But attributes are not attributes in and of themselves."

[9] The title of chapter 2 of the *Kung-sun Lung Tzu* is "Discourse on the White Horse," and the opening sentence runs, "A white horse is not a horse."

common and the peculiar, the deceitful and the strange—by the Tao this great variety is all brought into a single unity. Division to one is construction to another; construction to one is destruction to another. Whether in construction or in destruction, all things are in the end brought into unity. . . .

He who belabors his spirit and intelligence trying to bring about a unity among things and not understanding that they are already in agreement may be called "three in the morning." What is meant by "three in the morning"? Well, a keeper of monkeys once announced to the monkeys concerning their ration of acorns that each was to receive three in the morning and four in the evening. At this the monkeys were very angry. So the keeper said that they might receive four in the morning but three in the evening. With this all the monkeys were pleased. Neither name nor reality were affected either way, and yet the monkeys were pleased at the one and angry at the other. This is also due to their ignorance about the agreement of things. Therefore, the sages harmonize the right and the wrong, and rest in nature the equalizer. This is called following two courses at once.

The knowledge of the ancients was perfect. In what way was it perfect? They were not yet aware that there were things. This is the most perfect knowledge; nothing can be added. Then, some were aware that there were things, but not yet aware that there were distinctions among them. Then, some were aware that there were distinctions, but not yet aware that there was right and wrong among them. When right and wrong became manifest, the Tao thereby declined. With the decline of the Tao came the growth of love. But was there really a growth and a decline? Or was there no growth or decline?

Now, I have something to say [namely, that there is no such thing as right and wrong]. I do not know whether or not what I say agrees with what others say [namely, that there is right and wrong]. Whether or not what I say and what others say agree [in maintaining right and wrong], they at least agree [in assuming that there is right and wrong]. Then there is hardly any difference between what I say and what others say. But though this may be the case, let me try to explain myself. There was a beginning. There was a no-beginning [before the beginning]. There was a no-no-beginning [previous to the no-beginning before the beginning]. There was being. There was nonbeing [before there was being]. There

was no-nonbeing [before there was nonbeing]. There was no-no-nonbeing [before there was no-nonbeing]. Suddenly being and nonbeing appeared. And yet, between being and nonbeing, I do not know which is really being and which is really nonbeing. Just now I have said something, and yet I do not know whether what I have said really means something, or does not mean anything at all.

In all the world, there is nothing greater than the tip of an autumn hair; Mount T'ai is small.[10] Neither is there anyone who was longer lived than a child cut off in its infancy; P'eng-tsu himself died young. The universe and I exist together, and all things and I are one. Since all things are one, what room is there for speech? But since I have spoken of them as one, is this not already speech? One and speech make two; two and one make three. Going on from this, even the most skillful reckoner will not be able to keep count, how much less ordinary people! If, proceeding from nothing to something, we soon reach three, how much further shall we reach if we proceed from something to something! Let us not proceed; we had better let it alone. . . .

Ch'ü-ch'iao Tzu asked Ch'ang-wu Tzu, saying: "I heard from the Master [Confucius] that the sage does not occupy himself with the affairs of the world. He neither seeks gain nor avoids injury. He takes no pleasure in seeking. He does not purposely adhere to the Tao. He says things without speaking and does not say anything when he speaks. Thus he roams beyond the dust and dirt of this world. The Master himself considers this a very inappropriate description of the sage, but I consider it to be the Way of the mysterious Tao. How do you think of it, my dear sir?"

"These points," said Ch'ang-wu Tzu, "would have perplexed even the Yellow Emperor; how should Confucius understand them? Moreover, you are too hasty in forming your estimate. You see an egg, and expect to hear it crow. You look at the crossbow, and expect to find a dove roasting. Let me try speaking to you in a somewhat irresponsible manner, and may I ask you to listen to me in the same spirit. Leaning against the sun and the moon and carrying the universe under his arm, the sage blends everything into a harmonious whole. He is unmindful of the confusion and the gloom, and equalizes the humble and the honorable. The multitude strive and toil; the sage is primitive and without knowledge.

[10] Compare with Hui Shih's ten paradoxes, especially items 3, 4, and 5. See Chapter V.

He comprehends ten thousand years as one unity, whole and simple. All things are what they are, and are thus brought together.

"How do I know that the love of life is not a delusion? How do I know that he who is afraid of death is not like a man who left his home as a youth and forgot to return? Lady Li was the daughter of the border warden of Ai. When she was first brought to the state of Chin, she wept until the bosom of her robe was drenched with tears. But when she came to the royal residence, shared with the king his luxurious couch and ate sumptuous food, she regretted that she had wept. How do I know that the dead do not repent of their former craving for life? Those who dream of a merry drinking party may the next morning wail and weep. Those who dream of wailing and weeping may in the morning go off gaily to hunt. While they dream they do not know that they are dreaming. In their dream, they may even try to interpret their dream. Only when they have awakened do they begin to know that they have dreamed. By and by comes the great awakening, and then we shall know that it has all been a great dream. Yet all the while the fools think that they are awake; this they are sure of. With minute nicety, they discriminate between princes and grooms. How stupid! Confucius and you are both in a dream. And when I say that you are in a dream, this is also a dream. This way of talking may be called paradoxical. If after ten thousand generations we could once meet a great sage who knew how to explain the paradox, it would be as though we met him after only one morning or one evening.

"Suppose that you argue with me. If you beat me, instead of my beating you, are you necessarily right, and am I necessarily wrong? Or, if I beat you and not you me, am I necessarily right, and are you necessarily wrong? Must one of us necessarily be right and the other wrong? Or may we not both be right or both be wrong? You and I cannot come to a mutual and common understanding, and others, of course, are all in the dark. Whom shall I ask to decide this dispute? I may ask someone who agrees with you; but since he agrees with you, how can he decide it? I may ask someone who agrees with me; but since he agrees with me, how can he decide it? I may ask someone who differs with both you and me; but since he differs with both you and me, how can he decide it? I may ask someone who agrees with both you and me; but since he agrees with both you and me, how can he decide it? Thus, you and I and the others

all would be unable to come to a mutual and common understanding; shall we wait for still another?

"What is meant by harmonizing things according to the order of nature? It is: right is also not right, and 'so' is also 'not so.' If right were necessarily right, then with regard to the difference between right and not right there should be no dispute. If 'so' were necessarily 'so,' then with regard to the difference between 'so' and 'not so' there should also be no dispute. Whether or not the modulating voices [of the disputants] are relative to each other, they should be harmonized according to the order of nature and left to her changing processes. This is the way for us to complete our years. Let us forget the lapse of time; let us forget the claims of right and wrong. But let us find enjoyment in the realm of the infinite and let us abide there."

The Penumbra asked the Shadow, saying, "At one moment you move; at another you are at rest. At one moment you sit down; at another you stand up. Why this inconsistency of purpose?"

"Do I not have to depend upon something else," replied the Shadow, "for doing what I do? Does not that something upon which I depend still have to depend upon something else for doing what it does? Do I not have to depend upon the scales of a snake or the wings of a cicada? How can I tell why I do a thing, or why I don't do it?"

Once upon a time, Chuang Chou [i.e., Chuang Tzu] dreamed that he was a butterfly, a butterfly fluttering about, enjoying itself. It did not know that it was Chuang Chou. Suddenly he awoke with a start and he was Chuang Chou again. But he did not know whether he was Chuang Chou who had dreamed that he was a butterfly, or whether he was a butterfly dreaming that he was Chuang Chou. Between Chuang Chou and the butterfly there must be some distinction. This is what is called the transformation of things.

### CHAPTER 3: THE FUNDAMENTALS FOR THE CULTIVATION OF LIFE

There is a limit to our life, but there is no limit to knowledge. To pursue what is unlimited with what is limited is a perilous thing. When, knowing this, we still seek to increase our knowledge, we are simply placing ourselves in peril. Shrink from fame when you do good; shrink from punishment when you do evil; pursue always the middle course.

These are the ways to preserve our body, to maintain our life, to support our parents, and to complete our terms of years.

Prince Wen-hui's cook was cutting up a bullock. Every touch of his hand, every shift of his shoulder, every tread of his foot, every thrust of his knee, every sound of the rending flesh, and every note of the movement of the chopper was in perfect harmony—rhythmical like the dance of "The Mulberry Grove," blended like the chords of the "Ching-shou" movement.

"Ah, admirable," said the prince, "that your skill should be so perfect!"

The cook laid down his chopper and replied: "What your servant loves is the Tao, which I have applied to the skill of carving. When I first began to cut up bullocks, what I saw was simply whole bullocks. After three years' practice, I saw no more bullocks as wholes. Now, I work with my mind, and not with my eyes. The functions of my senses stop; my spirit dominates. Following the natural markings, my chopper slips through the great cavities, slides through the great cleavages, taking advantage of the structure that is already there. My skill is now such that my chopper never touches even the smallest tendon or ligament, let alone the great bones. A good cook changes his chopper once a year, because he cuts. An ordinary cook changes his chopper once a month, because he hacks. Now my chopper has been in use for nineteen years; it has cut up several thousand bullocks; yet its edge is as sharp as if it just came from the whetstone. At the joints there are always interstices, and the edge of the chopper is without thickness. If we insert that which is without thickness into an interstice, then we may ply the chopper as we wish and there will be plenty of room. That is why after nineteen years the edge of my chopper is still as sharp as if it just came from the whetstone. Nevertheless, when I come to a complicated joint, and see that there will be some difficulty, I proceed anxiously and with caution. I fix my eyes on it. I move slowly. Then by a very gentle movement of my chopper, the part is quickly separated, and yields like earth crumbling to the ground. Then I stand up straight with the chopper in my hand, and look all round, and feel a sense of triumph and satisfaction. Finally I wipe my chopper and put it in its sheath."

"Excellent," said the prince, "I have heard the words of this cook, and learned the way of cultivating life."

. . . .

When Lao Tzu died, Ch'in-shih went to mourn. He uttered three yells and left.

A disciple asked him, saying, "Were you not a friend of the master?"

"Yes, I was," replied Ch'in-shih.

"If so, is it proper to offer your mourning in the way you have done?"

"Yes," said Ch'in-shih. "At first, I thought the other mourners were his [Lao Tzu's] followers; now I know they are not. When I went in to mourn, there were old persons weeping as if for their sons, and young ones as if for their mothers. I suppose they behave like that because there are always some people who speak when there is no need to speak, and weep when there is no need to weep. This is to violate the principle of nature and to increase the emotion of man, forgetting what we have received from nature. This is what the ancients called the crime of violating the principle of nature. The master came because it was his natural time; he went because it was his natural course. Those who abide by their time and follow their natural course cannot be affected by sorrow or joy. They were considered by the ancients as men released by the Lord from bondage."

### CHAPTER 17: AUTUMN FLOODS

"From the point of view of the Tao," said the Spirit of the Ocean, "things are neither noble nor mean. From the point of view of the individual things, each considers itself noble and the others mean. From the point of view of common opinion, nobility or meanness do not depend on one's self.

"From the point of view of relativity, if we call a thing great because it is greater than something else, then there is nothing in all creation which is not great. If we call a thing small because it is smaller than something else, then there is nothing which is not small. To know that the universe is but a tare-seed, and the tip of a hair is as a mountain, is to have a clear perception of relative dimensions.

"From the point of view of function, if we call a thing useful when it fulfills a function, then there is nothing in all creation which is not useful. If we call a thing useless when it does not fulfill a function, then there is nothing which is not useless. To understand that east and west are mutually contrary, and yet neither can exist without the other, then we have a proper determination of function.

"From the point of preference, if we approve of anyone who is approved of by someone [at least himself], then there is no one who may not be approved of. If we condemn anyone who is condemned by someone else, then there is no one who may not be condemned. To know that [sage-king] Yao and [tyrant] Chieh would each approve of himself and condemn the other, then we have a clear realization of human preference. . . .

"A battering-ram can knock down a city wall, but it cannot stop a hole—the uses of different implements are different. The horses Ch'i-chi and Hua-liu could gallop a thousand *li* in one day, but for catching rats they were not equal to a wild cat or a weasel—the gifts of different creatures are different. An owl can catch fleas at night, and see the tip of a hair, but if it comes out in the daytime it may stare with its eyes and not see a mountain—the natures of different creatures are different.

"Therefore it has been said, one who wishes to uphold the right and eliminate the wrong, or uphold order and eliminate disorder, must be ignorant of the great principles of the universe as well as the nature of things. One might as well try to uphold Heaven and eliminate the earth, or uphold the yin and eliminate the yang, which is clearly absurd. Yet notwithstanding, there are people who insist upon talking in this way without cease. They must be either fools or knaves. . . .

"From the point of view of the Tao," said the Spirit of the Ocean, "what is noble, and what is mean? These are but phrases in a process of alternation. Do not be narrowly restricted in your inclination, lest you conflict with the Tao. What is few, and what is many? They are but varying amounts in a process of rotation. Do not be slavishly uniform in your conduct, lest you deviate from the Tao. Be august, like the ruler of a state whose favors are impartial. Be transcendant, like the god of the land at a sacrifice whose benediction is impartial. Be expansive, like the boundlessness of the four directions within which there are no sectional limits. Embrace all creation in your bosom, favoring and harboring none in particular. This is called impartiality. And where all things are equal, how is it possible for some to be short and some long?

"The Tao is without beginning and without end. Things are born and die, without holding to any permanence. They are now empty, now full, without maintaining a constant form. The years cannot be made to abide; time cannot be arrested. Processes of increase and decrease are

in operation and every end is followed by a new beginning. Thus may we speak of the great norm [of the Tao] and the principle pervading all things.

"The life of things passes by like a galloping horse. Every movement brings a change, and every hour makes a difference. What is one to do or what is one not to do? Indeed everything will take its own course. . . .

"Therefore it has been said that the natural abides within, the artificial without, and virtue (*te*) resides in the natural. If one knows the course of nature and man, taking nature as the fundamental and abiding by virtue, one may feel free either to proceed or retreat, either to contract or extend, for there is always a return to the essential and to the ultimate."

"What do you mean," inquired the Earl of the River, "by the natural and the artificial?"

"Horses and oxen," answered the Spirit of the Ocean, "have four feet. That is the natural. Putting a halter on a horse's head, a string through a bullock's nose—that is the artificial.

"Therefore it has been said, do not let the artificial obliterate the natural; do not let effort obliterate destiny; do not let enjoyment be sacrificed to fame. Diligently observe these precepts without fail, and thus you will revert to the original innocence."

. . . .

Once Chuang Tzu was fishing in the P'u River when the King of Ch'u sent two of his ministers to announce that he wished to entrust to Chuang Tzu the care of his entire domain.

Chuang Tzu held his fishing pole and, without turning his head, said: "I have heard that Ch'u possesses a sacred tortoise which has been dead for three thousand years and which the king keeps wrapped up in a box and stored in his ancestral temple. Is this tortoise better off dead and with its bones venerated, or would it be better off alive with its tail dragging in the mud?"

"It would be better off alive and dragging its tail in the mud," the two ministers replied.

"Then go away!" said Chuang Tzu, "and I will drag my tail in the mud!"

. . . .

Chuang Tzu and Hui Tzu were strolling one day on the bridge over the River Hao, when the former observed, "See how the minnows are

darting about! Such is the pleasure that fish enjoy." "You are not a fish," said Hui Tzu. "How do you know what fish enjoy?"

"You are not I," retorted Chuang Tzu, "so how do you know that I do not know what fish enjoy?" "I am not you," said Hui Tzu, "and so evidently I do not know what you know. But it is also evident that you are not a fish, and so it is certain that you do not know what fish enjoy."

"Let us go back," said Chuang Tzu, "to your original question. You asked me *how* I knew what fish enjoy. The way you put the question shows that you already knew that I knew. I know it just as we stand here over the Hao."

CHAPTER 33: THE WORLD OF THOUGHT

This is not only the earliest survey of thought in ancient China, but one which has become a classic of Chinese philosophical criticism for its succinctness of presentation and penetrating analysis. In it we see reflected a period of intense intellectual excitement, of great variety and vitality of thought, which belies the conclusion that might be drawn from the rather limited literature surviving from this time. For many of the thinkers taken up here, this chapter is the chief, and sometimes only, source of information. The fact that Chuang Tzu's philosophy is among those criticized has given rise to the suspicion that this chapter has been appended to the book by a later hand, a view held by most scholars. It is significant that Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu are treated separately, and that the latter is regarded as the pinnacle of thought in this period.

There are many in the world who devote themselves to theories of law and conduct. Each man thinks his own is perfect. Where then is to be found what the ancients called the system of Tao? It is everywhere. Whence comes the spiritual? Whence comes the intelligent? There is that which brings forth sages; there is that which produces kings. They all originate in the One. . . .

The men of old were indeed perfect! They were ranked among the gods and they were the equals of Heaven and earth; they nurtured all things and they harmonized the world. Their beneficent influence was extended to all people. Their ways were expressed through the basic measures and involved in the minutest details. Their spirit permeated everywhere in the six directions and the four quarters, and into everything great or small, fine or coarse. That which was expressed in the

measures and institutions has been preserved in a number of the official records of ancient laws and traditions. That which was recorded in the Classics of *Odes, History, Rites,* and *Music* has been known to many of the scholars of Tsou and Lu [11] and the intelligentsia. The *Book of Odes* tells of man's longings; the *Book of History* records events; the *Book of Rites* prescribes conduct; the *Book of Music* expresses harmony of the spirit; the *Book of Changes* discusses the principles of the yin and the yang; and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* defines names and duties. As to the rest of the measures that were diffused throughout the world and established in the Middle Kingdom they were sometimes mentioned and discussed by the various other schools.

When the world fell into chaos, sages and worthies no longer manifested themselves, and the Tao lost its power of unity. Many in the world comprehended but one particular aspect of the whole and they were delighted with themselves. . . . So it was that the Tao of "sageliness within and kingliness without" became obscure and unclear, repressed and suspended. Everyone in the world did what he wished and was a rule unto himself. Alas! The various schools of philosophy went their own ways, farther and farther afield, and they could never accord with the truth. Thus students in later times have unfortunately not been able to see the original purity of Heaven and earth or the complete social order of the ancients. The system of the Tao has been scattered in fragments throughout the world!

To leave no examples of extravagance to future generations, to show no wastefulness in the use of things, to indulge in no excess of measures and institutions, but to keep themselves under the restraint of strict rules so as to be prepared for relieving others in emergencies—these were some of the aspects of the system of the Tao among the ancients. Mo Ti (Mo Tzu) and Ch'in Ku-li [12] heard of them and cherished them. But in practicing them themselves they went to extremes and in restricting other people they were too arbitrary. Mo Tzu wrote an essay on "Condemnation of Music" and another on "Economy of Expenditures." There was to be no singing for the living and no mourning for the dead. He taught universal love and mutual benefit and condemned war. His teaching excluded anger. Besides, he was fond of study, and pressed everyone to

[11] Home states of Mencius and Confucius, indicating the Confucian school.
[12] A leading disciple of Mo Tzu.

conform to his teachings. He did not agree with the former kings. He wanted to do away with the rites and music of the ancients. . . .

Men want to sing but he condemns singing; men want to mourn but he condemns mourning; men want to enjoy music but he condemns music—is this truly in accord with man's nature? Any teaching that would have men toil through life and be contented with a bare funeral at death is too austere. It makes men sorrowful and dejected. Its practice would be difficult. I fear it cannot be regarded as the Tao of the sages. It is contrary to human nature and few people can stand it. Though Mo Tzu himself was able to carry it out, how about the rest of mankind? Being alien to mankind, his teaching is far removed from the way of the kings.

Mo Tzu, in arguing for his system, said: "Formerly when Yü dealt with the deluge, channeling the water into streams and rivers and guiding their courses through the four barbarian regions and the nine provinces, there were 300 great rivers, 3,000 tributaries and innumerable streamlets. With his own hands, Yü handled spade and bucket to channel all the streams into the great rivers. His legs were worn thin, and his shins worn hairless; he was bathed by heavy rains, and combed by the fierce winds. Yet he succeeded in pacifying all the states. Yü was a great sage, and yet he toiled so hard for the world." Thus most of the later Mo-ists were led to use skins and coarse linen garments, and straw and wood for sandals; to toil night and day without cease and to consider self-sacrifice as the ideal. They said: "If we cannot do this we are not following the way of Yü and shall be unworthy to be called Mo-ists."

The disciples of Hsiang-li Ch'in, such as Wo Hou, and the Mo-ists of the South, such as K'u Hou, Chi Ch'ih, and Teng Ling Tzu, all recited the "Mo-ist canon" but interpreted it differently, calling each other heretics of Mo-ism. They disputed with each other about "hardness and whiteness," about identity and difference, and answered each other's arguments in strange and contradictory terms. However, they all regarded the Elder Master as a living sage, aspiring to be his medium upon his death, in order to become his successor. To this day these differences are not settled.

The intentions of Mo Tzu and Ch'in Ku-li were right; their practice was wrong. They would make the Mo-ists of later ages feel it necessary to encourage each other in self-sacrifice until their legs were worn thin

and their shins hairless. The effect of such teachings would be to produce something better than disorder but still far from perfect order. Nevertheless, Mo Tzu was truly a fine man, of whom there are only too few to be found. Despite all personal hardships, he held fast to his ideal—a man of excellence indeed!

Not to be encumbered with popular fashions, not to be dazzled by the display of things, not to be unfeeling toward other men, and not to be antagonistic to the multitude; to desire peace in the world for the preservation of the life of the people; to seek no more than is sufficient for nourishing oneself and others, thus setting one's heart at peace —these were some of the aspects of the system of the Tao among the ancients. Sung Hsing and Yin Wen heard of them and cherished them. They adopted a Hua Shan cap [with a flat top to indicate equality] as their badge. In dealing with things they began to eliminate all prejudices. They talked about states of mind and called them the inner bases of conduct. By warmth of affection they sought the harmony of joy, wherewith to blend all people in the world. They wished to establish this as the principle of all things. They tried to save the people from fighting by demonstrating that an insult is no disgrace. They would save the world from wars by condemning aggression and urging disarmament. With this message they went about the world, counseling the high and instructing the low. Though the people would have none of it, Sung and Yin never stopped harping upon it. Hence about them it was said: "When everybody was wearied of seeing them, they persisted in showing themselves." However, they did too much for others, too little for themselves. . . .

To be impartial and nonpartisan; to be compliant and selfless; to be free from insistence and prejudice; to take things as they come; to be without worry or care; not to rely on one's wits; to accept all and mingle with all—these were some of the aspects of the system of the Tao among the ancients. P'eng Meng, T'ien, and Shen Tao heard of them and cherished them. Their fundamental idea was the equality of things. They said: "Heaven shelters things but does not support them. The earth supports them but does not shelter them. The great Tao is all-embracing without making any distinctions." Realizing that all things have their capacities and limitations, they said: "Selection cannot embrace the whole; instruction cannot exhaust the ultimate; only the Tao is all-inclusive."

Therefore Shen Tao discarded knowledge and renounced the self; he acted only upon necessity and was indifferent to things. Such were his principles. . . .

He went when he was pushed and followed when he was led, moving round and round like a whirling gale, like a feather tossed in the wind, like a millstone set turning. He thus preserved himself and avoided defects; in motion or at rest he was free from error and above reproach. Why was this so? Because creatures without reason do not trouble about asserting themselves or burden their minds with knowledge; in motion or at rest they do not depart from the principles of nature, and for this reason they never receive any praise [or blame]. Therefore he said: "Let us be just like creatures without knowledge. There is no use for sages and worthies. A clod of earth never misses the Tao."

Capable and spirited men laughed at him and said, "The teachings of Shen Tao are not for the practice of the living; they are the way of the dead. They would make one become nothing but peculiar."

It was just the same with T'ien P'ien. He studied under P'eng Meng and learned what could not be taught. P'eng Meng's master used to say: "Of old, the men of Tao were only trying to reach the state beyond right and wrong. That was all. So subtle is this doctrine that it cannot be expressed in words!"

The teaching of these men is often contrary to human nature and therefore few pay attention to it. They were not free from arbitrary judgments. What they called Tao is not the Tao; what they considered right was often wrong. P'eng Meng, T'ien P'ien, and Shen Tao did not really know the Tao. Nevertheless, they had probably heard something about it.

To regard essences as subtle, to regard things as coarse, to regard all measurable quantities as inadequate [representations of reality], to abide calmly and dispassionately alone with the spirits—these were some aspects of the system of the Tao among the ancients. Kuan Yin and Lao Tan [Lao Tzu] heard of them and cherished them. They built their system upon the principle of eternal nonbeing and based it upon the idea of supreme unity. Weakness and humility were its outward expression and pure emptiness with noninjury to all things were for them the true substance of their teaching. Kuan Yin said: "Give up all your assumptions, and things and forms will appear as they are. In motion,

be like water; at rest, be like a mirror; in response, be like an echo. Be subtle and appear as if not to exist; be quiet, and appear like clear water. He who agrees with others enjoys peace; he who gains, loses. Do not ever put yourself forward, but always follow behind."

Lao Tzu said: "Know the masculine but maintain the feminine; become thereby a ravine for the world. Know purity but endure disgrace; become thereby a valley for the world." Men all reach for the first; he alone took the last. He said, "Receive unto yourself the refuse of the world." Men all seek the substantial; he alone took the empty. Because he did not hoard, he had abundance; indeed great was his abundance. His actions were effortless and without waste. He believed in doing nothing, and laughed at the ingenious. Men all seek for happiness; he alone sought self-preservation through adaptation. He said: "Let us be free from reproach." He believed in depth for one's foundation, and simplicity as the rule of outward conduct. He said: "The hard will be crushed; the sharp will be blunted." He was always generous and tolerant toward things. He would not exploit others. This may be considered the height of perfection. Kuan Yin and Lao Tan—they belonged with the great and true men of old!

Silent and formless, changing and impermanent! Are life and death one? Do I coexist with heaven and earth? Where do the spirits move? Disappearing whither, going whence, so mysteriously and suddenly? All things lie spread before me, but in none of them can be found my destiny—these were some aspects of the system of the Tao among the ancients. Chuang Chou [Chuang Tzu] heard of them and cherished them. With unbridled fancies, extravagant language, and romantic nonsense, he gave free play to his ideas without restraint and without partiality. He regarded the world as dense and muddled, so that discussions in a dignified style would be of no avail. Thereupon he employed effervescent words for rambling discussions, "weighty words" for conveying truths, and allegories for broad illustrations. He had personal communion with the spirit of Heaven and earth but no sense of pride over things. He did not quarrel with what others regard as right and wrong, and so he was able to mingle with conventional society. Though his writings have a dazzling style and stagger the imagination, they are not directed against anything and so are harmless. Though his language is full of irregularities, it is ingenious and witty, seeming to gush forth from

the fullness of his thoughts in spite of himself. Above, his spirit roams with the creator; below, he makes friends of those who ignore beginning or end, and are indifferent toward life and death. In regard to the fundamental he was comprehensive and great, profound and free. In regard to the essential he might be called the harmonizer of things and adapter to the higher level. Nevertheless, in his response to change and his interpretation of things, his principles were inexhaustible and not divorced from their origin (Tao). He is mysterious, obscure and boundless.

Hui Shih [13] was a man of many ideas. His writings would fill five carriages, but his doctrines were contradictory and his sayings missed the truth. Referring to the nature of the physical universe, he said: [Here follow ten paradoxes, for which see Chapter V].

Through such sayings Hui Shih made a great show in the world and tried to enlighten the debaters. The debaters of the day were delighted with them. They said: [Here follow twenty-one paradoxes, for which see Chapter V].

Such were the questions over which the debaters argued with Hui Shih all their days without coming to an end.

Huan T'uan and Kung-sun Lung,[14] who were among the debaters, turned men's minds and altered their ideas. They were able to subdue people's tongues but not to win their hearts. Here lay the weakness of the debaters.

Day after day, Hui Shih exercised his wit to argue with people, and deliberately presented strange propositions to the debaters of the day. This was his general characteristic. Nevertheless, Hui Shih regarded his own eloquence as the most excellent. He said: "The universe alone is greater!" He wished to maintain supremacy but he did not have a proper system. Once a queer man from the south named Huang Liao asked him why the sky did not fall and the earth sink, as well as about the cause of wind, rain, and the rolling thunder. Hui Shih answered without hesitation and replied without taking time for reflection. He talked about everything in the universe, on and on without end, and imagining still that his words were but few, he added to them the strangest observations. Actually he merely contradicted people, but wished to have the

[13] For Hui Shih, see Chapter V.

[14] For Kung-sun Lung, see Chapter V.

reputation of overcoming them. Therefore he was never on good terms with others. Weak in the cultivation of virtue, strong in the handling of things, his way was a narrow one indeed!

From the point of view of the Tao of the universe, Hui Shih's ingenuity was about as effective as a humming mosquito or a buzzing fly. Of what use was he to the world? It should be enough to recognize the unity of the Tao and advance it with but a few words. But Hui Shih could not content himself with this; he spread himself insatiably over all things, to be known in the end only as a skilled debater. Alas! With all his talents Hui Shih wandered about without achieving anything; he went after all things without reverting to the Tao. He was like one trying to silence an echo by shouting at it, or like one trying to race with his own shadow. How sad!

brother of a man of Ch'in I do not love. Here the sanction for the feeling rests in me, and therefore I call it [i.e., humanity] internal. An old man of Ch'u I regard as old, just as an old man among my own people I regard as old. Here the sanction for the feeling lies in old age, and therefore I call it [i.e., righteousness] external." Mencius answered him: "We love the Ch'in people's roast as much as we love our own roast. Here we have a similar situation with respect to things. Would you say, then, that this love of roast is also something external?" [VI A:4]

The disciple Kung-tu Tzu said: "Kao Tzu says that human nature is neither good nor bad. Some say that human nature can be turned to be good or bad. Thus when [sage-kings] Wen and Wu were in power the people loved virtue; when [wicked kings] Yu and Li were in power the people indulged in violence. Some say that some natures are good and some are bad. Thus even while [the sage] Yao was sovereign there was the bad man Hsiang, even a bad father like Ku-sou had a good son like [the sage-king] Shun, and even with [the wicked] Chou for nephew and king there were the men of virtue Ch'i, the Viscount of Wei, and the Prince Pi-kan. Now, you say that human nature is good. Are the others then all wrong?" Mencius replied: "When left to follow its natural feelings human nature will do good. This is why I say it is good. If it becomes evil, it is not the fault of man's original capability. The sense of mercy is found in all men; the sense of shame is found in all men; the sense of respect is found in all men; the sense of right and wrong is found in all men. The sense of mercy constitutes humanity; the sense of shame constitutes righteousness; the sense of respect constitutes decorum (*li*); the sense of right and wrong constitutes wisdom. Humanity, righteousness, decorum, and wisdom are not something instilled into us from without; they are inherent in our nature. Only we give them no thought. Therefore it is said: 'Seek and you will find them, neglect and you will lose them.' Some have these virtues to a much greater degree than others —twice, five times, and incalculably more—and that is because those others have not developed to the fullest extent their original capability. It is said in the *Book of Odes:*

> Heaven so produced the teeming multitudes that
> For everything there is its principle.

The people will keep to the constant principles,
And all will love a beautiful character.[3]

Confucius said, regarding this poem: 'The writer of this poem understands indeed the nature of the Way! For wherever there are things and affairs there must be their principles. As the people keep to the constant principles, they will come to love a beautiful character.'" [VI A:6]

Mencius said: "All men have a sense of commiseration. The ancient kings had this commiserating heart and hence a commiserating government. When a commiserating government is conducted from a commiserating heart, one can rule the whole empire as if one were turning it on one's palm. Why I say all men have a sense of commiseration is this: Here is a man who suddenly notices a child about to fall into a well. Invariably he will feel a sense of alarm and compassion. And this is not for the purpose of gaining the favor of the child's parents, or seeking the approbation of his neighbors and friends, or for fear of blame should he fail to rescue it. Thus we see that no man is without a sense of compassion, or a sense of shame, or a sense of courtesy, or a sense of right and wrong. The sense of compassion is the beginning of humanity; the sense of shame is the beginning of righteousness; the sense of courtesy is the beginning of decorum; the sense of right and wrong is the beginning of wisdom. Every man has within himself these four beginnings, just as he has four limbs. Since everyone has these four beginnings within him, the man who considers himself incapable of exercising them is destroying himself. If he considers his sovereign incapable of exercising them, he is likewise destroying his sovereign. Let every man but attend to expanding and developing these four beginnings that are in our very being, and they will issue forth like a conflagration being kindled and a spring being opened up. If they can be fully developed, these virtues are capable of safeguarding all within the four seas; if allowed to remain undeveloped, they will not suffice even for serving one's parents." [II A:6]

Mencius said: "Man's innate ability is the ability possessed by him that is not acquired through learning. Man's innate knowledge is the knowledge possessed by him that is not the result of reflective thinking. Every child knows enough to love his parents, and when he is grown up he

[3] *Shih ching*, Ta ya: T'ang, Cheng-min.

knows enough to respect his elder brothers. The love for one's parents is really humanity and the respect for one's elders is really righteousness—all that is necessary is to have these natural feelings applied to all men." [VII A:15]

HUMANE GOVERNMENT

Mencius went to see King Hui of Liang. The king said: "You have not considered a thousand *li* too far to come, and must therefore have something of profit to offer my kingdom?" Mencius replied: "Why must you speak of profit? What I have to offer is humanity and righteousness, nothing more. If a king says, 'What will profit my kingdom?' the high officials will say, 'What will profit our families?' and the lower officials and commoners will say, 'What will profit ourselves?' Superiors and inferiors will try to seize profit one from another, and the state will be endangered. . . . Let your Majesty speak only of humanity and righteousness. Why must you speak of profit?" [I A:1]

Mencius said: "It was by virtue of humanity that the Three Dynasties won the empire, and by virtue of the want of humanity that they lost it. States rise and fall for the same reason. Devoid of humanity, the emperor would be unable to safeguard the four seas, a feudal lord would be unable to safeguard the altars of land and grain [i.e., his state], a minister would be unable to safeguard the ancestral temple [i.e., his clan-family], and the individual would be unable to safeguard his four limbs. Now people hate destruction and yet indulge in want of humanity—this is as if one hates to get drunk and yet forces oneself to drink wine." [IV A:3]

Mencius said: "An overlord [4] is he who employs force under a cloak of humanity. To be an overlord one has to be in possession of a large state. A king, on the other hand, is he who gives expression to his humanity through virtuous conduct. To be a true king, one does not have to have a large state. T'ang [founder of the Shang dynasty] had only a territory of seventy *li* and King Wen [founder of the Chou] only a hundred. When men are subdued by force, it is not that they submit from their hearts but only that their strength is unavailing. When men are won by virtue, then their hearts are gladdened and their submission is sincere, as

[4] The Chinese term *pa,* which during the Spring and Autumn period (722–481 B.C.) meant specifically the chief among the feudal princes.

the seventy disciples were won by the Master, Confucius. This is what is meant in the *Book of Odes* when it says:

> From east and west,
> From north and south,
> Came none who thought of disobedience."[5] [II A:3]

Mencius said: "States have been won by men without humanity, but the world, never." [VII B:13]

Mencius said: "It was because Chieh and Chou lost the people that they lost the empire, and it was because they lost the hearts of the people that they lost the people. Here is the way to win the empire: win the people and you win the empire. Here is the way to win the people: win their hearts and you win the people. Here is the way to win their hearts: give them and share with them what they like, and do not do to them what they do not like. The people turn to a humane ruler as water flows downward or beasts take to wilderness." [IV A:9]

### THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF HUMANE GOVERNMENT

Mencius was no advocate of "big government" or extensive economic activity by the state, but in passages like the following he made it clear that the economic welfare of the people was a necessary foundation of political stability, and that therefore the ruler had a responsibility to provide for the material needs of his people.

Mencius said to King Hsüan of Ch'i: . . . "Only the true scholar is capable of maintaining, without certain means of livelihood, a steadfast heart. As for the multitude, if they have no certain means of livelihood, they surely cannot maintain a steadfast heart. Without a steadfast heart, they are likely to abandon themselves to any and all manner of depravity. If you wait till they have lapsed into crime and then mete out punishment, it is like placing traps for the people. If a humane ruler is on the throne how can he permit such a thing as placing traps for the people? Therefore, when an intelligent ruler regulates the livelihood of the people, he makes sure that they will have enough to serve their parents on the one hand and to support their wives and children on the other, so that in good years all may eat their fill and in bad years no one need die of starvation.

[5] *Shih ching,* Ta ya: Wen-wang, Wen-wang yu-sheng.

Thus only will he urge them to walk the path of virtue, and the people will follow him effortlessly. But as the people's livelihood is ordered at present, they do not have enough to serve their parents on the one hand or to support their wives and children on the other. Even in good years life is one long struggle and in bad years death becomes all but inevitable. Such being the case, they are only anxiously trying to stay alive. What leisure have they for cultivating decorum and righteousness?

"If your Majesty wishes to practice humane government, would it not be well to go back to the root of the matter?

"Let the five *mu*[6] of land surrounding the farmer's cottage be planted with mulberry trees, and persons over fifty may all be clothed in silk. Let poultry, dogs, and swine be kept and bred in season, and those over seventy may all be provided with meat. Let the cultivation of the hundred-*mu* farm not be interfered with, and a family of eight mouths need not go hungry. Let attention be paid to teaching in schools and let the people be taught the principles of filial piety and brotherly respect, and white-headed old men will not be seen carrying loads on the road. When the aged wear silk and eat meat and the common people are free from hunger and cold, never has the lord of such a people failed to become king."[7] [I A:7]

### THE WELL-FIELD SYSTEM

As the best means of providing for the livelihood of the people Mencius upheld a system of equal landholding which he believed had been maintained by the Chou dynasty. It is doubtful that such a neat and uniform system ever prevailed over the entire Chou kingdom, but on the authority of Mencius (and other Confucian texts dealing with the rites and institutions of the Chou dynasty), this egalitarian system was accepted as the ideal by most later Confucianists. Note, however, how closely it is linked here to a two-class system: the rulers and the ruled.

Duke Wen of T'eng sent Pi Chan to Mencius to learn about the well-field land system. Mencius said: "Now that your prince has made up his mind to put through a humane measure in government and has appointed you to carry it out, you must do your best. At the bottom of all humane government, we might say, lies the system of land division and demarcation.

[6] One *mu* or *mou* is approximately one-sixth of an English acre.

[7] This paragraph is recorded also in I A:3 and VII A:22 in the *Mencius*, as if to suggest the importance attached to it in Mencius' thought.

When the land system is not in proper operation, then the well-field farms are not equally distributed among the farmers or the grain for salaries equitably apportioned among the ministers. So a wicked lord or a corrupt magistrate usually lets the land system fall into disuse. When the land system is in proper operation, on the other hand, the distribution of land and the apportioning of salaries can be settled where you sit.

"Although T'eng is a small state, yet there must be those who are gentlemen and those who are countrymen. Without the gentlemen there would be none to rule the countrymen; without the countrymen there would be none to feed the gentlemen.

"In the surrounding country let the land tax be fixed at one part in nine to be paid according to the well-field group plan, while within the limits of the state capital let it be one in ten to be paid individually. For all officers, from the chief ministers down, there should be sacrificial land, in lots of fifty *mu*. For all extra-quota men in a household there should be additional land, in lots of twenty-five *mu*. Whether in burying the dead or in house-moving, a family does not go beyond the district. Within the district those whose farms belong to the same well-field unit befriend one another in their going out and coming in, practice mutual aid in their self-defense, and uphold one another in sickness. Thus the people learn to live in affection and harmony.

"Each well-field unit is one *li* square and contains nine hundred *mu* of land. The center lot is the public field. The eight households each own a hundred-*mu* farm and collaborate in cultivating the public field.[8] When the public field has been properly attended, then they may attend to their own work. This is how the countrymen are taught their status.

"The above are the main features of the system. As to adapting it to your present circumstances, it is up to you and your prince." [III A:3, 13–20]

### IMPORTANCE OF THE PEOPLE AND THE RIGHT OF REVOLUTION

[Mencius' disciple] Wan Chang asked: "Is it true that Yao gave the empire[9] to Shun?" Mencius replied: "No. The emperor cannot give the

[8] The whole unit has the configuration of the Chinese character 井 (meaning a well).

[9] China before 221 B.C. would be better described as a kingdom than an empire, but the Chinese expression "all under Heaven" suggests that this realm embraced all the known world.

empire to another." Wan Chang asked: "Who then gave it to him, when Shun had the empire?" Mencius said: "Heaven gave it to him." Wan Chang asked: "You say Heaven gave it to him—did Heaven do it with an explicit charge?" Mencius said: "No. Heaven does not speak. It simply signified its will through his conduct and handling of affairs." Wan Chang asked: "How was this done?" Mencius said: . . . "Of old, Yao recommended Shun to Heaven and Heaven accepted him. He presented him to the people and the people accepted him. This is why I said that Heaven does not speak but simply signified its will through Shun's conduct and handling of affairs." Wan Chang said: "May I venture to ask, how was this acceptance by Heaven and the people indicated?" Mencius said: "He was appointed to preside over the sacrifices, and all the spirits were pleased with them: that indicated his acceptance by Heaven. He was placed in charge of public affairs, and they were well administered and the people were at peace: that indicated his acceptance by the people. Heaven thus gave him the empire; the people thus gave him the empire. That is why I said, the emperor cannot give the empire to another. . . . This is what is meant in the Great Declaration [in the *Book of History*] where it is said: 'Heaven sees as my people see, Heaven hears as my people hear.'" [V A:5]

Mencius said: "Men are in the habit of speaking of the world, the state. As a matter of fact, the foundation of the world lies in the state, the foundation of the state lies in the family, and the foundation of the family lies in the individual." [IV A:5]

Mencius said: "[In the constitution of a state] the people rank the highest, the spirits of land and grain come next, and the ruler counts the least." [VII B:14]

Mencius said: "There are three things that a feudal lord should treasure —land, people, and the administration of the government. If he should treasure pearls and jades instead, calamity is sure to befall him." [VII B:28]

Mencius said: "It is not so important to censure the men appointed to office; it is not so important to criticize the measures adopted in government. The truly great is he who is capable of rectifying what is wrong with the ruler's heart." [IV A:20]

Mencius said to King Hsüan of Ch'i: "When the ruler regards his ministers as his hands and feet, the ministers regard their ruler as their heart and bowels. When the ruler regards his ministers as his dogs and

horses, the ministers regard their ruler as a stranger. When the ruler regards his ministers as dust and grass, the ministers regard their ruler as a brigand or foe." [IV B:3]

King Hsüan of Ch'i asked: "Is it not true that T'ang banished Chieh and that King Wu smote Chou?" Mencius replied: "It is so stated in the records." The king asked: "May a subject, then, slay his sovereign?" Mencius replied: "He who outrages humanity is a scoundrel; he who outrages righteousness is a scourge. A scourge or a scoundrel is a despised creature [and no longer a king]. I have heard that a despised creature called Chou was put to death, but I have not heard anything about the murdering of a sovereign." [I B:8]

The men of Ch'i made war on Yen and took it. The other feudal lords began plotting to liberate Yen. King Hsüan [of Ch'i] asked: "The feudal lords of many states are plotting war against me; how shall I deal with them?" Mencius replied: "I have heard of one who, with a territory of only seventy *li*, extended his rule to the whole empire. That was T'ang. But never have I heard of the lord of a thousand *li* having to stand in fear of others. It is said in the *Book of History:* 'T'ang launched his punitive expedition, first against Ko. The whole empire had faith in him. When he carried his campaign to the east, the tribes in the west grumbled. When he carried his campaign to the south, the tribes in the north grumbled, saying: "Why should we be last?" ' [Announcement of Chung-hui]. People looked for his coming as they would look for the rain-clouds in time of great drought. Those going to the market were not stopped; those tilling the land were not interrupted. He put their rulers to death and he consoled the people. His visit was like the falling of rain in season, and the people were overjoyed. Thus it is said in the *Book of History:* 'We have been waiting for our lord. When he comes, we shall have a new life.' [Announcement of Chung-hui]." [I B:11]

### MENCIUS' DEFENSE OF FILIAL PIETY

Mencius is known in later tradition for his defense of Confucian filial piety against Yang Chu, the individualist, and Mo Tzu, the exponent of universal love. By thus making a special point of it, he gave added importance to filial piety among the Confucian virtues.

Now that sage-kings are no longer with us, the feudal lords yield to their lusts and idle scholars indulge in senseless disputation. The words of

Yang Chu and Mo Ti fill the land, and the talk of the land is either Yang Chu or Mo Ti. Yang is for individualism, which does not recognize the sovereign; Mo is for universal love, which does not recognize parents. To be without sovereign or parent is to be a beast. [III B:9]

Mencius said: "Of services which is the greatest? The service of parents is the greatest. Of charges which is the greatest? The charge of oneself is the greatest. Not failing to keep oneself and thus being able to serve one's parents—this I have heard of. Failing to keep oneself and yet being able to serve one's parents—this I have not heard of." [IV A:19]

Mencius said: "There are three things which are unfilial, and the greatest of them is to have no posterity." [IV A:26]

Mencius said: "The substance of humanity is to serve one's parents; the basis of righteousness is to obey one's elder brothers." [IV A:27]

## RATIONALISM AND REALISM IN HSÜN TZU

Of the life of the third great Confucian thinker, Hsün Tzu (fl. 298–238 B.C.), we know little except that he was a high official in the states of Ch'i and Ch'u and the teacher of Han Fei, the representative of ancient Legalism, and Li Ssu, the prime minister who assisted the First Emperor of the Ch'in in the unification of the empire. Although the exact dates of his life are impossible to determine, it is important to note that he lived at the very end of the Chou period. In his lifetime he witnessed the final extinction of the royal house of Chou, the gradual destruction of the other feudal states by the powerful state of Ch'in, and perhaps even the unification of the empire by the First Emperor of the Ch'in. It must have become clear to him that the optimism of earlier Confucianists concerning a re-establishment of the old order was no longer warranted, and that some of their basic assumptions would have to be re-examined. This may account to some extent for the hardheaded realism which marks his philosophy.

The lateness of the time in which he lived also made it possible for him to look back upon the solutions offered by all the various schools of philosophy of the Classical Period, to appraise their writings and adopt what he found useful in their systems. His writings, collected in the work called *Hsün Tzu* in thirty-two chapters, differ from the fragmentary notes of conversations and aphorisms which make up the *Analects* and

*Mencius*. As time went on, the Chinese philosophers relied not only upon oral instruction to their disciples, but took to writing expository essays in order to preserve their doctrines for later ages, and the *Hsün Tzu* is a series of such essays, well composed and cogently argued.

The historian Ssu-ma Ch'ien has remarked that one reason Hsün Tzu wrote was to attack the superstitious belief in magic, omens, and portents that dominated his age. Certainly he devoted much space to a refutation of the superstitions of his time, arguing for a completely rational and naturalistic view of the universe and man. From the old religious and moral concept of a Heaven which rewards or punishes a ruler according to his deserts, he substituted a purely mechanical process that operates quite independently of the doings of man, while he reinterpreted the ancient sacrifices and funeral rites which had once been intended to propitiate the dead as no more than forms to express the grief of the living.

With this rationalism went a reaction against the excessive idealization of the past. Confucius and Mencius had held up as their ideals the rulers of the early Chou or the more ancient sage-kings Yao and Shun. Rival schools had attempted to outdo the Confucianists by harking back to even more ancient figures of the legendary past until a whole literature had built up describing in detail the lives and institutions of these mythical paragons of virtue. Hsün Tzu employed these conventional historical symbols of virtue in his own discussions, but at the same time he attempted to destroy the gulf of time which the men of his age despairingly imagined separated them from the golden ages of the past. "The beginning of Heaven and earth—it is today. The ways of the hundred ancient kings are those of the later kings." Mankind and human nature are fundamentally the same, past and present. If rulers were wise and virtuous in ancient times, if peace and order prevailed two thousand years ago, then there is no reason why the same situation cannot be brought about again today. The leaders of society have only to comprehend the basic principles of human nature and society, and to discriminate between wise and foolish policies.

The faculty to discriminate between what is wise and foolish, good and bad, is of prime importance in Hsün Tzu's thinking. It is, he declares, what makes man man and distinguishes him from the beasts. He took violent exception to the view of Mencius that all men are born with a nature which is essentially good and that evil is simply an abuse or neglect

of this inborn goodness. Hsün Tzu, in a famous essay that has disturbed centuries of later scholars, declared flatly that man's nature is evil and that all goodness is the result of artificial training. While Mencius believed that the purpose of learning was simply to "seek the lost heart" of childhood innocence, Hsün Tzu saw in education, in the example and leadership of the sages, in all art and artifice in society, the only means of salvation for mankind. For Hsün Tzu, all that is good in society—rites, music, the moral worth and teachings of the sages—is the product of social restraint and the faculty of discrimination acting upon, training, and directing the crude animal nature of man.

Hsün Tzu's attack upon Mencius' view of human nature precipitated a long and violent controversy which strikes us today as strangely forced. Both men agreed upon the worth of perfect virtue, both agreed that all men are potentially able to attain it; they even agreed in general that the way to attain it is through the study and imitation of the sages. But where Mencius saw this goodness as something once possessed by all but later lost, Hsün Tzu regarded it as the hard-won achievement of effort and art. Yet later scholars seldom saw the bright hopes for human achievement which Hsün Tzu's doctrine optimistically opened up for mankind; they saw only the blunt initial thesis that the nature of man is evil, and they were instinctively repelled. Although Hsün Tzu enjoyed considerable popularity in the Han, by T'ang and Sung times he was completely overshadowed by Mencius, whose idealistic doctrines became the orthodox teaching of Confucianism, while Hsün Tzu remained simply one of the classical philosophers.

## *Selections from the Hsün Tzu*

### CHAPTER 17: CONCERNING HEAVEN

Heaven operates with constant regularity. It does not prevail because of [a sage-king like] Yao; nor does it cease to prevail because of [a tyrant like] Chieh. Respond to it with good government, and blessings will result; respond to it with misgovernment, and misfortune will result. If the staples of livelihood are built up and used economically, then Heaven cannot impoverish the country; if the sustenance of the people is provided for and their energies are employed in keeping with the seasons, then Heaven cannot afflict the people. If the Way is followed and not

deviated from, then Heaven cannot send misfortune. Under such circumstances, flood or drought cannot cause a famine, extreme cold or heat cannot cause any malady, and unnatural apparitions cannot cause disaster. On the other hand, if the staples of livelihood are neglected and used extravagantly, then Heaven cannot cause the country to be rich; if the sustenance of the people is deficient and their energies are employed inordinately, then Heaven cannot make the people healthful. If the Way is violated and conduct becomes unseemly, then Heaven cannot send blessings. Under such circumstances, even if flood and drought do not come, there will be famine; even if cold and heat have not become oppressive, there will be maladies; even if unnatural apparitions do not appear, there will be calamities. Seasonableness and prosperity go together; catastrophe and prosperity do not. It is useless to complain against Heaven, for such is the Way. Hence he who knows the distinctive functions of Heaven and of men may be called a great sage.

To accomplish without exertion [10] and to obtain without effort, this is what is meant by the office of Heaven. Therefore although the mind of the sage is deep, he will not deliberate on the Way of Heaven; although it is great, he will not pass any judgment upon it; although it is minute, he will not scrutinize it—this is what is meant by refraining from contesting with Heaven. Heaven has its seasons; earth has its resources; man has his government. This is how man is able to form a triad with Heaven and earth. If man should neglect his own part in this triad and put all his hope in Heaven and earth with which he forms the triad, he is making a grave mistake.

The fixed stars make their revolutions; the sun and moon alternately shine; the four seasons succeed one another; the yin and yang go through their great mutations; the wind and rain affect all things. The myriad things acquire their proper harmony and thus grow; each thing obtains its proper nourishment and thus attains its full maturity. We do not see the cause of these occurrences, but we do see their effects—we call it the efficacy of spirit. We all know the results achieved, but we do not know the invisible source—we call it the work of Heaven. It is only the sage that does not seek to know Heaven. . . .

Heaven does not suspend the winter because men dislike cold; the earth does not reduce its expanse because men dislike distances; the gen-

[10] A Taoist expression appearing in the *Lao Tzu*, chapter 47.

tleman does not alter his conduct because inferior men make a clamor. Heaven has a constant way of action; earth has a constant size; the gentleman has a constant demeanor. The gentleman conducts himself according to a constant principle, but the inferior man schemes after results. It is said in the *Book of Odes:*

If a person acts according to the rules of decorum and righteousness,
And does not deviate from them,
Why should he be anxious about people's talk?" [11]

This expresses what I mean.

The King of Ch'u has a thousand chariots following him—this is not because he is wise. The gentleman eats pulse and drinks water—this is not because he is foolish. In each case, it is just what is fitting to the external circumstances. Whereas for a person to have his purpose cultivated, to have his virtuous conduct strengthened, to have his knowledge and deliberations clarified, to live in this age but to emulate the ancients —this is what lies entirely within his power. Therefore the gentleman carefully develops what is within his power, and does not desire what is from Heaven. The inferior man neglects what is within his power, and seeks for what comes from Heaven. Because the gentleman carefully develops what is within his power, and does not desire what comes from Heaven, he progresses every day; whereas because the inferior man neglects what is within his power and seeks for what comes from Heaven, he degenerates every day. Therefore, it is one and the same reason why the gentleman progresses daily and why the inferior man degenerates daily. And this also accounts for the difference between the gentleman and the inferior man.

When stars fall or the sacred trees groan, all the people become afraid and ask: "What is the significance of all this?" I would say: There is no special significance. This is just due to a modification of Heaven and earth and the mutation of the yin and yang. These are rare phenomena. We may marvel at them, but we should not fear them. For there is no age that has not often experienced eclipses of the sun and moon, unseasonable rain or wind, or occasional appearances of strange stars. If the ruler is intelligent and the government just, even though these phenomena should all occur at once, it would do no harm. If the ruler is unintelligent

[11] The quotation does not appear in the present *Book of Odes.*

and his government is bent on evil, although not one of these strange phenomena should occur, still it would be of no help. Hence the falling of stars and the groaning of the sacred trees are due to the modification of Heaven and earth and the mutation of the yin and yang. These are rare phenomena. We may marvel at them, but we should not fear them.

Of all occurrences and phenomena, human portents are the most to be feared. To plow improperly so as to injure the crops, to weed improperly so as to miss the harvest, to govern recklessly so as to lose the allegiance of the people, to leave the fields uncultivated and to harvest poor crops, to let the price of grain rise high and the people starve and die on the roadside—these are what I mean by human portents. When the governmental measures and orders are not clear and just; when decisions of the state are not opportune; when the fundamental tasks are not attended to —these are what I mean by human portents. When the rules of decorum and righteousness are not cultivated, the inhabitants of the inner and outer quarters are not kept apart, and men and women become promiscuous, parents and children distrust each other, the ruler and ruled are at cross purposes, and invasion and disaster arrive at the same time—these are what I mean by human portents.

If people pray for rain and it rains, how is that? I would say: Nothing in particular. Just as when people do not pray for rain, it also rains. When people try to save the sun or moon from being swallowed up [in eclipse], or when they pray for rain in a drought, or when they decide an important affair only after divination—this is not because they think in this way they will get what they seek, but only to add a touch of ritual to it. Hence the gentleman takes it as a matter of ritual, whereas the common man thinks it is supernatural. He who takes it as a matter of ritual will suffer no harm; he who thinks it is supernatural will suffer harm. . . .

You exalt Heaven and meditate on it:
Why not domesticate it and regulate it?

You obey Heaven and sing praises to it:
Why not control its course and employ it?

You look on the seasons with expectation and await them:
Why not seize the seasonal opportunities and exploit them?

You rely on things increasing of themselves:
Why not exercise your ability and multiply them?

You speculate about the nature of things:
Why not manipulate them so that you do not lose them?

You admire the cause of the birth of things:
Why not assist them in their completion?

Hence, I say, to neglect human effort and speculate about Heaven,
Is to miss the true nature of all things.

### CHAPTER 23: HUMAN NATURE IS EVIL

The nature of man is evil; his goodness is acquired.

His nature being what it is, man is born, first, with a desire for gain. If this desire is followed, strife will result and courtesy will disappear. Second, man is born with envy and hate. If these tendencies are followed, injury and cruelty will abound and loyalty and faithfulness will disappear. Third, man is born with passions of the ear and eye as well as the love of sound and beauty. If these passions are followed, excesses and disorderliness will spring up and decorum and righteousness will disappear. Hence to give rein to man's original nature and to yield to man's emotions will assuredly lead to strife and disorderliness, and he will revert to a state of barbarism. Therefore it is only under the influence of teachers and laws and the guidance of the rules of decorum and righteousness that courtesy will be observed, etiquette respected, and order restored. From all this it is evident that the nature of man is evil and that his goodness is acquired.

Crooked wood needs to undergo steaming and bending by the carpenter's tools; then only is it straight. Blunt metal needs to undergo grinding and whetting; then only is it sharp. Now the original nature of man is evil, so he must submit himself to teachers and laws before he can be just; he must submit himself to the rules of decorum and righteousness before he can be orderly. On the other hand, without teachers and laws, men are biased and unjust; without decorum and righteousness, men are rebellious and disorderly. In ancient times the sage-kings knew that man's nature was evil and therefore biased and unjust, rebellious and disorderly. Thereupon they created the codes of decorum and righteousness and established laws and ordinances in order to bend the nature of man and set it right, and in order to transform his nature and guide it. All men are thus made to conduct themselves in a manner that is orderly and in accordance with

the Way. At present, those men who are influenced by teachers and laws, who have accumulated culture and learning, and who are following the paths of decorum and righteousness, are the gentlemen. On the other hand, those who give rein to their nature, who indulge in their willfulness, and who disregard decorum and righteousness, are the inferior men. From all this it is evident that the nature of man is evil and that his goodness is acquired.

Mencius says: "The reason man is ready to learn is that his nature is originally good." [12] I reply: This is not so. This is due to a lack of knowledge about the original nature of man and of understanding of the distinction between what is natural and what is acquired. Original nature is a heavenly endowment; it cannot be learned, and it cannot be striven after. As to rules of decorum and righteousness, they have been brought forth by the sages, they can be attained by learning, and they can be achieved by striving. That which cannot be learned and cannot be striven after and rests with Heaven is what I call original nature. That which can be attained by learning and achieved by striving and rests with man is what I call acquired character. This is the distinction between original nature and acquired character. Now by the nature of man, the eye has the faculty of seeing and the ear has the faculty of hearing. But the keenness of the faculty of sight is inseparable from the eye, and the keenness of the faculty of hearing is inseparable from the ear. It is evident that keenness of sight and keenness of hearing cannot be learned.

Mencius says: "The original nature of man is good; but because men all ruin it and lose it, it becomes evil." [13] I reply: In this he is gravely mistaken. Regarding the nature of man, as soon as he is born, he tends to depart from its original state and depart from its natural disposition, and he is bent on ruining it and losing it. From all this, it is evident that the nature of man is evil and that his goodness is acquired.

To say that man's original nature is good means that it can become beautiful without leaving its original state and it can become beneficial without leaving its natural disposition. This is to maintain that beauty pertains to the original state and disposition and goodness pertains to the

[12] This saying does not appear in the present *Mencius* but does reflect the doctrine in *Mencius*, VI A:2–6.

[13] This saying does not appear in the present *Mencius* but does reflect the doctrine in *Mencius*, VI A:6 and 8.

heart and mind in the same way as the keenness of the faculty of sight is inseparable from the eye and the keenness of the faculty of hearing is inseparable from the ear, just as we say that the eye is keen in seeing or the ear is keen in hearing. Now as to the nature of man, when he is hungry he desires to be filled, when he is cold he desires warmth, when he is tired he desires rest. This is man's natural disposition. But now a man may be hungry and yet in the presence of elders he dare not be the first to eat. This is because he has to yield precedence to someone. He may be tired and yet he dare not take a rest. This is because he has to labor in the place of someone. For a son to yield to his father and a younger brother to yield to his older brother, for a son to labor in the place of his father and a younger brother to labor in the place of his older brother—both of these kinds of actions are opposed to man's original nature and contrary to man's feeling. Yet they are the way of the filial son and in accordance with the rules of decorum and righteousness. It appears if a person follows his natural disposition he will show no courtesy, and if he shows courtesy he is acting contrary to his natural disposition. From all this it is evident that the nature of man is evil and that his goodness is acquired.

It may be asked: "If man's original nature is evil, whence do the rules of decorum and righteousness arise?" I reply: All rules of decorum and righteousness are the products of the acquired virtue of the sage and not the products of the nature of man. Thus, the potter presses the clay and makes the vessel—but the vessel is the product of the potter's acquired skill and not the product of his original nature. Or again, the craftsman hews pieces of wood and makes utensils—but utensils are the product of the carpenter's acquired skill and not the product of his original nature. The sage gathers many ideas and thoughts and becomes well versed in human affairs, in order to bring forth the rules of decorum and righteousness and establish laws and institutions. So then the rules of decorum and righteousness and laws and institutions are similarly the products of the acquired virtue of the sage and not the products of his original nature. . . .

Man wishes to be good because his nature is evil. If a person is unimportant he wishes to be important, if he is ugly he wishes to be beautiful, if he is confined he wishes to be at large, if he is poor he wishes to be rich, if he is lowly he wishes to be honored—whatever a person does not have within himself, he seeks from without. But the rich do not wish for

wealth and the honorable do not wish for position, for whatever a person has within himself he does not seek from without. From this it may be seen that man wishes to be good because his nature is evil. Now the original nature of man is really without decorum and righteousness, hence he strives to learn and seeks to obtain them. . . .

Straight wood does not require the carpenter's tools to be straight; by nature it is straight. Crooked wood needs to undergo steaming and bending by the carpenter's tools and then only will it be straight; by nature it is not straight. As the nature of man is evil, it must be submitted to the government of the sage-kings and the reforming influence of the rules of decorum and righteousness; then only will everyone issue forth in orderliness and be in accordance with goodness. From all this it is evident that the nature of man is evil and that his goodness is acquired.

It may be objected: "Decorum and righteousness and the accumulation of acquired virtues must be in the nature of man so that the sage could bring them forth." I reply: This is not so. Now the potter pounds and and molds the clay and produces earthenware. Are the earthenware and clay then in the nature of the potter? The workman hews a piece of wood and makes utensils. Are furniture and wood then in the nature of the carpenter? So it is with the sage and decorum and righteousness; he produces them in the same way as earthenware is produced. Are decorum and righteousness and the accumulation of acquired virtues then in the original nature of man? As far as the nature of man is concerned, the sage-kings Yao and Shun have the same nature as the wicked King Chieh and robber Chih; the gentleman has the same nature as the inferior man. Should we now regard decorum and righteousness and the accumulation of acquired virtues as being in the nature of man, then why should we prize the sage-kings Yao and Yü and why should we prize the gentlemen? We prize Yao, Yü, and the gentlemen because they were able to transform nature and produce acquired virtue, and from acquired virtue decorum and righteousness issued forth. . . .

There is a saying: "The man on the street can become a Yü." How would you account for that? I reply: All that made Yü what he was was that he instituted humanity and righteousness, laws, and government. However, there are principles by which humanity and righteousness, laws and government can be known and practiced. At the same time any man on the street has the faculty for knowing them and has the capacity for

practicing them. Thus it is evident that he can become a Yü. Should we assume there were really no principles by which humanity and righteousness, laws and government could be known and practiced, then even Yü would not be able to know them or practice them. Or, should we assume the man on the street really had no faculty for knowing humanity and righteousness, laws and government, or the capacity for practicing them, then the man cannot know, on the one hand, the proper relation between father and son and, on the other, the proper discipline between sovereign and minister. Thus it is evident that the man on the street does have the faculty for knowing and the capacity for practicing these virtues. Now let the man on the street take his faculty for knowing and his capacity for practicing humanity and righteousness, laws and government, and bring them to bear upon the principles by which these virtues can be known and can be practiced—then it is self-evident that he can become a Yü. Yes, let the man on the street pursue the path of knowledge and devote himself to learning, with concentration of mind and a singleness of purpose; let him think, search, examine, and re-examine, day in and day out, with persistence and patience—let him thus accumulate good works without cease, then he may be counted among the gods and may form a triad with Heaven and earth. Hence sagehood is a state that any man can achieve by cumulative effort. . . .

### CHAPTER 19: ON THE RULES OF DECORUM (OR RITES, LI)

In these passages Hsün Tzu sometimes uses *li* more in reference to individual and social conduct (in which cases it is rendered "rules of decorum") and sometimes more in reference to religious or social ceremony (in which case "rites" comes closer to the meaning). In either case the underlying idea is conduct in conformity with social, moral, and cosmic order, a central conception of Hsün Tzu.

Whence do the rules of decorum arise? From the fact that men are born with desires, and when these desires are not satisfied, men are bound to pursue their satisfaction. When the pursuit is carried on unrestrained and unlimited, there is bound to be contention. With contention comes chaos; with chaos dissolution. The ancient kings disliked this chaos and set the necessary limits by codifying rules of decorum and righteousness, so that men's desires might be satisfied and their pursuit be gratified. In

this way it was made certain that desires were not frustrated by things, nor things used up by desires. That these two should support each other and should thrive together—this is whence the rules of decorum arise. . . .

Rites (*li*) rest on three bases: Heaven and earth, which are the source of all life; the ancestors, who are the source of the human race; sovereigns and teachers, who are the source of government. If there were no Heaven and earth, where would life come from? If there were no ancestors, where would the offspring come from? If there were no sovereigns and teachers, where would government come from? Should any of the three be missing, either there would be no men or men would be without peace. Hence rites are to serve Heaven on high and earth below, and to honor the ancestors and elevate the sovereigns and teachers. Herein lies the threefold basis of rites. . . .

In general, rites begin with primitive practices, attain cultured forms, and finally achieve beauty and felicity. When rites are at their best, men's emotions and sense of beauty are both fully expressed. When they are at the next level, either the emotion or the sense of beauty oversteps the other. When they are at still the next level, emotion reverts to the state of primitivity.

It is through rites that Heaven and earth are harmonious and sun and moon are bright, that the four seasons are ordered and the stars are on their courses, that rivers flow and that things prosper, that love and hatred are tempered and joy and anger are in keeping. They cause the lowly to be obedient and those on high to be illustrious. He who holds to the rites is never confused in the midst of multifarious change; he who deviates therefrom is lost. Rites—are they not the culmination of culture? . . .

Rites require us to treat both life and death with attentiveness. Life is the beginning of man, death is his end. When a man is well off both at the end and the beginning, the way of man is fulfilled. Hence the gentleman respects the beginning and is carefully attentive to the end. To pay equal attention to the end as well as to the beginning is the way of the gentleman and the beauty of rites and righteousness. . . .

Rites serve to shorten that which is too long and lengthen that which is too short, reduce that which is too much and augment that which is too little, express the beauty of love and reverence and cultivate the elegance

of righteous conduct. Therefore, beautiful adornment and coarse sackcloth, music and weeping, rejoicing and sorrow, though pairs of opposites, are in the rites equally utilized and alternately brought into play. Beautiful adornment, music, and rejoicing are appropriate on occasions of felicity; coarse sackcloth, weeping, and sorrow are appropriate on occasions of ill-fortune. Rites make room for beautiful adornment but not to the point of being fascinating, for coarse sackcloth but not to the point of deprivation or self-injury, for music and rejoicing but not to the point of being lewd and indolent, for weeping and sorrow but not to the point of being depressing and injurious. Such is the middle path of rites. . . .

Funeral rites are those by which the living adorn the dead. The dead are accorded a send-off as though they were living. In this way the dead are served like the living, the absent like the present. Equal attention is thus paid to the end as well as to the beginning of life. . . .

Now the rites used on the occasion of birth are to embellish joy, those used on the occasion of death are to embellish sorrow, those used at sacrifice are to embellish reverence, those used on military occasions are to embellish dignity. In this respect the rites of all kings are alike, antiquity and the present age agree, and no one knows whence they came. . . .

Sacrifice is to express a person's feeling of remembrance and longing, for grief and affliction cannot be kept out of one's consciousness all the time. When men are enjoying the pleasure of good company, a loyal minister or a filial son may feel grief and affliction. Once such feelings arise, he is greatly excited and moved. If such feelings are not given proper expression, then his emotions and memories are disappointed and not satisfied, and the appropriate rite is lacking. Thereupon the ancient kings instituted rites, and henceforth the principle of expressing honor to the honored and love to the beloved is fully realized. Hence I say: Sacrifice is to express a person's feeling of remembrance and longing. As to the fullness of the sense of loyalty and affection, the richness of ritual and beauty—these none but the sage can understand. Sacrifice is something that the sage clearly understands, the scholar-gentlemen contentedly perform, the officials consider as a duty, and the common people regard as established custom. Among gentlemen it is considered the way of man; among the common people it is considered as having to do with the spirits.

CHAPTER 22: ON THE CORRECT USE OF TERMINOLOGY

Now that the sage-kings are no more, the preserving of names has become lax, strange terminology has arisen, and names and their actualities have become confused. As the standards of truth and falsehood are indistinct, even officials who maintain the law and scholars who study by themselves and teach others are likewise in a state of confusion. Should some king arise, he would have to retain certain old names and create certain new names. Thus, it is imperative for him to examine: 1) the reason for having names; 2) the conditions under which agreement and difference in names arise; and 3) the fundamental principles for instituting names.

Different forms are received by the mind and people are equally at a loss [to give expression to these forms]; different things are entangled when names and their actualities are intertwined;[14] noble and base are not clearly differentiated, similarities and differences are not distinguished —if this should be the case, there would certainly be the danger of people's ideas not being understood and their affairs being hampered and handicapped. Therefore, the wise man (the sage-king) institutes names severally to denote their actualities; thus, on the one hand, noble and base are differentiated, and on the other, similarities and differences are distinguished. As noble and base are differentiated and similarities and differences are distinguished, there is no longer the danger of people's ideas not being understood or of people's affairs being hampered and handicapped. This is the reason for having names.

What then are the conditions under which agreement and difference in names arise? They are the natural senses. All [creatures] that are of the same kind and have the same feelings have the same natural senses with which to perceive things. Therefore things are compared and classified, and those that are found to be approximately alike are grouped together. In this way they share the same name and claim each other. Forms and bodies, colors and designs, are distinctions made by the eye. "Clear" and "confused" qualities and big and small volumes of sound, as well as noises, are distinctions made by the ear . . . [and so on with the senses of taste, smell, and touch]. . . . Happy and morose moods,

[14] The meaning of the text for the two foregoing clauses is far from clear.

pleasure and anger, sorrow and joy, love and hate, as well as desires, are distinctions made by the mind.

The mind has the faculty of responsive knowledge. By this responsive knowledge it is possible to know sounds through the ear, and to know forms through the eye. However, the faculty of responsive knowledge is dependent on the objects being first noted and classified by the senses. When the five senses note something but do not comprehend it, and the mind responds to it but has no designation, then everyone says there is no knowledge. These, then, are the conditions under which agreement and difference in names arise.

Accordingly, names are given to things. All that are alike are given the same name; all that are unlike are given different names. When a simple term is sufficient to convey the meaning, a simple term is used; when a simple term is insufficient, a compound term is used. When simple and compound concepts do not conflict, the general term may be used; although it is a general term, there is no harm in using it. Knowing that different actualities should have different names, one should let all actualities that are different have nothing other than different terms; thus there could not be any confusion. Likewise one should let all actualities that are alike have nothing other than the same name.

For, although the myriad things are innumerable, there are times when we wish to speak of them all in general, and so we call them "things." "Things" is a great general term. We press on and generalize; we generalize and generalize still more, until we reach that beyond which there is nothing more general; then only we stop. There are times when we wish to speak of things in classes, and so we say "birds and beasts" (i.e., "animals"). "Birds and beasts" is a great particular term. We press on and particularize; we particularize and particularize still more, until we reach that beyond which there is nothing more particular, and then only we stop.

There are no names necessarily appropriate of themselves. Upon agreement things were named. When the agreement has been made and it has become customary, this is called an appropriate designation. That which is different from what has been agreed upon is called an inappropriate designation. Names have no actualities necessarily corresponding to them. Upon agreement things were named. When the agreement has been made and it has become customary, such names are called names

appropriate to actualities. But some names are inherently felicitous. When a name is simple, direct, easily understood, and not contradictory, it is called a felicitous name.

There are things which have the same appearance but are in different places; there are things which have different appearances but are in the same place. This distinction is easily made. Things which have the same appearance but are in different places, although they may be classified together, are to be called two actualities. Where the appearance changes, but the thing remains the same and is not different, this is to be called transformation. Where there is transformation but no differentiation, that is to be called one actuality. By this method objects are investigated and their number is determined. These, then, are the fundamental principles for instituting names. If a king some day wanted to define names, it would be imperative for him to examine all these matters.

## THE GREAT LEARNING (TA HSÜEH)

The essays known as "The Great Learning" and "The Mean" constitute two chapters of the Confucian Classic, the *Book of Rites*. Even before the Christian era the particular significance and interest of these texts was noted. The Neo-Confucian scholars of the Sung dynasty, claiming to find in them the psychological and metaphysical foundations for their system of thought, elevated these short texts to a position of prime importance in Confucian literature. The great Sung scholar Chu Hsi (A.D. 1130–1200), to emphasize their worth, combined the texts with the *Analects* and the *Mencius* to form the so-called *Four Books* (in the order: *The Great Learning, The Mean, Analects,* and *Mencius*). These four texts became the primer of Chinese education, the first major course of study before a student began his study of the Five Classics; they were read aloud and committed to memory by the students. And for a period of six centuries (A.D. 1313–1905) these four texts served as the basis of the civil service examinations by which Chinese scholars were selected for posts in the government bureaucracy.

*The Great Learning* is a brief essay of some 1,750 words. Its Chinese title, *Ta hsüeh,* means education for the adult or higher education. It has been variously attributed to Tzu Ssu (483–402 B.C.?), Confucius'

grandson, to Confucius' disciple Tseng Tzu, or to one of his pupils. Some scholars, however, especially in the last three decades, have dated it as late as 200 B.C. In all likelihood its basic ideas go back to Confucius, though the essay itself definitely belongs to a later age.

The central theme of the work is self-cultivation. This is, however, no ordinary guide to self-improvement, which can take for granted the intrinsic importance of each man's fulfillment as an individual. Rather *The Great Learning* seeks first of all to establish the value of self-cultivation in terms of accepted social ends, showing its relevance to the problem of good government which underlies much of the thinking of this age. Indeed, the argumentation here often makes sense only if we understand that it is addressed to the ruler and his officials, rather than to any ordinary man in search of moral guidance. Nevertheless, the problem of the ruler proves, upon analysis, to be identical with that of the individual. Not only does good government depend upon the proper conduct of men on the various levels of social organization, and thus upon their individual moral perfection, but also self-cultivation on the part of the ruler must proceed on essentially the same lines as it does for the individual. Before a man can regulate and discipline others he must learn to regulate and discipline himself. To accomplish this *The Great Learning* offers a method or program which became famous for its "eight points," three of them pertaining to social functions and five to personal cultivation. Broad in scope and rather general in meaning, these eight points nevertheless seemed to outline, in neat and concise form, a complete system of education and social organization. No doubt it appealed greatly to the Chinese taste for a balanced, symmetrical, and hierarchical view of things. It served, moreover, as a formulation of those attitudes which are at the very heart of Confucian teaching: the primacy of the moral order, and the delicate balance which must be maintained between individual and social ends. At the same time, however, *The Great Learning* gave impetus to a dangerous form of oversimplification and idealism among Confucianists: the belief that self-cultivation alone could solve all political problems and usher in the perfect society.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the tremendous influence of this short work on Confucian thought, not only in China, but also in Japan, Korea, and elsewhere in the Chinese cultural sphere. Especially in Neo-Confucian thought the interpretation of the "eight points" became one of the central problems of philosophy and ethics. The excerpts which

follow include the basic program of *The Great Learning* and selected passages amplifying two of the eight points.

### *Selections from The Great Learning*

The Way of the Great Learning consists in clearly exemplifying illustrious virtue, in loving the people, and in resting in the highest good.

Only when one knows where one is to rest can one have a fixed purpose. Only with a fixed purpose can one achieve calmness of mind. Only with calmness of mind can one attain serene repose. Only in serene repose can one carry on careful deliberation. Only through careful deliberation can one have achievement. Things have their roots and branches; affairs have their beginning and end. He who knows what comes first and what comes last comes himself near the Way.

The ancients who wished clearly to exemplify illustrious virtue throughout the world would first set up good government in their states. Wishing to govern well their states, they would first regulate their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they would first cultivate their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they would first rectify their minds. Wishing to rectify their minds, they would first seek sincerity in their thoughts. Wishing for sincerity in their thoughts, they would first extend their knowledge. The extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things. For only when things are investigated is knowledge extended; only when knowledge is extended are thoughts sincere; only when thoughts are sincere are minds rectified; only when minds are rectified are our persons cultivated; only when our persons are cultivated are our families regulated; only when families are regulated are states well governed; and only when states are well governed is there peace in the world.

From the emperor down to the common people, all, without exception, must consider cultivation of the individual character as the root. If the root is in disorder, it is impossible for the branches to be in order. To treat the important as unimportant and to treat the unimportant as important—this should never be. This is called knowing the root; this is called the perfection of knowledge [15]. . . .

What is meant by saying that "the cultivation of the person depends

[15] Following the order of the original text as found in the *Li chi*, where it constitutes chapter 42.

on the rectification of the mind" is this: When one is under the influence of anger, one's mind will not be correct; when one is under the influence of fear, it will not be correct; when one is under the influence of fond regard, it will not be correct; when one is under the influence of anxiety, it will not be correct. When the mind is not there, we gaze at things but do not see; we listen but do not hear; we eat but do not know the flavors. This is what is meant by saying that the cultivation of the person depends on the rectification of the mind. . . .

What is meant by saying that "the government of the state depends on the regulation of the family" is this: One can never teach outsiders if one cannot teach one's own family. Therefore the prince perfects the proper teaching for the whole country without going outside his family; the filial piety wherewith one serves his sovereign, the brotherly respect wherewith one treats his elders, the kindness wherewith one deals with the multitude. There is the saying in the "Announcement to K'ang" [in the *Book of History*]: "Act as if you were rearing an infant." If you set yourself to a task with heart and soul you will not go far wrong even if you do not hit the mark. No girl has ever learned to suckle an infant before she got married.

If one family exemplifies humanity, humanity will abound in the whole country. If one family exemplifies courtesy, courtesy will abound in the whole country. On the other hand, if one man exemplifies greed and wickedness, rebellious disorder will arise in the whole country.[16] Therein lies the secret. Hence the proverb: One word ruins an enterprise; one man determines the fate of an empire. Yao and Shun ruled the empire with humanity, and the people followed them. Chieh and Chou ruled the empire with cruelty, and the people only submitted to them. Since these last commanded actions that they themselves would not like to take, the people refused to follow them. Thus it is that what [virtues] a prince finds in himself he may expect in others, and what [vices] he himself is free from he may condemn in others. It is impossible that a man devoid of every virtue which he might wish to have in others could be able effectively to instruct them.

Thus we see why it is that "the government of the state depends on the regulation of the family."

. . . .

[16] The "one family" and "one man" are the family and person of the ruler.

What is meant by saying that "the establishment of peace in the world depends on the government of the state" is this: When superiors accord to the aged their due, then the common people will be inspired to practice filial piety; when superiors accord to elders their due, then the common people will be inspired to practice brotherly respect; when superiors show compassion to the orphaned, then the common people do not do otherwise. Thus the gentleman has a principle with which, as with a measuring square, he may regulate his conduct.

What a man dislikes in his superiors let him not display in his treatment of his inferiors; what he dislikes in his inferiors let him not display in his service to his superiors; what he dislikes in those before him let him not set before those who are behind him; what he dislikes in those behind him let him not therewith follow those who are before him; what he dislikes from those on his right let him not bestow upon those on his left; what he dislikes from those on his left let him not bestow upon those on his right. This is called the regulating principle of the measuring square.

## THE MEAN (CHUNG YUNG)

*The Mean* has traditionally been ascribed to Tzu Ssu, though it is probably a combination of two or more texts dating in part as late as Ch'in or early Han. The Chinese title of the essay, *Chung yung,* is composed of the elements "centrality" (*chung*) and "normality" (*yung*). The translation "The Mean" suggests the fundamental moral idea of moderation, balance, and suitableness. But in this essay the concept goes much deeper, denoting a basic norm of human action which, if comprehended and complied with, will bring man and his actions into harmony with the whole universe.

The second important concept of this little essay is that of *ch'eng,* sincerity or truth. In one sense *ch'eng* represents the fullness of virtue corresponding to Confucius' concept of humanity (*jen*), sincerity being that moral integrity whereby the individual becomes a genuine or real man. He is "genuine" with others, but also "genuinely" himself, a true human being. The purpose of *The Mean,* however, is precisely to relate what is most essential and real in man to the underlying reality or truth

of the universe. Human virtue does not exist or act in a sphere all its own, the "ethical" sphere, which is distinct from the metaphysical. The moral order and the cosmic order are one, and through ethical cultivation the individual not only achieves human perfection but also "realizes" himself in a mystic unity with Heaven and earth. In this way sincerity, as an active and dynamic force, works for the realization not only of man but also of all things. It is the underlying metaphysical principle, corresponding to the "Way" of the Taoists. Indeed *The Mean* may be considered a Confucian response to the challenge of Taoism, which regarded the Way as transcending all relative values, and as being indifferent to the ethical concerns of man. Yet eventually this essay in the direction of a Confucian metaphysics served as a bridge between this school, on the one hand, and Taoism and Buddhism on the other. Its importance was especially great as one of the basic texts of the Neo-Confucian movement in the eleventh century and after.

The contents of *The Mean* are varied. Portions of it deal with the character and duties of the true gentleman, the moral responsibilities of rulership, the performance of social obligations, and the ideal institutions of the sage-kings. Its prescriptions for the regulation of society and the conduct of life are no doubt what prompted inclusion of *The Mean* in the *Book of Rites* (*Li chi*), yet the tone of the work is lofty throughout and breathes the pure Confucian spirit.

## *Selections from The Mean*

I. That which is bestowed by Heaven is called man's nature; the fulfillment of this nature is called the Way; the cultivation of the Way is called culture [or instruction in the truth].

The Way is something that may not be departed from even for one instant. If it could be departed from, it would not be the Way. Hence the gentleman stands cautious and in awe of the unseen and the unheard. There is nothing more evident than what is hidden; there is nothing more manifest than what is minute. Hence the gentleman is watchful when he is alone with himself.

When the passions, such as pleasure and anger and sorrow and joy, have not awakened, the state is called that of centrality. When these passions awaken and each and all attain due measure and degree, it is called

the state of harmony. The state of centrality is the great root and the state of harmony is the far-reaching Way of all existence in the world. Once centrality and harmony are realized, Heaven and earth take their proper places and all things receive their full nourishment.

II. Confucius said: "The life of the gentleman is an exemplification of the Mean; the life of the inferior man is a contradiction of it. The life of the gentleman is an exemplification of the Mean, because he is a gentleman and constantly holds to the center. The inferior man's life is a contradiction of the Mean, because he is an inferior man and knows no restraint."

III. Confucius said: "Perfect indeed is the Mean! For long people have seldom had the capacity for it."

. . . .

XIV. The gentleman acts according to the situation he is in and does not desire what is outside of it. If he is wealthy and honorable, he acts like one wealthy and honorable, if poor and lowly, he acts like one poor and lowly. If he is among barbarians, he does what one does among barbarians, if he is in trouble, he acts like one in trouble. There is no situation into which the gentleman enters in which he is not himself. In a superior position he does not abuse his subordinates; in an inferior position he does not hang on his superiors. He makes his own conduct correct and seeks nothing from others, and so he has no resentment. He neither complains against Heaven nor blames men. Thus the gentleman dwells in calm and safety awaiting the commandments of Heaven, while the inferior man walks in danger seeking good luck. The Master said: "In the archer there is a resemblance to the gentleman. When he misses the mark, he turns and seeks the reason for his failure in himself."

. . . .

XX. Duke Ai asked about government, and the Master said: "The government of Wen and Wu is set forth in the historical records on wood and bamboo. If there are the right men, then the government will prosper; if the right men are lacking, the government will collapse. Men must be keen in matters of government, as the earth is keen in making things grow, and then their government will be like a growing reed. Therefore the administration of government depends upon the right men. One gets the right men by the force of one's own personality. One trains

one's personality by means of the Way. And one learns the Way through practice of humanity. Humanity is what it is to be a human being, and loving one's relatives is the most important part of it. Righteousness is doing what is right, and honoring the worthy is the greatest part of it. The degree to which one loves one's different relatives and the grades to which one honors various worthy men are dictated by the rules of decorum. . . . Therefore the gentleman may not neglect the training of his personality. If he would train his personality, he must serve his parents. If he would serve his parents, he must understand men. And if he would understand men, he must understand Heaven.

There are five relationships which concern all men, and three virtues by which they are fulfilled. The relationships of ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, older and younger brother, and of intercourse between friends—these five are the relationships which pertain to all men. Knowledge, humanity, and courage—these three are virtues which apply to all men, and that by which they are practiced is one. . . .

Confucius said: . . . "Sincerity [17] is the Way of Heaven; the attainment of sincerity is the Way of man. He who possesses sincerity achieves what is right without effort, understands without thinking, and naturally and easily is centered in the Way. He is a sage. He who strives after truth chooses the good and holds fast to it. This involves learning extensively [about the good], inquiring critically into it, pondering carefully over it, distinguishing it clearly, and practicing it earnestly."

. . . .

XXI. Intelligence that comes from sincerity is to be ascribed to nature; sincerity that comes from intelligence is to be ascribed to instruction. Where there is sincerity there is intelligence; where there is intelligence there is sincerity.

XXII. Only he who possesses absolute sincerity can give full development to his nature. Able to give full development to his own nature, he can give full development to the nature of other men. Able to give full development to the nature of men, he can give full development to the nature of all beings. Able to give full development to the nature of all beings, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of

[17] The Chinese word *ch'eng* is ordinarily used as an adjective or adverb meaning sincere or sincerely. But in *The Mean* the term is used as a noun in a distinctly metaphysical sense, so that here it might be understood as "Absolute Truth" or "Reality."

Heaven and earth. Capable of assisting the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and earth, he may, with Heaven and earth, form a triad.

. . . .

XXV. Sincerity is self-completing, and the way of it is self-directing. Sincerity is the beginning and end of things; without sincerity there is no existence. Therefore the gentleman regards sincerity as the most valuable of all attainments. Sincerity is not only the completion of one's own being. It is also that by which all being is completed. Completing one's own being one attains humanity; completing all being one attains knowledge. These, humanity and knowledge, are the virtues inherent in man's nature, and serve as the means by which the inner and the outer are united. Therefore with sincerity everything done is right.

XXVI. Hence absolute sincerity is unceasing. Being unceasing it is everlasting. Being everlasting it is self-evident. Being self-evident it is extensive. Being extensive it is broad and deep. Being broad and deep it is lofty and intelligent. It is because it is broad and deep that it supports all things. It is because it is transcendental and intelligent that it embraces all things. It is because it is extensive and everlasting that it brings all things to completion. In its breadth and depth it matches earth. In its transcendental intelligence it matches Heaven. Extensive and everlasting, it is infinite. Such being the nature of absolute sincerity, it manifests itself without display; it transforms without motion; it completes without action. The Way of Heaven and earth can be set forth simply: it exists of itself and without duality, and so the manner in which it begets things is unfathomable. The Way of Heaven and earth is broad and deep, transcendental and intelligent, extensive and everlasting.

bilization of society for the achievement of utilitarian ends is strongly echoed in the totalitarian aims of the Legalists, although they obviously have no use for Mo Tzu's doctrine of universal love and his condemnation of offensive warfare. Moreover Lao Tzu's old idea of nonaction as a way of government is applied to the Legalists' own conception of the ideal ruler, who takes no direct part in the government but simply presides as a semi-divine figurehead while the elaborate legal machinery of government functions of its own accord, obviating the necessity for personal decisions or intervention. Having so regulated the lives of his people that there is no longer any possibility of disorder or need for improvement or guidance, the ruler may retire to dwell, as Han Fei says, "in the midst of his deep palace," far removed from the eyes of the populace, enjoying the luxuries and sensual delights appropriate to his exalted position.

One may imagine the horror and revulsion which such a doctrine aroused among the traditionalists generally, and especially among the Confucianists who attached such importance to personal relations and human values. Their horror no doubt grew as they saw that the policies of the Legalist statesmen succeeded greatly in strengthening the state of Ch'in, whose campaign of conquest moved inexorably onward while the older states decayed and fell victim to its expansions. With the final unification of China by the First Emperor of the Ch'in, it looked as if the harsh policies of Shang Yang and Han Fei had won out over the other schools of political thought. Its exponents were now in a position of power from which, by repressive measures, they could at last deal the death blow to their rivals.

## *Selections from the Han Fei Tzu*

### CHAPTER 50: ON THE DOMINANT SYSTEMS OF LEARNING

The dominant systems of learning of the day are Confucianism and Mo-ism. The founder of Confucianism was Confucius; the founder of Mo-ism was Mo Tzu. . . . Since the days of Confucius and Mo Tzu, Confucianism has differentiated itself into eight schools and Mo-ism into three. These schools contradict and disagree with one another in their respective emphases, each claiming to be the true representative of Confucianism

or Mo-ism. Now that Confucius and Mo Tzu cannot come to life again, who is to decide among the various schools of the later ages?

Confucius and Mo Tzu both upheld [the sage-kings] Yao and Shun. Though they disagreed in their respective emphases, yet each claimed to be the true representative of Yao and Shun. Now that Yao and Shun cannot come to life again, who is to determine the genuineness as between Confucianism and Mo-ism? The Yü and the Hsia regimes together lasted upwards of seven hundred years, and the Yin and the Chou dynasties upwards of two millennia. Since it is impossible to determine the genuineness as between Confucianism and Mo-ism, if anybody should want now to scrutinize the ways of Yao and Shun which prevailed three thousand years ago, I should imagine it would also be impossible for him to achieve any certainty.

To claim certainty without corroborating evidence is stupid; to refer to anything that one cannot be certain of is self-deceptive. Therefore, those who explicitly refer to the ancient kings and dogmatically claim the authority of Yao and Shun must be either stupid or deceitful. Such stupid and deceptive teachings and such heretical and contradictory actions as these are not to be adopted by the intelligent ruler.

When the Mo-ists attend to a funeral, the deceased is simply clothed in winter clothes in winter and in summer clothes in summer, the coffin is three inches thick and made of soft wood, and mourning is observed for only three months. Regarding the practice as having the merit of frugality, the ruler of the day treats the Mo-ists with respect. The Confucianists, on the contrary, would go into bankruptcy, and even give their sons in pawn in order to accord the proper funeral [to a dead parent]. They would observe three years' mourning till their health breaks down and they have to walk with the aid of canes. Regarding the practice as having the merit of filial piety, the ruler of the day treats the Confucianists also with respect. But as a matter of fact, if one approves the frugality of Mo Tzu one has to reprove Confucius for his extravagance; if one approves the filial piety of Confucius one has to reprove Mo Tzu for his impiety. Now, piety and impiety, frugality and extravagance, are found in the Confucianists and the Mo-ists respectively, and yet the sovereign respects them both alike. . . .

While stupid and deceptive teachings and heretical and contradictory

talk are in conflict one with another, the ruler listens to them all equally. As a result, the scholars of the land have neither any definite theory to expound nor any constant standard for their conduct. Just as ice and burning charcoal do not remain long in the same container and as winter and summer do not arrive at the same time, so, heretical and contradictory teachings cannot be expected to prevail simultaneously and result in orderly government. Now that heretical teachings are equally listened to and contradictory talk is absurdly acted upon, how can there be anything else but chaos? Since such is the way the ruler listens to advice, it will also, of course, be the way he will govern the people.

When the learned men today discuss government policies, every so often they say: "Give land to the poor and the destitute, so that even those without property shall not be in want." Now, here is a man just like other men. Yet without the advantage of prosperous years or supplementary income, he has of himself become self-sufficient. This must be due, if not to his diligence, then to his frugality. There again is a man just like other men. Yet without the affliction of any famine, or illness, or calamity, he has of himself become poor and destitute. This must be due, if not to his extravagance, then to his laziness. It is the extravagant and lazy people who have become poor; it is the diligent and frugal people who have become rich. Now the sovereign would tax the rich to give to the poor. This amounts to robbing the diligent and frugal and rewarding the extravagant and lazy. It would be quite impossible then to expect the people to increase their exertion and reduce their expenditures.

Now suppose there is someone who on principle would neither enter any city that is in danger nor join the army, and would not give a hair from his shin even to make a major contribution to the whole world.[1] The ruler of the time will respect him for this, honoring his wisdom, exalting his conduct, and regarding him as a scholar who despises things but esteems life. The reason that the sovereign offers good fields and large pools, and establishes ranks and bounties, is to induce the people to be loyal unto death. But as long as the sovereign honors the scholars who despise things and esteem life, it will be impossible to expect the people to sacrifice their lives and be loyal to their sovereign to the death.

Suppose there again is someone who collects books, practices the art

[1] This has reference to Yang Chu, an early spokesman of Taoism.

of speaking, gathers a band of pupils, wears an appearance of culture and learning, and discusses the principles of all things. The ruler of the time will respect him for this, saying: "To show respect to worthy scholars is the way of the ancient kings." Now, those who are taxed by the magistrates are the farmers, while those who are maintained by the sovereign are the learned gentlemen. As long as heavy taxes are collected from the farmers while rich rewards are given to the learned gentlemen, it will be impossible to expect the people to work hard and talk little.

Again, suppose there is someone who holds fast to his principles and his reputation, and conducts himself so that none dares encroach upon his person. Whenever any reproachful word reaches his ear, he will draw his sword. The ruler of the time will respect him for this, regarding him as a self-respecting gentleman. But, as long as the merit of beheading the enemy in war is not rewarded, while bravery in family quarrels is celebrated with honors, it will be impossible to expect the people to fight hard against the enemy but refrain from having private feuds.

In time of peace the literati and the cavaliers are patronized; in time of war uniformed warriors are employed. Thus neither are the ones patronized the ones used, nor are the ones used the ones patronized. This is the reason why there is disorder.

Furthermore, in listening to a learned man, if the ruler approves his words, he should officially adopt them in his administration and appoint the man to office; and if he disapproves his words, he should get rid of the person and put an end to his heretical doctrine. Actually, however, what is regarded as right is not officially adopted in administration, and what is regarded as wrong is not stamped out as heretical doctrine. Thus, what is right is not employed and what is wrong is not eliminated—this is the way to chaos and ruin. . . .

When the sage rules the state, he does not count on people doing good of themselves, but employs such measures as will keep them from doing any evil. If he counts on people doing good of themselves, there will not be enough such people to be numbered by the tens in the whole country. But if he employs such measures as will keep them from doing evil, then the entire state can be brought up to a uniform standard. Inasmuch as the administrator has to consider the many but disregard the few, he does not busy himself with morals but with laws.

Evidently, if one should have to count on arrows which are straight

of themselves, there would not be any arrows in a hundred generations; if one should only count on pieces of wood which are circular of themselves, there would not be any wheels in a thousand generations. Though in a hundred generations there is neither an arrow that is straight of itself nor a wheel that is circular of itself, yet people in every generation ride carts and shoot birds. Why is that? It is because the tools for straightening and bending are used. Though without the use of such tools there might happen to be an arrow straight of itself or a wheel circular of itself, the skilled carpenter will not prize it. Why? Because it is not just one person who wishes to ride, or just one shot that the archers wish to shoot. Similarly, though without the use of rewards and punishments there might happen to be an individual good of himself, the intelligent ruler will not prize him. The reason is that the law of the state must not be sidetracked and government is not for one man. Therefore, the capable prince will not be swayed by occasional virtue, but will pursue a course that will assure certainty. . . .

Now, when witches and priests pray for people, they say: "May you live as long as one thousand and ten thousand years!" Even as the sounds, "one thousand and ten thousand years," are dinning upon one's ears, there is no sign that even a single day has been added to the age of any man. That is the reason why people despise witches and priests. Likewise, when the Confucianists of the present day counsel the rulers they do not discuss the way to bring about order now, but exalt the achievement of good order in the past. They neither study affairs pertaining to law and government nor observe the realities of vice and wickedness, but all exalt the reputed glories of remote antiquity and the achievements of the ancient kings. Sugar-coating their speech, the Confucianists say: "If you listen to our words, you will be able to become the leader of all feudal lords." Such people are but witches and priests among the itinerant counselors, and are not to be accepted by rulers with principles. Therefore, the intelligent ruler upholds solid facts and discards useless frills. He does not speak about deeds of humanity and righteousness, and he does not listen to the words of learned men.

Those who are ignorant about government insistently say: "Win the hearts of the people." If order could be procured by winning the hearts of the people, then even the wise ministers Yi Yin and Kuan Chung would be of no use. For all that the ruler would need to do would be

just to listen to the people. Actually, the intelligence of the people is not to be relied upon any more than the mind of a baby. If the baby does not have his head shaved, his sores will recur; if he does not have his boil cut open, his illness will go from bad to worse. However, in order to shave his head or open the boil someone has to hold the baby while the affectionate mother is performing the work, and yet he keeps crying and yelling incessantly. The baby does not understand that suffering a small pain is the way to obtain a great benefit.

Now, the sovereign urges the tillage of land and the cultivation of pastures for the purpose of increasing production for the people, but they think the sovereign is cruel. The sovereign regulates penalties and increases punishments for the purpose of repressing the wicked, but the people think the sovereign is severe. Again, he levies taxes in cash and in grain to fill up the granaries and treasuries in order to relieve famine and provide for the army, but they think the sovereign is greedy. Finally, he insists upon universal military training without personal favoritism, and urges his forces to fight hard in order to take the enemy captive, but the people think the sovereign is violent. These four measures are methods for attaining order and maintaining peace, but the people are too ignorant to appreciate them.

The reason for the ruler to look for wise and well-informed men is that the intelligence of the people is not such as to be respected or relied upon. For instance, in ancient times, when Yü opened the rivers and deepened them, the people gathered tiles and stones [to hit him]; when the prime minister of Cheng, Tzu Ch'an, cleared the fields and planted mulberry trees, the people of Cheng slandered and reviled him. Yü benefited the whole empire and Tzu Ch'an preserved the state of Cheng, but each incurred slander thereby. Clearly the intelligence of the people is not to be relied upon. Therefore, to seek for the worthy and the wise in selecting officials and to endeavor to suit the people in administering the government are equally the cause of chaos and not the means for attaining order.

### CHAPTER 49: THE FIVE VERMIN OF THE STATE

In the age of remote antiquity human beings were few while birds and beasts were many, and men were unable to overcome birds, beasts, insects, and serpents. Thereupon a sage arose who fastened trees and

branches together and made nests, and all harm was thereby avoided. At this the people were delighted and they made him ruler of the whole world, according to him the title "Nest-Builder." Again, the people in those days lived on the fruits of trees and seeds of grass as well as on mussels and clams which smelled rank and fetid and hurt the digestive organs, and many of the people were afflicted with diseases. Thereupon a sage arose who drilled a piece of wood and produced fire [for cooking], and the fetid and musty smell was thereby transformed. At this the people were delighted and they made him ruler of the whole world, according to him the title "Fire-Maker." In the age of middle antiquity, there was a great deluge in the world, and Kun and his son, Yü, opened channels for the water. In the age of recent antiquity, Chieh and Chou were wicked and disorderly, and T'ang and Wu punished them.

Now, if somebody tried to fasten the trees or drill a piece of wood in the age of the Hsia dynasty, he would certainly be ridiculed by Kun and Yü. Again, if somebody attempted to open channels for water in the age of the Yin and Chou dynasties, he would certainly be ridiculed by T'ang and Wu. For the same reason, if somebody in this present age should praise the ways of Yao and Shun, Kun and Yü, T'ang and Wu, he would certainly be ridiculed by contemporary sages. Hence the sage does not seek to follow the ways of the ancients, nor does he regard precedents as the rule. He examines the circumstances of his own time and plans his course of action accordingly.

There was once a man of Sung who tilled his field. In the midst of his field stood the stump of a tree, and one day a hare, running at full speed, bumped into the stump, broke its neck, and died. Thereupon the man left his plow and kept watch at the stump, hoping that he would get another hare. But he never caught another hare, and was only ridiculed by the people of Sung. Now those who try to rule the people of the present age with the conduct of government of the early kings are all doing exactly the same thing as that fellow who kept watch by the stump. . . .

When Yao held the empire, his reed thatch was left untrimmed and his roof-beams were not planed. The unhusked kernels of cereals were his food and wild greens made his soup. In winter he wore deerskins, and in summer a garment of rough fiber-cloth. Even the food and clothing of a gate-keeper were no worse than his. When Yü held the empire,

he worked with the plow and the spade personally so as to set an example to his people, till his thighs were without fat and his shins without hair. Even the toil of the servant and slave was not more arduous than his. Such being the case, the ancient emperors who abdicated their thrones were, as a matter of fact, relinquishing but the lot of the gate-keeper and parting but with the toil of the slave. Therefore even though they gave up their empire, there was nothing especially praiseworthy. Nowadays, on the contrary, after even a mere district magistrate dies, his descendants can maintain private carriages for many generations. Hence people value such an office. Thus in the matter of giving up something, people found it easy to abdicate the throne in ancient times, yet find it hard to relinquish the post of a present-day district magistrate. This is because the advantages in each case are so different.

Now, people who dwell in the mountains and have to draw water from the gorges give water to each other as a gift at festivals; those who live in swamps and are troubled with too much water hire laborers to open channels for it. Likewise, in the spring following a year of famine one is unable to feed one's younger brother, while in the autumn of a year of plenty even casual visitors are offered food. Not that men neglect their blood relations and love passers-by, but that the material provisions on the respective occasions are so different. Hence the ancient indifference to goods was not due to humanity, but to the abundance of goods. Nor are the present-day struggles for possession due to niggardliness but to the scarcity of goods. Men used to decline the position of the emperor lightly, and this was not because of any inner nobility but because the power of the emperor was limited. Men now strive fiercely for portfolios in government, and this is not because of any natural meanness but because the authority of the posts is great. Therefore the sage considers the condition of the times, whether it is one of plenty or scarcity, abundance or meagerness, and governs the people accordingly. Thus though penalties are light, it is not due to charity; though punishment is heavy, it is not due to cruelty. Whatever is done is done in accordance with the circumstances of the age. Therefore circumstances go according to their time, and the course of action is planned in accordance with the circumstances. . . .

Indeed, ancients and moderns have different customs; the present and the past follow different courses of action. To attempt to apply a benev-

olent and lenient government to the people of a desperate age is about the same as trying to drive wild horses without reins or whips. This is the affliction of ignorance.

Nowadays, the Confucianists and the Mo-ists all praise the ancient kings for their universal love for the whole world, which made them regard the people as parents regard their children. How do we know this was so? Because they say: "When the minister of justice employed punishment the ruler would stop having music; at the news of any capital punishment he would shed tears." In this way they commend the ancient kings. But if you maintain that good government will always prevail whenever the ruler and the ruled act towards each other like father and son, you imply that there are never any wayward fathers or sons. According to the nature of man, none could be more affectionate than one's own parents. And yet in spite of the love of both parents not all children are well brought up. Though the ruler be warm in his affection for his people, how is that necessarily any assurance that there would be no disorder? Now the love of the ancient kings for their people could not have surpassed that of the parents for their children. Since we could not be certain that the children would not be rebellious, how could we assume that the people would definitely be orderly? Moreover, if the ruler should shed tears when a penalty was inflicted in accordance with the law, he might thereby parade his humanity, but not thus conduct his government. Now tearful revulsion against penalties comes from humanity, but necessity of penalties issues from the law. Since even the early kings had to permit the law to prevail and repress their tears, it is clear enough that humanity could not be depended upon for good government. . . .

Now take a young fellow who is a bad character. His parents may get angry at him, but he never makes any change. The villagers may reprove him, but he is not moved. His teachers and elders may admonish him, but he never reforms. The love of his parents, the efforts of the villagers, and the wisdom of his teachers and elders—all the three excellent disciplines are applied to him, and yet not even a hair on his shins is altered. It is only after the district magistrate sends out his soldiers and in the name of the law searches for wicked individuals that the young man becomes afraid and changes his ways and alters his deeds. So while the love of parents is not sufficient to discipline the children, the severe pen-

alties of the district magistrate are. This is because men became naturally spoiled by love, but are submissive to authority. . . .

That being so, rewards should be rich and certain so that the people will be attracted by them; punishments should be severe and definite so that the people will fear them; and laws should be uniform and steadfast so that the people will be familiar with them. Consequently, the sovereign should show no wavering in bestowing rewards and grant no pardon in administering punishments, and he should add honor to rewards and disgrace to punishments—when this is done, then both the worthy and the unworthy will want to exert themselves. . . .

The literati by means of letters upset laws; the cavaliers by means of their prowess transgress prohibitions. Yet the ruler treats them both with decorum. This is actually the cause of all the disorder. Every departure from the law ought to be apprehended, and yet scholars are nevertheless taken into office on account of their literary learning. Again, the transgression of every prohibition ought to be censured, and yet cavaliers are patronized because of their readiness to draw the sword. Thus, those whom the law reproves turn out to be those whom the ruler employs, and those whom the magistrates suppress are those whom the sovereign patronizes. Thus legal standard and personal inclination as well as ruler and ministers are sharply opposed to each other and all fixed standards are lost. Then, even if there were ten Yellow Emperors, they would not be able to establish any order. Therefore, those who practice humanity and righteousness should not be upheld, for if upheld, they would hinder concrete accomplishments. Again, those who specialize in refinement and learning should not be employed, for if employed, they would disturb the laws. There was in Ch'u an upright man named Kung, who, when his father stole a sheep, reported it to the authorities. The magistrate said: "Put him to death," as he thought the man was faithful to the ruler but disloyal to his father. So the man was apprehended and convicted. From this we can see that the faithful subject of the ruler was an outrageous son to his father. Again, there was a man of Lu who followed his ruler to war, fought three battles, and ran away three times. Confucius interrogated him. The man replied: "I have an old father. Should I die, nobody would take care of him." Confucius regarded him as virtuous in filial piety, commended and exalted him.[2] From this we

[2] This story about Confucius is not recorded anywhere else and evidently is fabricated out of Confucius' teaching on filial piety.

It is he who does no governing who can govern the empire. Therefore Yao governed by not governing; it was not because of his governing that his empire was governed. Now [the recluse] Hsü-yu only realized that since the empire was well-governed he should not replace Yao. He thought it was Yao who did the actual governing. Consequently he said to Yao: "You govern the empire." He should have forgotten such words and investigated into that condition of peace. Someone may say: "It was Yao who actually governed and put the empire in good order but it was Hsü-yu who enabled Yao to do so by refusing to govern himself." This is a great mistake. Yao was an adequate example of governing by not governing and acting by not acting. Why should we have to resort to Hsü-yu? Are we to insist that a man fold his arms and sit in silence in the middle of some mountain forest before we will say he is practicing "nonaction"? This is why the words of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu are rejected by responsible officials. This is why responsible officials insist on remaining in the realm of action without feeling any regret. [Sec. 1, 1:9b–10a]

By taking no action is not meant folding one's arms and closing one's mouth. If we simply let everything act by itself, it will be contented with its nature and destiny. To have no alternative but [to rule an empire] is not to be forced into doing so by power or punishment. If only Tao is embraced and simplicity cherished, and what has to be is allowed to run its maximum course, then the world will naturally be contented with itself. [Sec. 11, 4:29a]

CONTENTMENT

[From Commentary on *Chuang Tzu,* Sec. 1, 1:14a; Sec. 3, 2:1a–6b; Sec. 4, 3:28a; Sec. 9, 4:11b]

If a person is perfectly at ease with his spirit and physical power, whether he lifts something heavy or carries something light, it is due to the fact that he is using his strength to a desired degree. If a person loves fame and is fond of supremacy and is not satisfied even when he has broken his back in the attempt, it is due to the fact that human knowledge knows no limit. Therefore what is called knowledge is born of our losing our balance and will be eliminated when ultimate capacity is realized intuitively. Intuitively realizing ultimate capacity means allowing one's lot to reach its highest degree, and [in the case of lifting weights] not adding

so much as an ounce beyond that. Therefore though a person carries ten thousand pounds, if it is equal to his capacity he will suddenly forget the weight upon his body. Though a person attends to ten thousand matters [if his capacity is equal to them] he will be utterly unaware that the affairs are upon him. These are the fundamentals for the cultivation of life. . . . If one attains the Mean and intuitively realizes the proper limit, everything can be done. The cultivation of life does not seek to exceed one's lot but to preserve the principle of things and to live out one's allotted span of life. [Sec. 3, 2:1a–2a]

Joy and sorrow are the results of gains and losses. A gentleman who profoundly penetrates all things and is in harmony with their transformations will be contented with whatever time may bring. He follows the course of nature in whatever situation he may be. He will be intuitively united with creation. He will be himself wherever he may be. Where does gain or loss, life or death, come in? Therefore, if one lets what he has received from nature take its own course, there will be no place for joy or sorrow. [Sec. 3, 2:6a–b]

Allow the foot to walk according to its capacity, and let the hand grasp according to its strength. Listen to what the ear hears and see what the eye sees. In knowing, stop at what cannot be known. In action, stop at what cannot be done. Employ [the faculties] as they would use themselves. Do things that would be done by themselves. Be unrestrained within one's lot but do not attempt the least outside of it. This is the easiest way of taking no [unnatural] action. There has never been a case of taking no action and yet of one's nature and life not being preserved, and I have never heard of any principle according to which the preservation of nature and life is not a blessing. [Sec. 4, 3:28a]

The expert driver utilizes the natural capacity of horses to its limit. To use the capacity to its limit lies in letting it take its own course. If forced to run at a rapid pace, with the expectation that they can exceed their capacity, horses will be unable to bear it and many will die. On the other hand, if both worn-out and thoroughbred horses are allowed to use their proper strength and to adapt their pace to their given lot, even if they travel to the borders of the country, their nature will be fully preserved. But there are those who, upon hearing the doctrine of allowing the nature of horses to take its own course, will say: "Then set the horses free and do not ride on them"; and there are those who, upon hearing the doctrine

of taking no action, will immediately say: "It is better to lie down than to walk." Why are they so much off the track and unable to return? In this they have missed Chuang Tzu's ideas to a very high degree. [Sec. 9, 4:11b]

If one is contented wherever he goes, he will be at ease wherever he may be. Even life and death cannot affect him, much less flood or fire. The perfect man is not besieged by calamities, not because he escapes from them but because he advances the principles of things and goes forward and naturally comes into union with good fortune. [Sec. 1, 1:14a]

SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT

[From Commentary on *Chuang Tzu,* Sec. 1, 1:11b, 14b; Sec. 4, 2:7a–25a; Sec. 6, 3:19a; Sec. 13, 5:35a; Sec. 14, 5:42a, 44b]

Man in society cannot get away from his fellow beings. The changes in society vary from generation to generation according to different standards. Only those who have no minds of their own and do not use their own judgment can adapt themselves to changes and not be burdened by them. [Sec. 4, 2:7a]

Events that took place in the past have disappeared with the past. Some may be transmitted to us [in writing], but can this make the past exist in the present? The past is not in the present and even every present is soon changed. Therefore only when one abandons the pursuit of knowledge, lets nature take its own course, and changes with the times, can he be perfect. [Sec. 13, 5:35a]

Humanity and righteousness are principles of human nature. Human nature undergoes changes and is different past and present. If one takes a temporary abode in a thing and then moves on, he will intuit [the reality of things]. If, however, he stops and is confined to one place, he will develop prejudices. Prejudices will result in hypocrisy, and hypocrisy will result in many reproaches. [Sec. 14, 5:44b]

To cry as people cry is a manifestation of the mundane world. To identify life and death, forget joy and sorrow, and be able to sing in the presence of the corpse is the perfection of transcendental existence. . . . Therefore the principles of things have their ultimates, and internal and external reality are to be intuited by means of each other. There has never been a person who has roamed over the entire realm of external reality and yet has not intuited internal reality, nor has there been anyone who could intuit internal reality and yet did not roam over the realm of external reality. [Sec. 6, 3:19a]

Although the sage is in the midst of government, his mind seems to be in the mountain forest. . . . His abode is in the myriad things, but it does not mean that he does not wander freely. [Sec. 1, 1:11b, 14b]

When a thousand people gather together with no one as their leader, they will be either unruly or disorganized. Therefore when there are many virtuous people, there should not be many rulers, but when there is no virtuous person, there should be a ruler. This is the principle of Heaven and man and the most proper thing to do. [Sec. 4, 2:16b]

The ceremonies of ancient kings were intended to meet the needs of the time. When the time has past and the ceremonies are still not cast away, they will become an evil influence to the people and serve to hasten the start of affectations and imitation. [Sec. 14, 5:42a]

When the king does not make himself useful in the various offices, the various officials will manage their own affairs. Those with clear vision will do the seeing, those with sharp ears will do the listening, the wise will do the planning, and the strong will provide protection. What need is there to take any action? Only profound silence, that is all. [Sec. 4, 2:25a]

## *HSI K'ANG*

### *On Partiality*

From the third to the sixth centuries it was fashionable for men of literary and philosophical interests to gather in small coteries and engage in what is called by the Chinese "ch'ing-t'an" or "pure conversation"—conversation which is highly witty, refined, and concerned with philosophical matters transcending the concerns and conventions of the mundane world. Many of the literati such as Wang Pi and Ho Yen were members of such groups, as were many eminent Buddhist monks. The most famous of these groups was the so-called "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove" which included Juan Chi, Hsi K'ang, and Hsiang Hsiu. For many years these friends met in the bamboo groves to the north of Lo-yang, the capital of the state of Wei, and behaved with utter disregard for social and intellectual convention. They engaged in philosophical discussions inspired by the freedom and transcendentalism of Neo-Taoist thought. The following excerpts are from the writings of one of this famous group, Hsi K'ang (A.D. 232–262).

[From *Shih-ssu lun,* in *Hsi Chung-san chi,* 6:1a–b]

A gentleman is so called because he is not fixed in his mind as to what is right and wrong, but acts without violating Tao. How is this? He whose

vital force is tranquil and whose spirit is absolutely peaceful and pure does not occupy his mind with attachments. And he whose physical faculties are clear and whose mental faculties are enlightened does not allow his feelings to be bound by desires. Since his mind is not occupied with attachments, he is able to transcend the established doctrines of social relations and let nature take its own course. And since his feelings are not bound by desires, he is able to discern what is noble and what is lowly and be in harmony with the feelings of people and things. Because he is in harmony with the feelings of people, he does not violate the Great Tao, and because he transcends social ranks and lets his mind take its own course he is not predetermined about what is right and what is wrong. Therefore when we talk about the gentleman, absence of predetermination is the point of fundamental importance and harmony with things is the point of excellence. When we talk about the inferior man, we consider his concealment of feelings as wrong and his violation of Tao as a defect.

### *On the Nourishment of Life*

[From *"Nan 'Yang-sheng lun'"* in *Hsi Chung-san chi,* 4:4b–5a]

Obey laws and follow principles so as not to fall into the net [of the law]. Honor the self for its freedom from crime, and enjoy peaceful leisure in the lack of burden. Roam in the realm of truth and righteousness, and lie down and rest in a humble abode. Be quiet, be at ease, and have nothing to thwart your wishes, and then your spirit and vital force will be in harmonious order. Is it necessary to have glory and splendor before one has honor? Cultivate the field to raise food and weave silk for clothing. When these are sufficient, leave the wealth of the world alone. Do as a thirsty person drinking from a river. He drinks happily enough, but does not covet the voluminous flow. Does one have to depend on an accumulation to be wealthy? This is how the gentleman exercises his mind for he regards rank and position as a tumor and material wealth as dirt and dust. What is the use of wealth and honor to him?

What is difficult to acquire in the world is neither wealth nor glory, but a sense of contentment. If one is contented, though he has only a small plot to cultivate, a coarse garment to wear, and beans to eat, in no case is he not satisfied. If one is discontented, though the whole world supports

him and all things serve him, he is still not gratified. Thus it is that the contented needs nothing from the outside whereas the discontented needs everything from the outside. Needing everything, he is always in want no matter where he goes. Needing nothing, he lacks nothing regardless of where he may be. If he does not indulge his will because he enjoys splendor and glory, nor chase after vulgarity because he lives in obscurity, but moves and has his being with all things as one and cannot be either favored or disgraced, he is then really honored and wealthy. . . . This is what the *Lao Tzu* means when it says: "There is no greater happiness than freedom from worry, and there is no greater wealth than contentment."

## *The Lieh Tzu*

This work, though traditionally attributed to the philosopher Lieh Yü-k'ao (c.450–375 B.C.) is actually by a Neo-Taoist writer of the third century A.D. and expresses the attitude of fatalism characteristic of some of the thinkers of this school.

[From *Lieh Tzu,* 1:1a–b, 6:1a]

[As the *Chuang Tzu* says]: "There is creation which is itself uncreated" [Ch. 6], and "there is transformation which is itself not transformed" [Ch. 22]. The uncreated is able to create and recreate, and the nontransformed is able to transform and retransform. That which is created cannot help producing, and the transformed cannot help transforming. Hence there is constant production and transformation. By this is meant that there is no time without production or transformation, as in [the production of] yin and yang and in [the transformation of] the four seasons. The uncreated, we may assume, is One and has neither beginning nor end. The nontransformed goes to and fro. The range [of what goes to and fro] is illimitable. The Way of the One that has neither beginning nor end is inexhaustible. The *Book of the Yellow Emperor* says: "The Spirit of the Valley never dies. It is called the Profound Mother. The gate of the Profound Mother is called the root of Heaven and earth. It is continuous and seems to be always existing. It can be used forever without being worn out." [1] Therefore that which creates things is itself uncreated, and that which transforms things is itself nontransformed. Creation, trans-

[1] *Lao Tzu.* 6.

formation, form, appearance, wisdom, energy, decline, cessation—all by itself. It is wrong to say that any of these is achieved through external effort. [1:11a–b]

Effort said to Fate: How can your achievement be compared to mine?

Fate said: What have you done for things that you wish to compare yourself with me?

Effort said: Longevity, brevity of life, obscurity, prominence, honor, humble station, poverty, and success are all within my power.

Fate said: P'eng-tzu's wisdom was not superior to that of Yao and Shun, but he enjoyed a longevity of 800 years. The talent of Yen Hui [Confucius' favorite pupil] was not inferior to those of the multitude, yet he lived for only thirty-two years. . . . If such things are within your power, why is it that you allot long life to P'eng-tzu but short life to Yen Hui; that you award obscurity to the sage and prominence to the stupid, poverty to the good and wealth to the wicked?

Effort said: Is it true then, as you say, that I have no influence over the way things are? Are they under your control?

Fate said: Since I am called Fate, how can I have any control? If a thing is straight, I push it on. If it is crooked, I leave it alone. Longevity, brevity of life, obscurity, prominence, honor, humble station, wealth and poverty—all these come naturally and of themselves. How should I know anything about them? How should I know anything about them? [6:1a]

## *The "Yang Chu" Chapter of Lieh Tzu*

This essay is probably by a contemporary of the unknown author of the *Lieh Tzu,* though it now forms one chapter of that work and like the *Lieh Tzu* expresses the Neo-Taoist tendency toward fatalism. It has been erroneously attributed to the philosopher Yang Chu who lived around 440 to 360 B.C. and is mentioned in the writings of Mencius. A much more pessimistic view of life is expressed here than in the early Taoist philosophers.

[From *Lieh Tzu,* 7:1b–2a]

Yang Chu said: The longest life is but a hundred years, and not one man in a thousand lives to that age. Suppose there is one who does. Half of that time is occupied with infancy and senility. Of the other half, almost half is wasted in sleep at night and naps in the day time. And almost half of the remainder is lost in pain, illness, sorrow, grief, death, and loss [of relatives and friends]. I would estimate that in the ten years or more

such superior nature, men should be equal and uniform. And yet they differ in being virtuous or stupid, in being perverse or upright, in being fair or ugly, tall or short, pure or impure, chaste or lewd, patient or impatient, slow or quick. What they pursue or avoid in their interests and what their eyes and ears desire are as different as Heaven and earth, and as incompatible as ice and coals. Why should you only wonder at the fact that immortals are different and do not die like ordinary people? . . . But people with superficial knowledge are bound by what is ordinary and adhere to what is common. They all say that immortals are not seen in the world, and therefore they say forthwith that there cannot be immortals. [2:1a–4a]

Among men some are wise and some are stupid, but they all know that in their bodies they have a heavenly component (*hun*) and an earthly component (*p'o*) of the soul. If these are partly gone, man becomes sick. If they are completely gone, man dies. If they are partially separated from the body, the occult expert has means to retain and restrict them. If they are entirely separated, there are principles in the established rites to recall them. These components of the soul as entities are extremely close to us. And yet although we are born with them and live with them throughout life, we never see or hear them. Should one say that they do not exist simply because we have not seen or heard them? [2:12a]

### *Alchemy*

[From *Pao-p'u Tzu,* 2:3b–4a; 3:1a, 5a; 4:1a–3a; 6:4a]

The immortals nourish their bodies with drugs and prolong their lives with the application of occult science, so that internal illness shall not arise and external ailment shall not enter. Although they enjoy everlasting existence and do not die, their old bodies do not change. If one knows the way to immortality, it is not to be considered so difficult. [2:3b–4a]

Among the creatures of nature, man is the most intelligent. Therefore those who understand [creation] slightly can employ the myriad things, and those who get to its depth can enjoy [what is called in the *Lao Tzu*] "long life and everlasting existence" [Ch. 59]. As we know that the best medicine can prolong life, let us take it to obtain immortality, and as we know that the tortoise and the crane have longevity, let us imitate their activities to increase our span of life. . . . Those who have obtained Tao

are able to lift themselves into the clouds and the heavens above and to dive and swim in the rivers and seas below. [3:1a, 5a]

Pao-p'u Tzu said: I have investigated and read books on the nourishment of human nature and collected formulas for everlasting existence. Those I have perused number thousands of volumes. They all consider reconverted cinnabar [after it has been turned into mercury] and gold fluid to be the most important. Thus these two things represent the acme of the way to immortality. . . . The transformations of the two substances are the more wonderful the more they are heated. Yellow gold does not disintegrate even after having been smelted a hundred times in fire, and does not rot even if buried in the ground until the end of the world. If these two medicines are eaten, they will strengthen our bodies and therefore enable us not to grow old nor to die. This is of course seeking assistance from external substances to strengthen ourselves. It is like feeding fat to the lamp so it will not die out. If we smear copperas on our feet, they will not deteriorate even if they remain in water. This is to borrow the strength of the copper to protect our flesh. Gold fluid and reconverted cinnabar, however, upon entering our body, permeate our whole system of blood and energy and are not like copperas which helps only on the outside. [4:1a–3a]

It is hoped that those who nourish life will learn extensively and comprehend the essential, gather whatever there is to see and choose the best. It is not sufficient to depend on cultivating only one thing. It is also dangerous for people who love life to rely on their own specialty. Those who know the techniques of the *Classic of the Mysterious Lady* and the *Classic of the Plain Lady* [books on sexual regimen no longer extant] will say that only the "art of the chamber" will lead to salvation. Those who understand the method of breathing exercises will say that only the permeation of the vital power can prolong life. Those who know the method of stretching and bending will say that only physical exercise can prevent old age. And those who know the formulas of herbs will say that only medicine will make life unending. They fail in their pursuit of Tao because they are so onesided. People of superficial knowledge think they have enough when they happen to know of only one way and do not realize that the true seeker will search unceasingly even after he has acquired some good formulas. [6:4a]

Pao-p'u Tzu answered: Yes, it is true. The middle section of the *Yu-ch'ien ching* says: "The most important thing is to accomplish good works. The next is the removal of faults. For him who cultivates the way, the highest accomplishment of good work is to save people from danger so they may escape from calamity, and to preserve people from sickness so that they may not die unjustly. Those who aspire to be immortals should regard loyalty, filial piety, harmony, obedience, love, and good faith as their essential principles of conduct. If they do not cultivate moral conduct but merely devote themselves to occult science, they will never attain everlasting life. If they do evil, the Arbiter of Human Destiny will take off units of three hundred days from their allotted life if the evil is great, or units of three days if the evil is small. Since [the punishment] depends on the degree of evil, the reduction in the span of life is in some cases great and in others small. When a man is endowed with life and given a life span, he has his own definite number of days. If his number is large, the units of three hundred days and of three days are not easily exhausted and therefore he dies later. On the other hand, if one's allotted number is small and offences are many, then the units are soon exhausted and he dies early."

The book also says: "Those who aspire to be terrestrial immortals should accomplish three hundred good deeds and those who aspire to be celestial immortals should accomplish 1,200. If the 1,199th good deed is followed by an evil one, they will lose all their accumulation and have to start all over. It does not matter whether the good deeds are great or the evil deed is small. Even if they do no evil but talk about their good deeds and demand reward for their charities, they will nullify the goodness of these deeds although the other good deeds are not affected." The book further says: "If good deeds are not sufficiently accumulated, taking the elixir of immortality will be of no help." [3:7b–8a, 10a–b]

### *Taoism in Relation to Other Schools*

[From *Pao-p'u Tzu,* 10:1a–b; 12:1a–b]

Someone said: If it were certain that one could become an immortal, the sages would have trained themselves to be such. But neither Duke Chou nor Confucius did so. It is clear that there is no such possibility.

Pao-p'u Tzu answered: A sage need not be an immortal and an im-

mortal need not be a sage. The sage receives a mandate [from Heaven], not to attend to the way of everlasting life, but to remove tyrants and eliminate robbers, to turn danger into security and violence into peace, to institute ceremonies and create musical systems, to propagate laws and give education, to correct improper manners and reform degenerate customs, to assist rulers who are in danger of downfall and to support those states that are about to collapse. . . . What the ordinary people call sages are all sages who regulate the world but not sages who attain Tao. The Yellow Emperor and Lao Tzu were sages who attained Tao, while Duke Chou and Confucius were sages who regulated the world. [12:1a–b]

Someone asked: Which is first and which is last, Confucianism or Taoism?

Pao-p'u Tzu answered: Taoism is the essence of Confucianism and Confucianism is an appendage to Taoism. First of all,[4] there was the "teaching of the yin-yang school which had many taboos that made people constrained and afraid." "The Confucianists had extensive learning but little that was essential; they worked hard but achieved little." "Mo-ism emphasized thrift but was difficult to follow," and could not be practiced exclusively. "The Legalists were severe and showed little kindness"; they destroyed humanity and righteousness. "The teachings of the Taoist school alone enable men's spirits to be concentrated and united and their action to be in harmony with the formless. . . . Taoism embraces the good points of both Confucianism and Mo-ism and combines the essentials of the Legalists and Logicians. It changes with the times and responds to the transformations of things. . . . Its precepts are simple and easy to understand; its works are few but its achievements many." It is devoted to the simplicity that preserves the Great Heritage and adheres to the true and correct source. [10:1a–b]

[4] Most of the following is quoted from the essay on the six philosophical schools by the Han historian Ssu-ma T'an (d. 110 B.C.).

practice, they cannot serve to guide the chariot-wheels of society; they can only trail behind the chariot grumbling that it goes too fast, and endeavor to drag it back and make it go in the opposite direction.

We also oppose the phrase-mongering of the "leftists." Their ideas are ahead of a given stage of development of the objective process: some of them regard their fantasies as truth; others, straining to realize at present an ideal which can only be realized in the future, divorce themselves from the practice of the majority of the people at the moment and from the realities of the day and show themselves as adventurist in their actions. Idealism and mechanistic materialism, opportunism, and adventurism, are all characterized by a breach between the subjective and the objective, by the separation of knowledge from practice. The Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge, which is distinguished by its emphasis on social practice as the criterion of scientific truth, cannot but resolutely oppose these incorrect ideologies. The Marxist recognizes that in the absolute, total process of the development of the universe, the development of each concrete process is relative; hence, in the great stream of absolute truth, man's knowledge of the concrete process at each given stage of development is only relatively true. The sum total of innumerable relative truths is the absolute truth.[21] [pp. 294–96]

To discover truth through practice, and through practice to verify and develop truth. To start from perceptual knowledge and actively develop it into rational knowledge, and then, starting from rational knowledge, actively direct revolutionary practice so as to remold the subjective and the objective world. Practice, knowledge, more practice, more knowledge; the cyclical repetition of this pattern to infinity, and with each cycle, the elevation of the content of practice and knowledge to a higher level. Such is the whole of the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge, and such is the dialectical materialist theory of the unity of knowing and doing. July, 1937 [p. 297]

## *LIU SHAO-CH'I*

### *How To Be a Good Communist*

Liu Shao-ch'i (1905– ), a veteran Communist who joined the Party in 1921, the year of its founding, has been one of Mao's closest co-workers and speaks

[21] Cf. V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* Chapter II, Section 5.

as a theoretician with an authority second only to Mao. When the People's Republic was established in 1949, he became vice-chairman of the Central People's Government, and after Mao relinquished the chairmanship in 1959, Liu succeeded to it.

*How To Be a Good Communist* is a basic text of indoctrination for party members, delivered first as a series of lectures in July, 1939, at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Yenan. It represents one more aspect of the campaign for tightening Party discipline and strengthening orthodoxy which was pressed in the late '30s and early '40s in order to insure the proper assimilation of new recruits, growing rapidly in number, and the maintenance of Party unity along orthodox Leninist lines.

The original Chinese title of this work is literally *The Cultivation of Communist Party Members*. Both the title and Liu's frequent reference to earlier Chinese concepts of self-cultivation suggest a link with Chinese tradition, though perhaps only a tenuous one. In any case, the crucial factor in Communist cultivation is Party authority and guidance. Though the Party does not conceal its readiness to apply the most stringent sanctions against recalcitrance and deviation, it is highly conscious of the limits to which coercion may be employed in maintaining order and discipline. Wherever possible, it encourages Party members to discipline themselves, and prefers persuasion quietly backed by overwhelming force to outright dictation and naked oppression. A further inducement for Party cadres is the hope of joining the new elite. The prospect of rising to some power and authority in the system encourages them to stomach indoctrination and discipline which otherwise might be quite unpalatable for those who were merely subject to it.

In this, again, there is nothing unique or peculiar to Chinese Communism, but the extension of these methods to the nation as a whole has been a significant element in maintaining ideological unity under the Communist regime.

[From *How To Be a Good Communist*, pp. 15–34]

Comrades! In order to become the most faithful and best pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, we need to carry on cultivation in all aspects in the course of the long and great revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the masses of the people. We need to carry on cultivation in the theories of Marxism-Leninism and in applying such theories in practice; cultivation in revolutionary strategy and tactics; cultivation in studying and dealing with various problems according to the standpoint and methods of Marxism-Leninism; cultivation in ideology and moral character; cultivation in Party unity, inner-Party struggle, and discipline; cultivation in hard work and in the style of work; cultivation in being skillful in dealing with different kinds of people and in associating with

the masses of the people; and cultivation in various kinds of scientific knowledge, etc. We are all Communist Party members and so we have a general cultivation in common. But there exists a wide discrepancy today between our Party members. Wide discrepancy exists among us in the level of political consciousness, in work, in position, in cultural level, in experience of struggle, and in social origin. Therefore, in addition to cultivation in general we also need special cultivation for different groups and for individual comrades.

Accordingly, there should be different kinds of methods and forms of cultivation. For example, many of our comrades keep a diary in order to have a daily check on their work and thoughts or they write down on small posters their personal defects and what they hope to achieve and paste them up where they work or live, together with the photographs of persons they look up to, and ask comrades for criticism and supervision. In ancient China, there were many methods of cultivation. There was Tseng Tze[22] who said: "I reflect on myself three times a day." The *Book of Odes* has it that one should cultivate oneself "as a lapidary cuts and files, carves and polishes." Another method was "to examine oneself by self-reflection" and to "write down some mottoes on the right hand side of one's desk" or "on one's girdle" as daily reminders of rules of personal conduct. The Chinese scholars of the Confucian school had a number of methods for the cultivation of their body and mind. Every religion has various methods and forms of cultivation of its own. The "investigation of things, the extension of knowledge, sincerity of thought, the rectification of the heart, the cultivation of the person, the regulation of the family, the ordering well of the state and the making tranquil of the whole kingdom" as set forth in *The Great Learning*[23] also means the same. All this shows that in achieving one's progress one must make serious and energetic efforts to carry on self-cultivation and study. However, many of these methods and forms cannot be adopted by us because most of them are idealistic, formalistic, abstract, and divorced from social practice. These scholars and religious believers exaggerate the function of subjective initiative, thinking that so long as they keep their general "good intentions" and are devoted

[22] A disciple of Confucius.

[23] *The Great Learning* is said to be "a Book handed down by the Confucian school, which forms the gate by which beginners enter into virtue."

to silent prayer they will be able to change the existing state of affairs, change society, and change themselves under conditions separated from social and revolutionary practice. This is, of course, absurd. We cannot cultivate ourselves in this way. We are materialists and our cultivation cannot be separated from practice.

What is important to us is that we must not under any circumstances isolate ourselves from the revolutionary struggles of different kinds of people and in different forms at a given moment and that we must, moreover, sum up historical revolutionary experience and learn humbly from this and put it into practice. That is to say, we must undertake self-cultivation and steel ourselves in the course of our own practice, basing ourselves on the experiences of past revolutionary practice, on the present concrete situation and on new experiences. Our self-cultivation and steeling are for no other purpose than that of revolutionary practice. That is to say, we must modestly try to understand the standpoint, the method and the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, and understand how Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin dealt with people. And having understood these, we should immediately apply them to our own practice, i.e., in our own lives, words, deeds, and work. Moreover, we should stick to them and unreservedly correct and purge everything in our ideology that runs counter to them, thereby strengthening our own proletarian and Communist ideology and qualities. That is to say, we must modestly listen to the opinions and criticisms of our comrades and of the masses, carefully study the practical problems in our lives and in our work and carefully sum up our experiences and the lessons we have learned so as to find an orientation for our own work. In addition, on the basis of all these, we must judge whether we have a correct understanding of Marxism-Leninism and whether we have correctly applied the method of Marxism-Leninism, found out our own shortcomings and mistakes and corrected them. At the same time, we must find out in what respects specific conclusions of Marxism-Leninism need to be supplemented, enriched and developed on the basis of well-digested new experiences. That is to say, we must combine the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the revolution.

These should be the methods of self-cultivation of us Communist Party members. That is to say, we must use the methods of Marxism-Leninism