

Philosophy 100

Confucius - Key Terms in the "Analects"

Compare with Socrates: II/17, IX/8, VII/8/19, III/15, IV/10, XVIII/8, VII/20, VIII/19; XI/12, VII/21; XVIII/7, IV/5, VII/16, IV/12, IV/16, XIV/12 (XVI/10, XIX/1), XV/9

dao (the Way): I/2, IV/8/9, VII/6, VIII/13, XI/24, XIII/25, XIV/1/3/36, XV/7/29/32, XVII/4

tian (Heaven): VII/23, VIII/19, IX/5, XI/9, XII/5, XIV/35, XVII/19

jun zi ("gentleman"): I/2, II/12, IV/5/9/10/16, VI/18/27, VII/33, VIII/2/7, XII/5/15/19, XIII/3/23/25, XV/9/18/21/32, XVI/10, XVII/4/23, XVIII/7, XIX/9, XX/3

ren ("benevolence"; humaneness): IV/1/2/5/6/15, V/19, VI/7/22/30, VII/6/30/34, VIII/2/7, IX/1, XII/1/2/3/22, XIII/12/19/27, XIV/1/4/6/28, XV/9/33/35/36, XVII/6/8, XIX/6, XX/2

shu (reciprocity): I/4, IV/15/17, V/27, VI/30, VII/22, XII/2, XV/24

li ("the rites"; sacred ceremony): I/12/13, II/3/5/23, III/3/4/15/17/19/26, IV/13, VI/27, VIII/2/8, IX/3/11, X/4, XII/1/5/15, XIII/3/4/5, XIV/12/41, XV/18/33, XVI/5/13, XVII/11, XX/3

yi ("morality"; rightness): I/13, II/24, IV/5/10/12, VII/3/16, XII/10/20, XIII/4, XIV/12/13, XV/17/18, XVI/10/11, XVII/23, XVIII/7, XIX/1

the power of the *word*: IV/22/24, XII/3/10, XIII/3, XVII/6, XIX/25

Study Questions on the *Analects*

1. In what respects is Confucius's philosophy like that of Socrates? What are the major differences in their views of the self and its relation to the world?
2. Explain Confucius's ideas of *ren* and *shu*. What role does his ideal of the *jun zi* play in his ethical thinking? Why is there an obligation for the *jun zi* to enter public life?
3. Describe the role of *li* in the process of becoming a fully human being, according to Confucius. In what kinds of activities can one see examples of this idea in contemporary everyday life?

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

PRE-DYNASTIC: legendary sage-rulers and culture heroes, including Huang Ti, the "Yellow Sovereign" (trad. xxvii cent. n.c.)

HSIA dynasty (trad. 2205-1766 n.c.): unconfirmed by archaeology

SHANG dynasty (trad. 1765-1123 n.c.): confirmed by archaeology; earliest script and bronze

CHOU dynasty (trad. 1122-256 n.c.; actual founding date may be as much as century later): China's age of "feudalism"

"Spring and Autumn" period (722-481 n.c.)

Warring States period (403-222 n.c.): classical age of philosophy

CH'IN dynasty (221-207 n.c.): creation of China's first universal empire

HAN dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220): the age of classical empire

Former or Western Han (206 B.C.-A.D. 9)

Emperor Kao-tsu (206-195)	Emperor Chao (85-74)
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" Hui (194-188)	" Hsüan (73-49)
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Empress Lü (187-180)	" Yüan (48-33)
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Emperor Wen (179-157)	" Ch'eng (32-7)
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" Ching (156-141)	" Ai (7-1 n.c.)
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" Wu (140-87)	" P'ing (A.D. 1-5)
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Wang Mang as Regent and Acting Emperor (A.D. 6-8)

Wang Mang as Emperor of "Hsin" dynasty (A.D. 9-23)

Later or Eastern Han (A.D. 25-220)

Emperor Kuang-wu (25-57)	Emperor Shun (126-144)
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" Ming (58-75)	" Ch'ung (145)
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" Chang (76-88)	" Chih (146)
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" Ifo (89-105)	" Huan (147-167)
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" Shang (106)	" Ling (168-188)
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" An (107-125)	" Shao (189)
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" Shao (125)	" Hsien (190-220)
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PERIOD OF DISUNITY (190/220-589): "mediaeval" China

Three Kingdoms (190/220-280)

Chin dynasty (265-316)

Northern and Southern Dynasties (317-589)

SUI dynasty (590-617): China reunited

TANG dynasty (618-906): political grandeur, cultural brilliance, cosmopolitanism

FIVE DYNASTIES (907-959)

SUNG dynasty (960-1279): economic development, urbanization, spread of printing

Northern Sung (960-1125)

Southern Sung (1126-1279)

YÜAN (Mongol) dynasty (1280-1367)

MING dynasty (1368-1643)

CH'ING (Manchu) dynasty (1644-1911)

REPUBLIC (1912-)

Roger Ames, trans.

I

1. The Tao which can be spoken of is not the eternal Tao;¹
The name which can be named is not the eternal Name.²
2. 'Non-Being' names this beginning of Heaven and Earth;
'Being' names the mother of the myriad things.³
3. Therefore, some people constantly dwell in 'Non-Being'
Because they seek to perceive its mysteries,
While some constantly dwell in 'Being'
Because they seek to perceive its boundaries.⁴
4. These two ['Non-Being' and 'Being'] are of the same origin,
But have different names;
Together they are called abstruse —⁵
5. Abstruse and again abstruse,
6. This is the gate of all mysteries.⁶

道可道，非常道；

名可名，非常名。

無，名天地之始；

有，名萬物之母。

故常無，欲以觀其妙；

常有，欲以觀其徼。

此兩者，同出而異名，同謂之玄。

玄之又玄，衆妙之門。

NOTES

1. The word *tao* 道 appears three times in this first phrase. The first and the third *tao* is a special term in Lao Tzu's philosophy. In this chapter, the special term designates the body

CHUANG TZU



BASIC WRITINGS

Translated by BURTON WATSON

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FREE AND EASY WANDERING

(SECTION 1)

In the northern darkness there is a fish and his name is K'un.¹ The K'un is so huge I don't know how many thousand li he measures. He changes and becomes a bird whose name is P'eng. The back of the P'eng measures I don't know how many thousand li across and, when he rises up and flies off, his wings are like clouds all over the sky. When the sea begins to move,² this bird sets off for the southern darkness, which is the Lake of Heaven.

The *Universal Harmony*³ records various wonders, and it says: "When the P'eng journeys to the southern darkness, the waters are roiled for three thousand li. He beats the whirlwind and rises ninety thousand li, setting off on the sixth-month gale." Wavering heat, bits of dust, living things blown about by the wind—the sky looks very blue. Is that its real color, or is it because it is so far away and has no end? When the bird looks down, all he sees is blue too.

If water is not piled up deep enough, it won't have the strength to bear up a big boat. Pour a cup of water into a hollow in the floor and bits of trash will sail on it like boats. But set the cup there and it will stick fast, for the water is too

¹ K'un means fish roe. So Chuang Tzu begins with a paradox—the tiniest fish imaginable is also the largest fish imaginable.

² Probably a reference to some seasonal shift in the tides or currents.

³ Identified variously as the name of a man or the name of a book. Probably Chuang Tzu intended it as the latter, and is poking fun at the philosophers of other schools who cite ancient texts to prove their assertions.

shallow and the boat too large. If wind is not piled up deep enough, it won't have the strength to bear up great wings. Therefore when the P'eng rises ninety thousand li, he must have the wind under him like that. Only then can he mount on the back of the wind, shoulder the blue sky, and nothing can hinder or block him. Only then can he set his eyes to the south.

The cicada and the little dove laugh at this, saying, "When we make an effort and fly up, we can get as far as the elm or the sapanwood tree, but sometimes we don't make it and just fall down on the ground. Now how is anyone going to go ninety thousand li to the south!"

If you go off to the green woods nearby, you can take along food for three meals and come back with your stomach as full as ever. If you are going a hundred li, you must grind your grain the night before; and if you are going a thousand li, you must start getting the provisions together three months in advance. What do these two creatures understand? Little understanding cannot come up to great understanding; the short-lived cannot come up to the long-lived.

How do I know this is so? The morning mushroom knows nothing of twilight and dawn; the summer cicada knows nothing of spring and autumn. They are the short-lived. South of Ch'u there is a caterpillar which counts five hundred years as one spring and five hundred years as one autumn. Long, long ago there was a great rose of Sharon that counted eight thousand years as one spring and eight thousand years as one autumn. They are the long-lived. Yet P'eng-tsu⁴ alone is famous today for having lived a long time, and everybody tries to ape him. Isn't it pitiful!

Among the questions of T'ang to Ch'i we find the same

⁴ Said to have lived to an incredible old age. See below, p. 72, n. 12.

thing.⁵ In the bald and barren north, there is a dark sea, the Lake of Heaven. In it is a fish which is several thousand li across, and no one knows how long. His name is K'un. There is also a bird there, named P'eng, with a back like Mount T'ai and wings like clouds filling the sky. He beats the whirlwind, leaps into the air, and rises up ninety thousand li, cutting through the clouds and mist, shouldering the blue sky, and then he turns his eyes south and prepares to journey to the southern darkness.

The little quail laughs at him, saying, "Where does he think *he's* going? I give a great leap and fly up, but I never get more than ten or twelve yards before I come down fluttering among the weeds and brambles. And that's the best kind of flying anyway! Where does he think *he's* going?" Such is the difference between big and little.

Therefore a man who has wisdom enough to fill one office effectively, good conduct enough to impress one community, virtue enough to please one ruler, or talent enough to be called into service in one state, has the same kind of self-pride as these little creatures. Sung Jung-tzu⁶ would certainly burst out laughing at such a man. The whole world could praise Sung Jung-tzu and it wouldn't make him exert himself; the whole world could condemn him and it wouldn't make him mope.

⁵ The text may be faulty at this point. The *Pei-shan-lu*, a work written around A.D. 800 by the monk Shen-ch'ing, contains the following passage, said by a T'ang commentator on the *Pei-shan-lu* to be found in the *Chuang Tzu*: "T'ang asked Ch'i, 'Do up, down, and the four directions have a limit?' Ch'i replied, 'Beyond their limitlessness there is still another limitlessness.'" But whether this passage was in the original *Chuang Tzu*, or whether, if it was, it belongs at this point in the text, are questions that cannot be answered.

⁶ Referred to elsewhere in the literature of the period as Sung Chien or Sung K'eng. According to the last section of the *Chuang Tzu*, he taught a doctrine of social harmony, frugality, pacifism, and the rejection of conventional standards of honor and disgrace.

He drew a clear line between the internal and the external, and recognized the boundaries of true glory and disgrace. But that was all. As far as the world went, he didn't fret and worry, but there was still ground he left unturned.

Lieh Tzu⁷ could ride the wind and go soaring around with cool and breezy skill, but after fifteen days he came back to earth. As far as the search for good fortune went, he didn't fret and worry. He escaped the trouble of walking, but he still had to depend on something to get around. If he had only mounted on the truth of Heaven and Earth, ridden the changes of the six breaths, and thus wandered through the boundless, then what would he have had to depend on?

Therefore I say, the Perfect Man has no self; the Holy Man has no merit; the Sage has no fame.⁸

Yao wanted to cede the empire to Hsü Yu. "When the sun and moon have already come out," he said, "it's a waste of light to go on burning the torches, isn't it? When the seasonal rains are falling, it's a waste of water to go on irrigating the fields. If you took the throne, the world would be well ordered. I go on occupying it, but all I can see are my failings. I beg to turn over the world to you."

Hsü Yu said, "You govern the world and the world is already well governed. Now if I take your place, will I be doing it for a name? But name is only the guest of reality—will I be doing it so I can play the part of a guest? When the tailor-bird builds her nest in the deep wood, she uses no more than one branch. When the mole drinks at the river, he takes no more than a bellyful. Go home and forget the matter, my lord.

⁷ Lieh Yü-k'ou, a Taoist philosopher frequently mentioned in the *Chuang Tzu*. The *Lieh Tzu*, a work attributed to him, is of uncertain date and did not reach its present form until the 3d or 4th centuries A.D.

⁸ Not three different categories but three names for the same thing.

I have no use for the rulership of the world! Though the cook may not run his kitchen properly, the priest and the impersonator of the dead at the sacrifice do not leap over the wine casks and sacrificial stands and go take his place."⁹

Chien Wu said to Lien Shu, "I was listening to Chieh Yü's talk—big and nothing to back it up, going on and on without turning around. I was completely dumfounded at his words—no more end than the Milky Way, wild and wide of the mark, never coming near human affairs!"

"What were his words like?" asked Lien Shu.

"He said that there is a Holy Man living on faraway Ku-she Mountain, with skin like ice or snow, and gentle and shy like a young girl. He doesn't eat the five grains, but sucks the wind, drinks the dew, climbs up on the clouds and mist, rides a flying dragon, and wanders beyond the four seas. By concentrating his spirit, he can protect creatures from sickness and plague and make the harvest plentiful. I thought this was all insane and refused to believe it."

"You would!" said Lien Shu. "We can't expect a blind man to appreciate beautiful patterns or a deaf man to listen to bells and drums. And blindness and deafness are not confined to the body alone—the understanding has them too, as your words just now have shown. This man, with this virtue of his, is about to embrace the ten thousand things and roll them into one. Though the age calls for reform, why should he wear himself out over the affairs of the world? There is nothing that can harm this man. Though flood waters pile up to the sky, he will not drown. Though a great drought melts metal and

⁹ Or, following another interpretation, "the priest and the impersonator of the dead do not snatch his wine casks and chopping board away from him and take his place."

stone and scorches the earth and hills, he will not be burned. From his dust and leavings alone you could mold a Yao or a Shun! Why should he consent to bother about mere things?"

A man of Sung who sold ceremonial hats made a trip to Yüeh, but the Yüeh people cut their hair short and tattoo their bodies and had no use for such things. Yao brought order to the people of the world and directed the government of all within the seas. But he went to see the Four Masters of the far away Ku-she Mountain, [and when he got home] north of the Fen River, he was dazed and had forgotten his kingdom there.

Hui Tzu¹⁰ said to Chuang Tzu, "The king of Wei gave me some seeds of a huge gourd. I planted them, and when they grew up, the fruit was big enough to hold five piculs. I tried using it for a water container, but it was so heavy I couldn't lift it. I split it in half to make dippers, but they were so large and unwieldy that I couldn't dip them into anything. It's not that the gourds weren't fantastically big—but I decided they were no use and so I smashed them to pieces."

Chuang Tzu said, "You certainly are dense when it comes to using big things! In Sung there was a man who was skilled at making a salve to prevent chapped hands, and generation after generation his family made a living by bleaching silk in water. A traveler heard about the salve and offered to buy the prescription for a hundred measures of gold. The man called everyone to a family council. 'For generations we've been bleaching silk and we've never made more than a few measures of gold,' he said. 'Now, if we sell our secret, we can make

¹⁰ The logician Hui Shih who, as pointed out by Waley, in the *Chuang Tzu* "stands for intellectuality as opposed to imagination."

a hundred measures in one morning. Let's let him have it! The traveler got the salve and introduced it to the king of Wu, who was having trouble with the state of Yüeh. The king put the man in charge of his troops, and that winter they fought a naval battle with the men of Yüeh and gave them a bad beating.¹¹ A portion of the conquered territory was awarded to the man as a fief. The salve had the power to prevent chapped hands in either case; but one man used it to get a fief, while the other one never got beyond silk bleaching—because they used it in different ways. Now you had a gourd big enough to hold five piculs. Why didn't you think of making it into a great tub so you could go floating around the rivers and lakes, instead of worrying because it was too big and unwieldy to dip into things! Obviously you still have a lot of underbrush in your head!"

Hui Tzu said to Chuang Tzu, "I have a big tree named ailanthus. Its trunk is too gnarled and bumpy to apply a measuring line to, its branches too bent and twisty to match up to a compass or square. You could stand it by the road and no carpenter would look at it twice. Your words, too, are big and useless, and so everyone alike spurns them!"

Chuang Tzu said, "Maybe you've never seen a wildcat or a weasel. It crouches down and hides, watching for something to come along. It leaps and races east and west, not hesitating to go high or low—until it falls into the trap and dies in the net. Then again there's the yak, big as a cloud covering the sky. It certainly knows how to be big, though it doesn't know how to catch rats. Now you have this big tree and you're dis-

¹¹ Because the salve, by preventing the soldiers' hands from chapping, made it easier for them to handle their weapons.

tressed because it's useless. Why don't you plant it in Not-Even-Anything Village, or the field of Broad-and-Boundless, relax and do nothing by its side, or lie down for a free and easy sleep under it? Axes will never shorten its life, nothing can ever harm it. If there's no use for it, how can it come to grief or pain?"

 DISCUSSION ON MAKING
ALL THINGS EQUAL

(SECTION 2)

Tzu-ch'i of South Wall sat leaning on his armrest, staring up at the sky and breathing—vacant and far away, as though he'd lost his companion.¹ Yen Ch'eng Tzu-yu, who was standing by his side in attendance, said, "What is this? Can you really make the body like a withered tree and the mind like dead ashes? The man leaning on the armrest now is not the one who leaned on it before!"

Tzu-ch'i said, "You do well to ask the question, Yen. Now I have lost myself. Do you understand that? You hear the piping of men, but you haven't heard the piping of earth. Or if you've heard the piping of earth, you haven't heard the piping of Heaven!"

Tzu-yu said, "May I venture to ask what this means?"

Tzu-ch'i said, "The Great Clod belches out breath and its name is wind. So long as it doesn't come forth, nothing happens. But when it does, then ten thousand hollows begin crying wildly. Can't you hear them, long drawn out? In the mountain forests that lash and sway, there are huge trees a hundred spans around with hollows and openings like noses, like mouths, like ears, like jugs, like cups, like mortars, like rifts, like ruts. They roar like waves, whistle like arrows, screech, gasp, cry, wail, moan, and howl, those in the lead calling out *yee!*, those behind calling out *yuu!* In a gentle

¹The word "companion" is interpreted variously to mean his associates, his wife, or his own body.

breeze they answer faintly, but in a full gale the chorus is gigantic. And when the fierce wind has passed on, then all the hollows are empty again. Have you never seen the tossing and trembling that goes on?"

Tzu-yu said, "By the piping of earth, then, you mean simply [the sound of] these hollows, and by the piping of man [the sound of] flutes and whistles. But may I ask about the piping of Heaven?"

Tzu-ch'i said, "Blowing on the ten thousand things in a different way, so that each can be itself—all take what they want for themselves, but who does the sounding?"²

Great understanding is broad and unhurried; little understanding is cramped and busy. Great words are clear and limpid;³ little words are shrill and quarrelsome. In sleep, men's spirits go visiting; in waking hours, their bodies hustle. With everything they meet they become entangled. Day after day they use their minds in strife, sometimes grandiose, sometimes sly, sometimes petty. Their little fears are mean and trembly; their great fears are stunned and overwhelming. They bound off like an arrow or a crossbow pellet, certain that they are the arbiters of right and wrong. They cling to their position as though they had sworn before the gods, sure that they are holding on to victory. They fade like fall and winter—such is the way they dwindle day by day. They drown in what they do—you cannot make them turn back. They grow dark, as though sealed with seals—such are the excesses of their old age. And when their minds draw near to death, nothing can restore them to the light.

Joy, anger, grief, delight, worry, regret, fickleness, inflex-

² Heaven is not something distinct from earth and man, but a name applied to the natural and spontaneous functioning of the two.

³ Reading *tan* instead of *yen*.

ibility, modesty, willfulness, candor, insolence—music from empty holes, mushrooms springing up in dampness, day and night replacing each other before us, and no one knows where they sprout from. Let it be! Let it be! [It is enough that] morning and evening we have them, and they are the means by which we live. Without them we would not exist; without us they would have nothing to take hold of. This comes close to the matter. But I do not know what makes them the way they are. It would seem as though they have some True Master, and yet I find no trace of him. He can act—that is certain. Yet I cannot see his form. He has identity but no form.

The hundred joints, the nine openings, the six organs, all come together and exist here [as my body]. But which part should I feel closest to? I should delight in all parts, you say? But there must be one I ought to favor more. If not, are they all of them mere servants? But if they are all servants, then how can they keep order among themselves? Or do they take turns being lord and servant? It would seem as though there must be some True Lord among them. But whether I succeed in discovering his identity or not, it neither adds to nor detracts from his Truth.

Once a man receives this fixed bodily form, he holds on to it, waiting for the end. Sometimes clashing with things, sometimes bending before them, he runs his course like a galloping steed, and nothing can stop him. Is he not pathetic? Sweating and laboring to the end of his days and never seeing his accomplishment, utterly exhausting himself and never knowing where to look for rest—can you help pitying him? I'm not dead yet! he says, but what good is that? His body decays, his mind follows it—can you deny that this is a great sorrow? Man's life has always been a muddle like this. How could I be the only muddled one, and other men not muddled?

If a man follows the mind given him and makes it his teacher, then who can be without a teacher? Why must you comprehend the process of change and form your mind on that basis before you can have a teacher? Even an idiot has his teacher. But to fail to abide by this mind and still insist upon your rights and wrongs—this is like saying that you set off for Yüeh today and got there yesterday.⁴ This is to claim that what doesn't exist exists. If you claim that what doesn't exist exists, then even the holy sage Yü couldn't understand you, much less a person like me!

Words are not just wind. Words have something to say. But if what they have to say is not fixed, then do they really say something? Or do they say nothing? People suppose that words are different from the peeps of baby birds, but is there any difference, or isn't there? What does the Way rely upon,⁵ that we have true and false? What do words rely upon, that we have right and wrong? How can the Way go away and not exist? How can words exist and not be acceptable? When the Way relies on little accomplishments and words rely on vain show, then we have the rights and wrongs of the Confucians and the Mo-ists. What one calls right the other calls wrong; what one calls wrong the other calls right. But if we want to right their wrongs and wrong their rights, then the best thing to use is clarity.

Everything has its "that," everything has its "this." From the point of view of "that" you cannot see it, but through understanding you can know it. So I say, "that" comes out of "this" and "this" depends on "that"—which is to say that

⁴ According to the last section of the *Chuang Tzu*, this was one of the paradoxes of the logician Hui Tzu.

⁵ Following the interpretation of Chang Ping-lin. The older interpretation of *yin* here and in the following sentences is, "What is the Way hidden by," etc.

"this" and "that" give birth to each other. But where there is birth there must be death; where there is death there must be birth. Where there is acceptability there must be unacceptability; where there is unacceptability there must be acceptability. Where there is recognition of right there must be recognition of wrong; where there is recognition of wrong there must be recognition of right. Therefore the sage does not proceed in such a way, but illuminates all in the light of Heaven.⁶ He too recognizes a "this," but a "this" which is also "that," a "that" which is also "this." His "that" has both a right and a wrong in it; his "this" too has both a right and a wrong in it. So, in fact, does he still have a "this" and "that"? Or does he in fact no longer have a "this" and "that"? A state in which "this" and "that" no longer find their opposites is called the hinge of the Way. When the hinge is fitted into the socket, it can respond endlessly. Its right then is a single endlessness and its wrong too is a single endlessness. So I say, the best thing to use is clarity.

Chü Ch'üeh-tzu said to Chang Wu-tzu, "I have heard Confucius say that the sage does not work at anything, does not pursue profit, does not dodge harm, does not enjoy being sought after, does not follow the Way, says nothing yet says something, says something yet says nothing, and wanders beyond the dust and grime. Confucius himself regarded these as wild and flippant words, though I believe they describe the working of the mysterious Way. What do you think of them?"

Chang Wu-tzu said, "Even the Yellow Emperor would be confused if he heard such words, so how could you expect Confucius to understand them? What's more, you're too hasty in your own appraisal. You see an egg and demand a crowing cock, see a crossbow pellet and demand a roast dove. I'm going to try speaking some reckless words and I want you to listen to them recklessly. How will that be? The sage leans on the sun and moon, tucks the universe under his arm, merges himself with things, leaves the confusion and muddle as it is, and looks on slaves as exalted. Ordinary men strain and struggle; the sage is stupid and blockish. He takes part in ten thousand ages and achieves simplicity in oneness. For him, all the ten thousand things are what they are, and thus they enfold each other.

"How do I know that loving life is not a delusion? How do I know that in hating death I am not like a man who, having left home in his youth, has forgotten the way back?"

"Lady Li was the daughter of the border guard of Ai.²¹ When she was first taken captive and brought to the state of

²¹ She was taken captive by Duke Hsien of Chin in 671 B.C., and later became his consort.

Chin, she wept until her tears drenched the collar of her robe. But later, when she went to live in the palace of the ruler, shared his couch with him, and ate the delicious meats of his table, she wondered why she had ever wept. How do I know that the dead do not wonder why they ever longed for life?

"He who dreams of drinking wine may weep when morning comes; he who dreams of weeping may in the morning go off to hunt. While he is dreaming he does not know it is a dream, and in his dream he may even try to interpret a dream. Only after he wakes does he know it was a dream. And someday there will be a great awakening when we know that this is all a great dream. Yet the stupid believe they are awake, busily and brightly assuming they understand things, calling this man ruler, that one herdsman—how dense! Confucius and you are both dreaming! And when I say you are dreaming, I am dreaming, too. Words like these will be labeled the Supreme Swindle. Yet, after ten thousand generations, a great sage may appear who will know their meaning, and it will still be as though he appeared with astonishing speed.

"Suppose you and I have had an argument. If you have beaten me instead of my beating you, then are you necessarily right and am I necessarily wrong? If I have beaten you instead of your beating me, then am I necessarily right and are you necessarily wrong? Is one of us right and the other wrong? Are both of us right or are both of us wrong? If you and I don't know the answer, then other people are bound to be even more in the dark. Whom shall we get to decide what is right? Shall we get someone who agrees with you to decide? But if he already agrees with you, how can he decide fairly? Shall we get someone who agrees with me? But if he already agrees with me, how can he decide? Shall we get someone who disagrees with both of us? But if he already disagrees with both of us,

how can he decide? Shall we get someone who agrees with both of us? But if he already agrees with both of us, how can he decide? Obviously, then, neither you nor I nor anyone else can know the answer. Shall we wait for still another person?

"But waiting for one shifting voice [to pass judgment on] another is the same as waiting for none of them.²² Harmonize them all with the Heavenly Equality, leave them to their endless changes, and so live out your years. What do I mean by harmonizing them with the Heavenly Equality? Right is not right; so is not so. If right were really right, it would differ so clearly from not right that there would be no need for argument. If so were really so, it would differ so clearly from not so that there would be no need for argument. Forget the years; forget distinctions. Leap into the boundless and make it your home!"

Penumbra said to Shadow, "A little while ago you were walking and now you're standing still; a little while ago you were sitting and now you're standing up. Why this lack of independent action?"

Shadow said, "Do I have to wait for something before I can be like this? Does what I wait for also have to wait for something before it can be like this? Am I waiting for the scales of a snake or the wings of a cicada? How do I know why it is so? How do I know why it isn't so?"²³

²² I follow the rearrangement of the text suggested by Lü Hui-ch'ing. But the text of this whole paragraph leaves much to be desired and the translation is tentative.

²³ That is, to ordinary men the shadow appears to depend upon something else for its movement, just as the snake depends on its scales (according to Chinese belief) and the cicada on its wings. But do such causal views of action really have any meaning?

Once Chuang Chou dreamt he was a butterfly, a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased. He didn't know he was Chuang Chou. Suddenly he woke up and there he was, solid and unmistakable Chuang Chou. But he didn't know if he was Chuang Chou who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Chuang Chou. Between Chuang Chou and a butterfly there must be *some* distinction! This is called the Transformation of Things.

Life and death are fated—constant as the succession of dark and dawn, a matter of Heaven. There are some things which man can do nothing about—all are a matter of the nature of creatures. If a man is willing to regard Heaven as a father and to love it, then how much more should he be willing to do for that which is even greater! ⁷ If he is willing to regard the ruler as superior to himself and to die for him, then how much more should he be willing to do for the Truth!

When the springs dry up and the fish are left stranded on the ground, they spew each other with moisture and wet each other down with spit—but it would be much better if they could forget each other in the rivers and lakes. Instead of praising Yao and condemning Chieh, it would be better to forget both of them and transform yourself with the Way.

The Great Clod burdens me with form, labors me with life, eases me in old age, and rests me in death. So if I think well of my life, for the same reason I must think well of my death.⁸

You hide your boat in the ravine and your fish net⁹ in the swamp and tell yourself that they will be safe. But in the middle of the night a strong man shoulders them and carries

⁷ Since Chuang Tzu elsewhere uses *T'ien* or Heaven as a synonym of the Way, this passage has troubled commentators. Some would emend the order of the words to read "If a man is willing to regard his father as Heaven," or would substitute *jen* for *T'ien*, that is, "If a man is willing to regard another man as his father."

⁸ Or perhaps the meaning is: "So if it makes my life good, it must for the same reason make my death good."

⁹ Following the interpretation of Yü Yüen.

them off, and in your stupidity you don't know why it happened. You think you do right to hide little things in big ones, and yet they get away from you. But if you were to hide the world in the world, so that nothing could get away, this would be the final reality of the constancy of things.

You have had the audacity to take on human form and you are delighted. But the human form has ten thousand changes that never come to an end. Your joys, then, must be uncountable. Therefore, the sage wanders in the realm where things cannot get away from him, and all are preserved. He delights in early death; he delights in old age; he delights in the beginning; he delights in the end. If he can serve as a model for men, how much more so that which the ten thousand things are tied to and all changes alike wait upon!

The Way has its reality and its signs but is without action or form. You can hand it down but you cannot receive it; you can get it but you cannot see it. It is its own source, its own root. Before Heaven and earth existed it was there, firm from ancient times. It gave spirituality to the spirits and to God; it gave birth to Heaven and to earth. It exists beyond the highest point, and yet you cannot call it lofty; it exists beneath the limit of the six directions, and yet you cannot call it deep. It was born before Heaven and earth, and yet you cannot say it has been there for long; it is earlier than the earliest time, and yet you cannot call it old.

Hsi-wei got it and held up heaven and earth.¹⁰ Fu-hsi got it and entered into the mother of breath. The Big Dipper got it and from ancient times has never wavered. The Sun and Moon got it and from ancient times have never rested. K'an-

¹⁰ The figures in this paragraph are all deities or mythical beings, but the myths to which Chuang Tzu refers are in many cases unknown, so that the translation is tentative in places.

p'i got it and entered K'un-lun. P'ing-i got it and wandered in the great river. Chien Wu got it and lived in the great mountain.¹¹ The Yellow Emperor got it and ascended to the cloudy heavens. Chuan Hsü got it and dwelt in the Dark Palace. Yü-ch'iang got it and stood at the limit of the north. The Queen Mother of the West got it and took her seat on Shao-kuang—nobody knows her beginning, nobody knows her end. P'eng-tsu got it and lived from the age of Shun to the age of the Five Dictators.¹² Fu Yüeh got it and became minister to Wu-ting, who extended his rule over the whole world; then Fu Yüeh climbed up to the Eastern Governor, straddled the Winnowing Basket and the Tail, and took his place among the ranks of stars.¹³

Yen Hui said, "I'm improving!"

Confucius said, "What do you mean by that?"

"I've forgotten benevolence and righteousness!"

"That's good. But you still haven't got it."

Another day, the two met again and Yen Hui said, "I'm improving!"

"What do you mean by that?"

"I've forgotten rites and music!"

"That's good. But you still haven't got it."

Another day, the two met again and Yen Hui said, "I'm improving!"

"What do you mean by that?"

"I can sit down and forget everything!"

Confucius looked very startled and said, "What do you mean, sit down and forget everything?"

Yen Hui said, "I smash up my limbs and body, drive out perception and intellect, cast off form, do away with understanding, and make myself identical with the Great Thoroughfare. This is what I mean by sitting down and forgetting everything."

Confucius said, "If you're identical with it, you must have no more likes! If you've been transformed, you must have no more constancy! So you really are a worthy man after all!²³ With your permission, I'd like to become your follower."

²³ Chuang Tzu probably intends a humorous reference to the words of Confucius in *Analects* VI, 9: "The Master said, 'What a worthy man was Hui!'"

Do not be an embodier of fame; do not be a storehouse of schemes; do not be an undertaker of projects; do not be a proprietor of wisdom. Embody to the fullest what has no end and wander where there is no trail. Hold on to all that you have received from Heaven but do not think you have gotten anything. Be empty, that is all. The Perfect Man uses his mind like a mirror—going after nothing, welcoming nothing, responding but not storing. Therefore he can win out over things and not hurt himself.

The emperor of the South Sea was called Shu [Brief], the emperor of the North Sea was called Hu [Sudden], and the emperor of the central region was called Hun-tun [Chaos]. Shu and Hu from time to time came together for a meeting in the territory of Hun-tun, and Hun-tun treated them very generously. Shu and Hu discussed how they could repay his kindness. "All men," they said, "have seven openings so they can see, hear, eat, and breathe. But Hun-tun alone doesn't have any. Let's try boring him some!"

Every day they bored another hole, and on the seventh day Hun-tun died.

¹⁰ According to commentators, the three forms of the abyss in the order given here correspond to the third, first, and second of Hu Tzu's manifestations.

¹¹ That is, he had reached the highest stage of understanding.

Chuang Tzu's wife died. When Hui Tzu went to convey his condolences, he found Chuang Tzu sitting with his legs sprawled out, pounding on a tub and singing. "You lived with her, she brought up your children and grew old," said Hui Tzu. "It should be enough simply not to weep at her death. But pounding on a tub and singing—this is going too far, isn't it?"

Chuang Tzu said, "You're wrong. When she first died, do you think I didn't grieve like anyone else? But I looked back to her beginning and the time before she was born. Not only the time before she was born, but the time before she had a body. Not only the time before she had a body, but the time before she had a spirit. In the midst of the jumble of wonder and mystery a change took place and she had a spirit. Another change and she had a body. Another change and she was born. Now there's been another change and she's dead. It's just like the progression of the four seasons, spring, summer, fall, winter.

"Now she's going to lie down peacefully in a vast room. If I were to follow after her bawling and sobbing, it would show that I don't understand anything about fate. So I stopped."

Uncle Lack-Limb and Uncle Lame-Gait were seeing the sights at Dark Lord Hill and the wastes of K'un-lun, the place where the Yellow Emperor rested.⁸ Suddenly a willow

⁸ These are all places or persons associated in Chinese legend with immortality. The Yellow Emperor, as we have seen above, p. 78, did not die but ascended to Heaven.

sprouted out of Uncle Lame-Gait's left elbow.⁴ He looked very startled and seemed to be annoyed.

"Do you resent it?" said Uncle Lack-Limb.

"No—what is there to resent?" said Uncle Lame-Gait. "To live is to borrow. And if we borrow to live, then the living must be a pile of trash. Life and death are day and night. You and I came to watch the process of change, and now change has caught up with me. Why would I have anything to resent?"

When Chuang Tzu went to Ch'u, he saw an old skull, all dry and parched. He poked it with his carriage whip and then asked, "Sir, were you greedy for life and forgetful of reason, and so came to this? Was your state overthrown and did you bow beneath the ax and so come to this? Did you do some evil deed and were you ashamed to bring disgrace upon your parents and family, and so came to this? Was it through the pangs of cold and hunger that you came to this? Or did your springs and autumns pile up until they brought you to this?"

When he had finished speaking, he dragged the skull over and, using it for a pillow, lay down to sleep.

In the middle of the night, the skull came to him in a dream and said, "You chatter like a rhetorician and all your words betray the entanglements of a living man. The dead know nothing of these! Would you like to hear a lecture on the dead?"

"Indeed," said Chuang Tzu.

The skull said, "Among the dead there are no rulers above, no subjects below, and no chores of the four seasons. With nothing to do, our springs and autumns are as endless as

⁴ According to the more prosaic interpretation of Li Tz'u-ming, the character for "willow" is a loan for the word "tumor."

heaven and earth. A king facing south on his throne could have no more happiness than this!"

Chuang Tzu couldn't believe this and said, "If I got the Arbiter of Fate to give you a body again, make you some bones and flesh, return you to your parents and family and your old home and friends, you would want that, wouldn't you?"

The skull frowned severely, wrinkling up its brow. "Why would I throw away more happiness than that of a king on a throne and take on the troubles of a human being again?" it said.

When Yen Yüan went east to Ch'i, Confucius had a very worried look on his face.⁵ Tzu-kung got off his mat and asked, "May I be so bold as to inquire why the Master has such a worried expression now that Hui has gone east to Ch'i?"

"Excellent—this question of yours," said Confucius. "Kuan Tzu⁶ had a saying that I much approve of: 'Small bags won't hold big things; short well ropes won't dip up deep water.' In the same way I believe that fate has certain forms and the body certain appropriate uses. You can't add to or take away from these. I'm afraid that when Hui gets to Ch'i he will start telling the marquis of Ch'i about the ways of Yao, Shun, and the Yellow Emperor, and then will go on to speak about Sui- jen and Shen-nung.⁷ The marquis will then look for similar greatness within himself and fail to find it. Failing to find it, he will become distraught, and when a man becomes distraught, he kills.

⁵ Yen Yüan or Yen Hui, who has appeared earlier, was Confucius' favorite disciple.

⁶ Kuan Chung, a 7th-century statesman of Ch'i whom Confucius, judging from the *Analects*, admired.

⁷ Sui- jen and Shen-nung are mythical culture heroes, the discoverers of fire and agriculture respectively.

"The fish trap exists because of the fish; once you've gotten the fish, you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit; once you've gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning; once you've gotten the meaning, you can forget the words. Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a word with him?"

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