

Follow Your Nose 道 (Dao) Follow Your Heart 德 (De) Book 經 (Jing)



The giant statue of Laozi, located north of Quanzhou Fujian province, China stolen from dreamstime.com



Dao De Jing

or the book of

Follow Your Nose and Follow Your Heart

by **Tor Fosnæs**and **Craig Squires**

being a description of a personal journey of 60 years living with Lao Tzu's Dao De Jing, attempting to show how the words of that book are applicable to every human and can provide guidance as we spend our time in the present. Also a study guide.

N.B.

Tao Te Ching of old is now Dao De Jing. All instances of Tao were replaced by Dao for consistency.

Follow your Nose (Dao) Follow your Heart (De) Book (Jing).

Authors: Tor Fosnaes and Craig Squires

Publisher: A Fosnaes-Squires Collaboration, St. John's

I. Compilation; Collection

II. Exigeses

III. Study and reading guide.



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Dedicated to the memory of Amalgak Jusniktuk (Dances on Air) 1955-2022



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Primary sources used

The following primary sources were used to annotate this commentary. As they contain much relevant information, some sections plus extraneous materials, form a number of Appendices. The following link to the downloaded PDF files stored with this document. A browser search for the title will get you to the online version.

The five thousand dictionary and index to the character cards of the College of Chinese studies

California College in China, originally compiled by Courtenay H. Fenn, M.A., D.D. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1948.

Available online at the Internet Archive and in print form. An ordinary dictionary of Chinese words and the characters that make them up. The table of radicals is most useful.

Laozi - Daodejing (Lao Tzu - Dao Te Ching) Word by Word

Two Literal English Translations - One Simple, One Complex, The Chinese Text and a Pinyin Transcription by Bradford Hatcher, Nucla, Hermetica, 2009.

A downloadable file which provides literal character by character translation, similar to Linnell. Available at https://www.academia.edu/42632933/Laozi_Daodejing_Word_by_Word.

Chinese Characters: Their Origin, Etymology, History, Classification, and Signification: A Thorough Study from Chinese Documents

by Dr. L. Wieger, S.J., Dover Publications, New York, 1964, 1968 Indispensable etymological dictionary of Chinese characters only available in print format. Wieger also made a translation of the DDJ into French.

I used Wisdom of the Daoist Masters: The Works of Lao Zi (Lao Tzu), Lie Zi (Lieh Tzu), Zhuang Zi (Chuang Tzu) rendered into English by Derek Bryce from the French of Leon Wieger's Les Peres du System Taoiste (Cathasia, Les Belles Lettres, Paris). 1984. Liarech Enterprises. Available at the Internet Archive.

Dao De Jing - A Minimalist Translation

The Project Gutenberg eBook of Dao De Jing, by Lao Zi.html, produced by Bruce R. Linnell, 2015

This wondrous work by Bruce R. Linnell in 2015 is free on the internet. It provides Chinese and English versions, plus a literal character by character transliteration and copious notes for each line of translated text. Available at Project Gutenberg.

www.dong-chinese.com/wiki/home

The Chinese Character Wiki is a free and open source dictionary of Chinese characters, including stroke orders, pronunciations, definitions, examples, origins, and component breakdowns.

The Dàodéjīng: A 2022 Translation

by Shaun C. R. Ramsden, in Asian Culture and History; Vol. 14, No. 2; 2022, Canadian Center of Science and Education. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/364643573_The_Daodejing_A_2022_Translation

The Living Dao: The Art and Way of Living A Rich & Truthful Life

Translated with annotations by Lok Sang Ho. Lingnan University. Online document dated September 1, 2002. Available at https://amsil.com/occultism/Dao2.pdf.

The Scripture on the Dao and Virtue (Dào Dé Jīng) by Lǎozi (Old Master), with the Commentary

by Heshang Gong, Translated and edited by Dan G. Reid. Available at https://www.academia.edu/20139286/

Heshang_Gong_The_history_and_influence_of_the_Riverside_Elder_and_his_commentary_on_the_Dao_De_Jing

The Annotated Critical Laozi With Contemporary Explication and Traditional Commentary

by Chen Guying, translated by Paul J. D'Ambrosio, et. al. Available at https://www.pdf-drive.to/dl/the-annotated-critical-laozi-with-contemporary-explication-and-traditional-commentary-0

Student's Four Thousand and General Pocket Dictionary

by W. E. Soothill, American Presbyterian Mission Press, Shanghai, 1908. On the title page Soothill uses 字 original meaning *to raise up children*, based on a child under a roof but now used as *letter*, *character*, *symbol*. Available at Internet Archive.



Introduction

I learned the truth at 17, shortly after I walked out of Macy's Bookstore on Rowan Street in St. John's with my first copy of Witter Bynner's *The Way of Life According to Lao Tzu*. Now 60 years later I am still trying to follow the Path, as we like to say. If you say you are a Daoist, of course, you aren't. It is a curious thing. Paradoxes are curious things.

 $paradox\,/p \'ar'e-doks''/\,noun\,from\,The\,American\,Heritage \textcircled{M}\,\,Dictionary\,of\,the\,\,English\,\,Language,\,5th\,\,Edition}$

A statement that seems to contradict itself but may nonetheless be true.

A person, thing, or situation that exhibits inexplicable or contradictory aspects.

A statement that is self-contradictory or logically untenable, though based on a valid deduction from acceptable premises.

I once owned more than 100 English translations and interpretations of Lao Tzu (sometimes Laozi) over time, and made transcriptions of about 60 of them, available at mobilewords.ca/Tao. Any that were word for word repeats were avoided. Twenty-three versions were transcribed line by line, these lines provide this work's examples.

Most versions of Dao De Jing start with a long (usually) explanation of who was Lao Tzu, when was Lao Tzu, and what happened to Lao Tzu, all legendary, all speculative. Like Ambrose Bierce, he (if he was) simply disappeared. Given Bierce's aphoristic style, he could have been an incarnation or continuation of Lao Tzu; an immortal who spreads the word throughout the past 3000 years, maybe before that even. Like Bierce, Lao Tzu was pithy, sarcastic, sometimes cynical and often humorous.

https://beckchris.com/people/the-greatest-philosophers-of-all-time-ranked/the-greatest-philosophers-of-all-time-chronological/ provides an interesting timeline into philosophical developments. Lao Tzu fits neatly into the dates for Thales of Miletus, Kanada, Mahavira, Pythagoras, Gautama, Confucius, Heraclitus, Parmenides (all the seventh and sixth centuries BCE) followed closely a century or so later by Socrates, Mozi, Democritus, Sun Tzu,

Plato, and Diogenes. There was something in the air those days, it seems, in human development. Three centuries of blossoming philosophical thought.



Dao De Us

I make no pretense to erudition or great knowledge, I am not a philosopher or an occultist. I have studied the Dao De Jing for 60 years and this work is my *take* on what it is about. This is my legacy work. It is a *study guide*.

Craig Squires, whom I know and respect for 40 years, decided, when he began to read the Dao De Jing, to learn to read Chinese. He helped me get a lot of plain ideas uncovered from the layers of smothering bias, personal belief, religious and philosophical backgrounds of the translators and interpreters. When you look at the literal translations of the Chinese characters, a basic simplicity appears. It is like looking at works by Picasso thinking they have serious meaning when, in fact, he had an extraordinary sense of humour and fun. He wanted us to laugh. A picture is worth many words holds true.

Understanding Chinese characters, and attempts to dabble in etymology

Using the patient tutelage of Craig, I learned how to use several sources to parse the traditional meanings of the characters in the Dao De Jing. The characters all stem from pictographs from ancient times and are usually made up of a *radical* and a *phonetic*. Once I identified the character for the word, I looked into Bradford Hatcher's work to see that it was made up of a certain radical plus a phonetic of so many strokes. Then using Fenn's dictionary I would find the number of stokes of the radical and its meaning. They add the strokes for a total for the character look it up in Wieger's dictionary which would give me a *lesson* where the etymology is explained. To illustrate how varied are the English words for the characters, I've included them as found in Hatcher.

It is a tedious process, but I learned a lot of Chinese characters, especially the radicals, of which there are 214. The phonetics number 858.

It isn't always obvious how a particular radical and a particular phonetic came to mean a certain idea, coupled with the fact characters are spoken using various tones, each tone making a different meaning. It is very complicated, but I am encouraged as more than a billion Chinese people can do it.

Many etymological notes are included in the appendices.

Sometimes it seemed a character's meaning is off the wall or far and away incorrect, Craig and I would discuss how we understood the concept, attempting to reach a common, *Newfoundland* cultural and personal understanding.

Old, ancient

Well, if the Dao De Jing is about 2500 years old, when it refers to something *ancient* or *old* it must really be a long time ago. 古 is the radical for *mouth* underneath the radical for *ten*, *That which has passed through ten mouths*, i.e. a tradition dating back 10 generations. It is the common character for *(the) ancients, classic-; antiquity, timeless.*

There are many places on the internet with versions of Dao De Jing in hundreds of languages, more than 100 in English. A collection of the more interesting or different interpretations in English can be found at mobilewords.ca.

There are those who think the whole of Dao De Jing is encapsulated in the first two sentences, the rest is just ways to show they are *true*. Historical commentators stress certain aspects; some change the original masculinity to she/her in a 20th century paean to gender equality. We are told now there are 62 different *genders*. But there is still only one Dao. Dao is totally *scalable* across all things and ideas and behaviours.

For me, the Dao De Jing is *personal*, related to individuals and an individual's presence in the scheme of things (the *External*, the World outside the senses) and the *Internal* (the process of being human). When Lao Tzu referred to the *Sage* or *ruler* it easily can be construed to be you. Because Dao is scalable and in constant flux (change is!) his advisories to Nations and States, Rulers and Ministers can apply to these entities but also they can be applied to an ordinary individual. You are *the Master of your Fate* and *the Captain of Your Soul*, after all.

As we got started, Craig showed me a wonderful thing. The two characters forming the character *Dao* are feet moving along a path and a human nose, which translates literally to *follow your nose* (external). And those comprising *De* include long strides of purpose along a path and the heart, which translate literally *as follow your heart* (internal). Hence the title. A momentous revelation!

Dao De 道德 dào dé

dao 道 [p.c. 辶, walk, a component form of 辵, which depicts a foot walking in a street, represents the meaning and 首 *head*, pictograph of a head (hair above face with an eye) represents the sound] de 德, originally written as 惪, depicting a straight 直 heart 心. Virtuous people have a straight heart. The 彳 (walk) component, the left half of 行, which depicts a street intersection, was added later

Craig notes: I got "follow your nose" from Wieger. Lesson 160 A is *Shou* "the head" but without hair, so 首 without the two strokes on top, which is where he mentions Dao. And he says there "compare with 自 the nose, ancient form, L. 159." And Lesson 159 A is *tzu/zi*, the nose, which means "the self", which, as it happens, is used heavily throughout the Dao De Jing, for example in Chapter 33. I just kind of melded those two Wieger lessons together in my brain and got "follow your nose", without much analysis. It just seemed extremely appropriate. The case for De being "follow your heart" is more straight forward.



Ren Jiyu categories

Some translators/interpreters like to give the chapters names. The names from ten versions are shown at the end of each chapter, they are helpful in grokking the concepts sometimes, other times they don't help at all. My favourite: Chapter 18, *The Paradoxes of Abandoning the Great Integrity*.

Some people re-arranged the chapters into themes. Frank J. MacHovec, for example, divided the Dao De Jing in four parts: *Sutras on the nature of Dao*; *Sutras on the nature of Teh*; *Sutras on the nature of Paradox*; and *Dao and the State*.

The accepted order is well known. Ren Jiyu did a category index, presented below. Some chapters are referenced in more than one category. This allows you to easily read all the chapters in a category, should you choose to focus this way in your use of the work.

Click on chapter number to go to it, click on word Chapter to return here

									(On Da	ao									
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			7	13	22	24	28	33	42	43	44	46	50	67	69	73	76			
	On Tenderness and Retreat																			
						8	9	26	29	36	45	66	68	78						

On Dao and On De are fairly straightforward, but note there are only two chapters on De.

Idealistic Apriorism – Idealistic is, of course, an idealistic approach to something; *a priori* knowledge is independent from any experience. Examples include mathematics, tautologies and deduction from pure reason. So, things you know intuitively, perhaps. Although, in my case, I never did get the mathematics past Algebra.

Obscurantism – In the fields of philosophy, the terms obscurantism and obscurationism identify and describe the anti-intellectual practices of deliberately presenting information in an abstruse and imprecise manner that limits further inquiry and understanding of a subject. Huh? I suppose Crowley and the Anthroposophists practised this in some degree. Esoterica. Steiner may not have been an obscurantist, he is very difficult to read in English translation.

Dialectical Views – Dialectic, also known as the dialectical method, refers originally to dialogue between people holding different points of view about a subject but wishing to arrive at the truth through reasoned argumentation. Dialectic resembles debate, but the concept excludes subjective elements such as emotional appeal and rhetoric. Nothing personal or using third person pronouns allowed.

On the Return to Antiquity – Lao Tzu [Old Fellow] had an idea the old days were somehow better. Somehow natural and innocent. As the nature of Dao is to give rise to things (the 10,000 things) and to reabsorb them at their end, Lao Tzu suggested whenever possible, return freely to the origin of things, Dao. That's where it all ends up anyway. Obviously, that is not really possible, time flies in one direction, but by minimizing interaction with the exterior world and simplifying the internal world it is possible to return to antiquity, a state of simplicity and peace.

These category descriptions are lifted from Wikipedia.

The remainder are ordinary concepts in Dao De Jing; a return to simplicity; the ability of the weak to overcome the strong; the benefits of conservatism. All these are *scalable* to the individual, the family, the state, the world.

Shifting between Dao of your external world (outside) and your internal world (inside) is all through Dao De Jing. The Dao permeates everything we are and do; so what works outside, works inside.

I use excerpts from *The Dao of Leadership; Lao Tzu's Dao Te Ching adapted for a New Age by John Heider. 1985. Humanics Limited. Atlanta. ISBN 0-89334-079-0.* It is a unique interpretation that uses Dao De Jing as a tool for people who lead groups. Being focused on the individual it is useful in understanding some of the more arcane passages and especially those of, seemingly, a political bent. It and Bynner was for nearly 35 years my touchstone in *grokking* how Dao is scalable, from the farthest reaches of the Universe to our inner hearts.

Dao is the principle; De is the process; It is all principle and process. Or, what happens and how it happens. Heider

Unlike me, Craig is not fond of Heider as he finds it not literal to the Chinese characters.

I also use Ren Jiyu's *A Daoist Classic: the book of Lao Zi, Foreign Language Press, Beijing, 1993.* It is one of my favourites, mostly because it is very quirky while often opening understanding. Remember, nothing Dao is fixed in concrete, as say things are in the Bible, the Koran, the Book of Mormon.

The sample sentences were chosen from the Tao website at mobilewords.ca and were selected from the 23 versions presented there sentence by sentence. The selections were made by me and Craig based on what seemed most illustrative of Lao Tzu's words, for me, and what seemed most true to the Chinese characters, for Craig.

What Lao Tzu said about rulers and kings is totally applicable to individuals, you just have to be able to *zoom* in and out; sweep smoothly from *external* to *internal*.

We must learn to zoom in and out from our individual neurons to the farthest reaches of the Universe. Of interest to me on this topic is that, of course, Gautama taught the universe is inside our heads. Double paradox intended. The further you go, the less you know.

Keep walking the Path, your *nose* always leads as long as you are going forward. If you are going backwards, another part of your anatomy is leading, enough said. Install some basic Dao behaviours and ideas and allow your *heart* to develop and govern your inner and outer world. Pretty simple. Easy to say. Very hard to do.

The Book of Lao Tzu is now about 5000 characters and was added to and compiled to that length by many people over the first five or so centuries. Finding the original bits can no longer be accomplished accurately, but once you make a few attempts, there are certainly signposts found. The first two lines of Chapter 1 being a good example.



Purpose

What you may ask is the purpose of this book? Well, it started as a personal commentary and experiential guide to the contents of the Dao De Jing. It is probably, really, a reading and study guide.

The challenge in that the individual characters of the text are interpreted in so many different ways by so many different people means it is necessary to look at the original meanings of the characters, that is, engage in a form of etymology.

Once I began to understand the characters, and with Craig's help, began to see the poetry in the text, it became even more apparent that I would need to know what the original words meant. If possible.

Hatcher's work presents an interpretation in the literal way, each character with its basic meaning as he saw them in context. And there are others, Linnell for example, but there is little coherency between versions since the beginning of English translations in the late 1800s.

Characters in Chinese are often composed of multiple sub-characters organized into two main parts, a component for the *meaning* and a component for the *sound*, a radical and a phonetic. Sometimes a character has two sub-characters and each can be parsed by sound and meaning. Sometimes the sub-characters are directly related to the whole idea they represent, others are *sound loans* where the sound can have many meanings depending on context and tone when spoken. *p.c.* is an abbreviation for *phonosemantic compound*, as used by Dong in the character definitions.

Concepts in Chinese are often made from two or more characters, pairs being very common, each of which is likely a p.c. So interpreting the etymology of concepts can rapidly escalate into many cross meanings, entanglements, families of meaning, etc. Here is an example.

Vanity means emptiness, and this discovery, which I made late in life turns out to be a very Daoist idea.

The concept vanity 虛 榮 (*xu rong*) is made up of two characters each of which has phonosemantic sub-characters; 虛 *xu*, *void*, made up of tiger (sound) and hill [void, false] (meaning) coupled with 榮 *rong*, *glory*, which has the sub-characters for glimmer (sound) and tree [flourish, glory] (meaning). Vanity: *empty glory*. I am not sure if the English word vanity has a better etymology; from etymonline.com:

vanity (n.) c. 1200, "that which is vain, futile, or worthless," from Old French vanite "self-conceit; futility; lack of resolve" (12c.), from Latin vanitatem (nominative vanitas) "emptiness, aimlessness; falsity," figuratively "vainglory, foolish pride," from vanus "empty, void," figuratively "idle, fruitless." This is reconstructed to be from PIE *wano-, suffixed form of root *eue- "to leave, abandon, give out." The meaning "self-conceited" in English is attested from mid-14c.

This work contains **Key terms** at the end of each chapter. These are structured as follows

An English word, the Chinese character (from the accepted text), its Chinese pronunciation (from Dong)

Dong-Chinese structure of the character, original meaning, other meanings Linnell's definitions
Hatcher's definitions
Wieger's construction and/or definitions
Fenn's use and definitions

Here is the first Key term, an important one.

sage 聖 shèng

depicts listening ($\not\equiv ear$) to what is spoken ($\not\equiv mouth$). $\not\equiv stand\ upright$ represents the sound Linnell has sage

Hatcher has (to be) consecrated, divine, holy, intuitive, perceptive, reverent, sacred, sagacious, sagely, saintly, wise; (a, the) holiness, piety, reverence, sacrednes, sagacity, wisdom; piousness, sanctimony; sage; wisdom's; [combining spiritual, moral and intellectual virtues]

Wieger has radical 128 耳 ear plus phonetic 255 made up of *mouth* and *stand upright*, meaning *state clearly, file a complaint*, but he lists the complete character under the radical for mouth, yet his phonetic 255 is *mouth* over *stand upright*. An example of a century of development in Chinese etymology.

The main human brain input-output channel is the ear Ξ (in) and the mouth \Box (out). The channel can be easily overtaxed as in Chapter 12, where excess can lead to negative consequences. The Sage is moderate, humble and detached. What better a man to whisper in your ear?

Each chapter provides example translations of sentences which are deliberately left without citation to save space. Readers are asked to visit the mobilewords.ca site, pick the chapter and line they want to explore and note the source.



Dao is empty

All attempts to teach Dao must fail as Dao cannot be defined or explained. Beyond words. Dao must be experienced and practised, but it is on a personal level, not for dissemination or other forms of communication.

As we follow our noses and follow our hearts on the Way, it is sometimes fraught but, like a traffic jam in the centre of the city, it doesn't matter how fast you go forward as long as you're moving forward. And of course, as Lao Tzu tells us, people love straying off a path. It is in our nature.

How brazen, to think I could comment on Dao De Jing! *Those who speak do not know, those who know do not speak*, said Lao Tzu. *I'm sorry for smudging the air with my song*, said L. Cohen.

Finally, Chapter 81 says *True speech is not elegant; elaborate speech is not truth* and *The wise are not erudite, The erudite are not wise.* My attempt to provide this commentary is really a need for me to further *grok* Dao, before I get too much older and find myself withdrawing into the west. Lao Tzu and Ambrose Bierce both went that way. Poof! Simply disappeared into the west. It may be a sign. It *is* a sign.

Another nice thing about the Dao De Jing is that it doesn't dabble in ontology in the western sense. Perhaps it is the only human-based philosophy that doesn't do this. 本体论, *ontology* is made up of three characters; 本 *root*, 体 *person with roots* [rooted] and 论 *logical speech*. No. Dao is ontology.

Craig notes: with respect to instruction and guidance, further, reading the text can be itself a 'spiritual' exercise in following the guidance of the text – empty the mind through filling the mind.



Grok

This is a *Martian* word found in Heinlein's 1961 *Stranger in a Strange Land*. It means *to understand profoundly and intuitively*. After some popularity among the counterculture through the 70's and 80's it is now coming back in use as part of an Artificial Intelligence dialogue. It is the name of E. Musk's alternative to Chat GPT. Good luck Elon!

To understand profoundly 熟习 is 熟 well-cooked, ripe and 习 practice. To know intuitively 心领神会 is 心 heart, 领 head and neck, 神 spirit 会 to gather. Having a practice, with one's heart, head and spirit unified and under control, grok. Indeed! Further can be found at https://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Grok. That article ends with All that groks is God.

As we read through the chapters we keep returning to basic ideas many times. This reiteration and repetition, often with different points of view or foci, makes us *grok*. The structure of the Chinese is poetic, many chapters follow strict poetic forms. Each chapter has a number of sentences. Most interpretations/translations agree on the content of sentences in English, however the Chinese uses more and shorter sentences. This is demonstrated by looking at Hatcher and Legge, for examples. How many sentences, you ask? There are none of just one sentence and none with more than eight.

# of Sentences	#of Chapters	# of Sentences	#of Chapters	# of Sentences	#of Chapters
2	4	5	22	8	1
3	18	6	6		
4	27	7	3		

Before you get into it, don't try to read this work in one go. Instead, read one chapter at a time, think about it before going to another. Choosing a chapter at random each time can also prove valuable, so as not to carry any confusion from one chapter to another.

R.G.H. Siu, in his introduction to *The Portable Dragon: a Western's Man's Guide to the I Ching*, suggested you should read his book from cover to cover first time, then put it away for a couple of years; then read it at random, letting your reading be led by connections inside the text; then put it away for five years or so, find it by accident, pick it up, feel it, and throw it away. I can't think of a better method for this work. Thanks Ralph.

The Daozang Chinese: the Daoist canon

道藏 Dàozàng is a large canon of Daoist writings, consisting of around 1,500 texts that were seen as continuing traditions first embodied by the Daodejing, Zhuangzi, and Liezi. The canon was assembled by monks c. 400 CE in an attempt to bring together these disparate yet consonant teachings, and it included commentaries and expositions from various masters on material found in the aforementioned core texts of Daoism. The anthology consisted of three divisions (known as grottoes) based on what were seen at that time in Southern China as Daoism's primary focuses: meditation, ritual, and exorcism. These three grottoes were ranked by skill level—with exorcism being the lowest and meditation the highest—and used for the initiation of Daoist masters. Wikipedia

Laozi, the guy

Despite the fact that after his death he became one of the world's two or three best-selling authors, Laozi never actually died. In traditional China, many people believed that this was so because Laozi had possessed the secret of immortality and had evaded death by transforming his body into a non-perishable form, after which, being able to fly, he had moved his home to heavenly realms. Modern scholars believe that the reason Laozi never died is because he never lived. There was never any such person as Laozi. R. Eno

Chapter 1 🗵

Sentence 1

The Way that can be described is not the absolute Way; the name that can be given is not the absolute name.

Dao is like a little ball of mercury from a broken thermometer in the pencil slot on your school desk. It is there, you can see it, but you cannot pick it up. Try to put your finger on it, it slips away. It is real but unmanageable. Captivating but useless. Pretty and poisonous.

The Hebrews have a name for their divinity, *Yahweh*, which they are prohibited from saying; the Muslims have *Allah*, which they cannot stop saying. In both cases, the name does not provide definition or prove reality. In both cases it is a belief there is one God. In both cases, a name is taken at face value, cannot be proven or dis-proven, becoming an article of Faith and Belief, surrounded by Dogma and Ritual.

Abstraction involves induction of ideas or the synthesis of particular facts into one general theory about something. It is the opposite of specification.

Naming Dao as God is convenient for some but Dao always remains unnameable. Name $\not\equiv$ *ming* depicts identifying oneself at $\not\equiv$ *night* by saying \sqcap *mouth* your name because is too dark for others to see you.

Sentence 2

Nameless is the source of heaven and earth; named is the mother of all things.

adds to the tangley nature of Dao but continues the idea that naming something prevents one from seeing it properly. Dao is the end of it, if viewed by a desire to see and know it, but it is the beginning, if viewed *beyond all boundaries*. Gautama suggested everything is illusory, perception is a product of the senses, and how do we know they do not lie? Desire, in Buddhist thought is the cause of suffering, so, if we want to know the essence of Dao we will suffer because we are trying to know it. Walker said, *dispense with names*, *with concepts*, *with expectations and ambitions and differences* if we want to see to the *subtle heart of things*.

For nameless read empty, not existent, as opposed to substance. One opposite of *emptiness* is to have, to be $\not\equiv y\check{o}u$, depicts a hand $\not\supset$ holding meat $\not\supset$. In Oracle script this character was written the same as the phonetically similar $\not\supset$, but later the $\not\supset$ component was added to distinguish them. The hand hiding the moon is a sign of substance, existence. Dong has *a hand* $\not\supset$ *holding meat* $\not\supset$ *which is deceptively similar but unrelated to the character for moon* $\not\supset$. Meat is substance, for sure.

Craig notes: the form of the first part of this text is extremely simple and schematic, repeated for two cases: *dao ke dao fei chang dao; ming ke ming fei chang ming*" - "X that can

be X is not the true/eternal/absolute X; Y that can be Y is not the true Y". So the two concepts, *dao* and *name*, are treated as a contrasting pair in some way. "Noun that can be verbed is not the true noun". I prefer a translation that reflects this contrast, so something like "The way that can be followed is not the true way; the name that can be named is not the true name."

Translations that include language in the first part (*dao*), such as the one above, seem to me to violate the intended contrast, whatever it might be, between *dao* and *name*. The latter is clearly language. So the first should be understood as something not language, in order to preserve the clearly intended contrast between the two. I'm claiming here that the very schematic form of the phrases implies strong contrast. This sort of strong, stark schematic structure of sentences, in which two concepts are placed in repeated simple phrases, occurs all over the place in the Lao Tzu. It contributes heavily to the poetic structure of the text. Children used to be taught in school to recite these sentences like songs. The simplicity is both playful and deep. Reading it should be both easy and hard.

What could it possibly mean? It seems to be a flat out contradiction, in fact two of them. How can a way be a way if it can't be followed? How can a name be a name if it can't be named? What the heck does "true" mean here? The character 常 *chang* is an image of a banner, a standard, flying in the distance — I'm a foot soldier among a horde of soldiers trying to follow my leader and all I can see of them is this banner off in the distance being held aloft by someone, perhaps on a horse. Yet I am committed to this engagement, I'm here on the ground moving in some direction toward some target. I trust that banner with my life. It is the marker of the true direction I must follow. The "true" way is the way I trust with my life, with my heart and my body and my mind. The "true" name is the name I trust with my life, the name I speak with my heart. But how can I trust any way that I've merely been told about, any way that I might follow, as something handed to me? How can I trust a name that I've only heard from someone else?

You get the idea: both easy and hard.

The second part of this sentence again has a very schematic structure around a pair of concepts: wu ming tian ti zhi shi; yu ming wan wu zhi mu — "A is the name of the B of C; X is the name of the Y of Z", repeated for two concepts — wu and yu, emptiness and fullness, or non-being and being. My preferred translation would be something like: "emptiness (non-being) is the name of the origin of heaven and earth; fullness (being) is the name of the mother of the ten thousand things". See Hatcher's simple translation, for example. The translation above reads wu ming as "having no name", or "cannot be named", instead of "emptiness is the name", and yu ming as "having a name" instead of "being is the name", or something like that, and as a result confuses or completely misses other parts of this schematic: tian ti: "heaven and earth", and wan wu; "the ten thousand things". But we know to read wu and yu as the two contrasting concepts, not only because of the clear repeated schematic structure of the phrases, but also because of the structure of the following sentences.

In other words, it is because the Dao "does not show its form" that Laozi uses "nonbeing" to describe it. However, this the Dao that "does not show its form" is simultaneously the basis for the existence of things, and therefore Laozi also designates the Dao as "being." It is clear then that Laozi's "non being" does not refer to nothingness, but simply references concealed or undifferentiated aspects of the Dao that remain unknowable to us. Thus, as we are unable to experience these aspects of the Dao through our senses or express them as concepts, Laozi resorts to referring to the Dao with the term "non being." In consideration of the Dao's generation of and immanence within all things, Laozi also adopts "being" to refer to the Dao. Summarily, then, being and non being both refer to the Dao and express the Dao's continuously active process of moving successively from levels of formless non being to formed being. Chen

Sentences 3, 4 and 5

3. thus in innocence we see the beginning in passion we see the end

The mystery is reiterated in sentence three. To try to know (to investigate, to study) true (eternal) emptiness leads to the Dark Mystery; to try to know (to investigate, to study) true (eternal) being, substance, leads to light, the brilliant mystery, De.

This is non-substantive depth; substantive depth, as in abyss, is a different character.

Craig notes: the schematic structure here is: true X desire therefore to contemplate these Y. 'True' here is again *chang* as in the first sentence. *Chang wu*, true emptiness, desire therefore to contemplate these 'dark mysteries'; *chang yu*, true fullness, desire therefore to contemplate these 'bright forms'. Note the structure 'X' in sentence two and 'true X' here in sentence three strongly reflects the same structure in the first sentence.

Sentence four shows us the two possible (only?) views of Dao are in fact two views of the one thing. The human process of investigation, trying to know, exploring mysteries is the same, regardless of where we start.

4. These two come from the same source but differ in name;	
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Craig notes: the second translation above is close to correct, and it reinforces the pairing I describe in sentences two and three: "these two" are "non-being" and "being", wu and yu. To be explicit then: these two (being and non-being) are identical in emerging but differ in name. This again is an explicit contradiction.

Sentence five adds perplexity inasmuch as it says the process of understanding Dao in its slipperiness is what gives rise to everything. It is arcane. The gist is that without names, preconceived ideas, knowledge, supposition, etc. getting in the way, we *can* see to the very heart of ourselves and the universe. The origin of life. Who and why we are.

5. This source is called "Mystery" Mystery upon Mystery, The womb giving birth to all of being.

Dao, the subtle reality of the universe cannot be described.

That which can be described in words is merely a conception of the mind.

Although names and descriptions have been applied to it, the subtle reality is beyond the description.

One may use the word "Nothingness" to describe the Origin of the universe, and "Beingness" to describe the Mother of the myriad things, but Nothingness and Beingness are merely conceptions.

From the perspective of Nothingness, one may perceive the expansion of the universe.

From the perspective of Beingness, one may distinguish individual things. Hua-Ching Ni

Craig notes the last sentence calls out and emphasizes the identity of being and non-being: 'identical in emerging' in the last sentence is *tong chu*, 'identical emerging'. This sentence says – *tong*, identity, calls out or means mystery upon mystery, the door to myriad mysteries.

Dao means how: how things happen, how things work. Dao is the single principle underlying all creation ... Dao is a principle. Creation is a process. That is all there is: principle and process, how and what. Heider

What is the Dao	Realization of Dao	Manifestation of the Dao
Marking out the Path	A Way Can Be a Guide	Transcending
Embodying the Dao	The Transcendental Dao	The Beginning of Power
The Nameless Eternal Dao		

The Dao that can be spoken of and the Name that can be named, which refer to the denoting of things and the making of shapes, are not eternal. Therefore, [the eternal] cannot be spoken of and named.

All being originates from non-being. Therefore, while formless and unnamed, it is the beginning of all things. While formed and named, it grows, cultivates, protects, and disciplines, becoming the mother. Dao described as formless and unnamed begins the completion of all things. To begin and complete without knowing why—this is the mystery of the mystical.

Subtlety is infinitely small. All things originate from ultimate smallness and later achieve completion, begin from nothingness and then grow. Therefore constantly void of desire and empty, one may discern the mystery of the origin of things. Potentiality returns to the ultimate. All benefits of being must be based on the usefulness of non-being. Desire must be rooted in Dao in order to prevail. Therefore one constantly has desires in order to see the potential of ultimate things. "The two" refer to the origin and the mother. Coming from the same source means coming together from the mystic. Having different names, they function differently. In the beginning it is called the origin; at the end, it is called the mother. The mystic is dark, silent, and void; it is where the origin and the mother come from. It cannot be named, therefore it cannot be spoken of. Call it "the mystic," because it is derived from the unobtainable, as it must be. If it must be so, then it cannot be determined by only one mystical element and to name it would be a big mistake. Therefore the mystic is more mystical than the most mystical. All subtle things come from this same source, which is therefore called the gate of all subtleties.

Key terms

abstruse, deep 玄 xuán

radical 95, deep, profound, abstruse; black; mysterious

Linnell uses *subtle mystery*.

Hatcher has depth, mystery, profundity, subtlety (ies)

Fenn has 玄 dark, mystic, abstruse spelled hsüan

Dao, way 道 dào

[p.c. <u>:</u> walk represents the meaning and 首 head, pictograph of a head (hair above a face with an eye), represents the sound]

subtle 妙 miào

[p.c. ot y woman represents the meaning and ot y few, depicts four dots, representing the meaning "few". Originally the same character as 小. The small dots possibly represent grains of sand (沙), represents the sound]

Linnell uses *subtle mystery* twice.

Hatcher has (of)(the) mystery(ies), subtlety(ies), wonder(s)



Sentences 1 to 4

- 1. When people see things as beautiful, ugliness is created.
- 2. When people see things as good, evil is created.
- 3. Being and non-being produce each other. Difficult and easy complement each other. Long and short define each other.
- 4. High and low oppose each other. Fore and aft follow each other.

Aptly, it is in our nature to be caught in dualism. We are wired that way, at least for the past 10,000 or 30,000 years, it seems. There are those who suppose our brains were bi-cameral (two chambers) until 3000 years ago when the human brain evolved so that one side could *talk* to the other without recourse to external media. Dualism. This chapter poses a number of opposite concepts *if then* ... *then*, so if something is thought one way there is something the opposite way. The *this-that*, *internal-external*, *light-dark*, *yin-yang* are created in Dao

and we must work around them to achieve any sort of approach to unity, to Dao. Recognizing the *other* inherent in recognizing the *one* is tricky and can ensnare the unaware.

Dualism has a long history in western thinking and has led to *mind-body dualism, property dualism and cosmological dualism*. An important one is *epistemological dualism, the epistemological question of whether the world we see around us is the real world itself or merely an internal perceptual copy of that world generated by neural processes in our brain.* We know where the Buddhists stand on this; Daoists simply ignore it all as fallacy as there is only Dao. Dualism discussions can be useful to get some insight into Dao, as in this chapter.

Chapter 2, line 2: therefore, [to] have [and] not [have] mutually create, difficult [and] easy mutually become, long [and] short mutually shape, high [and] low mutually lean, voice [and] sound mutually harmonise, front [and] back mutually follow. The idea of wú wei is also an idea of opposites with wú being the nothing/ness and emptiness, while wei is action, movement or activity. Ramsden

Beauty and ugliness are perceptions, having no substantive characteristics, also they are relative. Facial features and physical attributes are not mentioned.

As soon as the world regards something as beautiful, ugliness simultaneously becomes apparent. As soon as the world regards something as good, evil simultaneously becomes apparent. Hua-Ching Ni

Craig notes: When all know beauty as beauty, i.e. when people are conscious or aware of beauty, naming the beautiful "beautiful", then ugliness is already there. When people are aware of good as good, when they name the good "good", then not good is already there. The arising of concepts is in pairs, contrasting or opposite, at the same time. Discrimination in awareness, positive determination in awareness, is through simultaneous negation. Thus being and non-being create each other. This 'mechanism' of awareness, the simultaneous mutual arising of opposites in consciousness, is the root of confusion and ignorance, how the Tao is lost. It is as unavoidable as awareness itself. We cannot help but discriminate, perceive, describe. It appears to be the greatest root of knowledge, yet it is at the same time the greatest root of ignorance and loss.

Sentence 5

Therefore the Master can act without doing anything and teach without saying a word.

Given all this, sentence five gives us guidance to cut through the blather of *this* or *that* by telling us how the Sage (a person who practices the Path, or you yourself) operates.

Wieger says do 為 wei, was commonly thought to be based on the radical for claw and the phonetic for female monkey with one claw at the top and two more mingled at the bottom as the female monkey, of all the animals, the most likely to claw. But, he says, the ancient character represented a hand carding textile fibres, no monkeys involved, and means to do. The confusion was abetted by the fact both the monkey and the carding action are pronounced wei. Later non-action is the same character with not, non added. Action is pronounced wei-and not is wu.

The phrase *wu wei* is an important Daoist use, found throughout the Dao De Jing. As explained elsewhere *non action* should really be read as *empty action*. Action cannot not be, it is what it is. It can, however, be empty, empty of motive, of result, of cause.

Craig notes: Despite the mechanism of simultaneous emergence of opposites in consciousness, it is possible to 'pause' the process, to be aware but not impose a name, to act but not have or achieve a goal, to hesitate in the gap between the opposites, at the very moment of mutual emergence, and recognize that hesitation itself as a hesitating, a continuing living in the gap. Time does not stop even in that gap. "This is how the wise person abides in/lives/

practices empty action in their work, and practices no speech in their teaching". Even not acting is acting. Not speaking is speaking. Time does not stop even if one stops grasping.

Sentence 6

All things arise, and he does not turn away from them. He produces them but does not take possession of them.

Furthermore, in sentence six the Sage rises above normal human behaviour. Shades of *live* in the moment.

Sentence 7

To earn, not to own, To accept naturally without self-importance: If you never assume importance You never lose it.

This idea is reiterated in sentence seven where accomplishment works best if it is not owned. There is a reflection here of one of the three Dao treasures, *not to be seen as important* (not to claim importance in the world).

Love is a rose but you better not pick it, Only grows when it is on the vine, Handful of thorns and you'll know you missed it, Lose your love when you say the word mine ..., N. Young ca. 1975.

Craig notes: "The myriad phenomena arise in the flow of time but he does not explain them. He produces things but does not possess them. He acts but there is no goal or expectation. His tasks are completed yet he does not claim or linger in the result. Now, as he lays no claim and does not linger, this is how there is no departure". More contradictions: perceive but do not explain, produce but do not possess, act with no goal, do not linger in accomplishment and so never depart from it. This is living in the gap.

Chapter titles

Self-Development	Self-Culture	Striving for Perfection
Self-Perfection	Everyone Knows	Relativity
Nourishing the Person	Recognizing Dualities	Using Polarity
Relativity and the Meaning of Existence		

Wang Bi

Beauty induces happiness in human hearts; ugliness brings disgust to human hearts. So beauty and ugliness are like happiness and anger; good and not good are like right and wrong. Happiness and anger have the same root; right and wrong have the same gate. So they cannot be mentioned with partiality. These six show that obvious elements of nature cannot be mentioned with partiality.

To be natural is quite enough; to exert means to defeat.

Wisdom and knowledge are innate; to strive for them is false [to nature].

Abiding by their natural functions, all things will achieve their own fulfillment; hence one cannot take any credit.

If one takes credit, then fulfillment will not last.

Key terms

beauty 美 *měi*

pictograph of a person with ornamental head wear resembling sheep horns

Wieger has a man resembling to the lamb, sweet, gentle, good.

Hatcher has (a, the) beauty(iful), elegance(ant); attractive

dwell 居 jū, jī

[p.c. \vdash door represents the meaning and \vdash old represents the sound]. This appears to be wrong Linnell uses dwell as in do not get stuck in the self praise of your accomplishments Hatcher has dwelling, lingering, resting; laying (of) claims

ugly 惡 ěxīn, èxīn

[p.c. \(\frac{1}{12}\)\) heart represents the meaning and \(\frac{\pmathft{\pmathftall}}{\pmathftall}\) Asia, original meaning tomb, depicts a wooden structure where coffins are placed. Based on the original meaning "tomb", the current meanins "Asia" is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]

Hatcher has ugliness; (the) bad, offensive, ugly, vile (ness) with added meanings (to be) abhorrent, bad, cruel, depraved, evil, foul, hateful, horrible, loathesome, malicious, offensive, repulsive, sinister, ugly, vicious, vile, wrong, wicked; (a, the) contempt, dirt, disdain, dislike, evil, filth, hate, ill-will, malice, revulsion, sickness, ugliness, wrong; (to) condemn, detest, dislike, hate, resent, spurn Wieger has 亞 as secondary, alike. He has the character 亞 as a radical in 亞 meaning evil; wrong and also to hate

Dong doesn't use 亞 by itself, only in compounds, many meaning vile, disgusting, sick

Chapter 3 🗵

Sentences 1, 2 and 3

- 1. To reward merit is to stir up emulation;
- 2. Do not value rare treasures, so that the people shall not steal.
- 3. Do not make a public display of riches and finery Or the people's hearts will be envious and discontent.

So now we've learned Dao cannot be defined. If you try to define it you fail and when you make or achieve things it is best not to *own* them, the greatest achievements are not to be claimed or credited, self-credited or otherwise. Along these lines a certain simplicity is required so as to let good order and peace arrange itself in your life. You, the Sage, must follow these ideas in order to deal with your own reality.

Sentences 4 and 5

- 4. In this manner the sage governs people: Emptying their minds, Filling their bellies, Weakening their ambitions, And strengthening their bones.
- 5. He constantly (tries to) keep them without knowledge and without desire, and where there are those who have knowledge, to keep them from presuming to act (on it).

By always ensuring that the citizens are without-knowledge and without-desire, Those who make men wise will not dare to act. Linnell

Always keeping the people free of sophistication, free of desires So that even the clever ones will not presume to meddle at all. Hatcher

tell us that a Sage, or you yourself, governs or influences by keeping things simple and clear. The *crafty ones* in sentence 5 [term used by Chan, Mabry, and Ta-Kao] and *the cunning ones* [term used by Beck, Bynner, Chan and Lin Yutan] are those who do not live in Dao and are always trying to be something they are not. They manipulate everyone they can and wheel and deal for their own benefit.

wisdom 智, *zhì* which means *wisdom, knowledge; crafty; cunning*. This indicates that wisdom and knowledge used for ulterior purpose is crafty. Knowledge for gain. The top of the character is 知 *know* [p.c.口 *mouth* represents the meaning and 矢 *arrow* represents the sound]. Direct talk. Straight talk. No unnecessary talk. Knowledge must be directly conveyed for it to be knowledge. So two kinds of talk, knowledge talk (direct) and not knowing talk (hot air); see Chapters 5 and 56, and peripherally 81.

Of course, we are told a sage doesn't talk much. But, every here and there, when a sage speaks he does so in a circumspect manner, perhaps *whispering in an ear*, but giving direct, *straight* talk quietly and only once; the sage never publicly orates or uses persuasion, never takes a side, never gets involved in discussion. If he did, he would not be sage. Joe Friday lived in Dao; *just the facts ma'am*.

Chapter 81 ends with a repeat of the knowledge-talk relationship in our makeup, Chapter 5 simply states too much talk about Dao is destructive and we have to live Dao inside. It can't be named, discussed, proven, not proven, so why bother. Cultivate Dao in yourself.

Sentence 6

Practice not-doing, and everything will fall into place.		
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The chapter concludes with the idea of "not doing" wu wei. $mathemath{m}$ (wu) is the character for not, nothing, without. It is the abbreviated radical for fire under the phonetic for clearing a forest, leaving nothing. It is also the character for emptiness. You should read it as empty action.

Chapter titles

Quieting People	Peace to the People	Peace through Non-Action			
Resting the People	Not Exalting Cleverness	Tempering			
	Abandoning Desires and Strategy	Keeping Peace			
The Art of Government					

Wang Bi

To be worthy means to be able. To exalt means to praise. To prize is to attach high value. If only the able man is appointed, why exalt him? If only useful things are employed, why set high value on them? To exalt the worthy man and to glorify his name is to place his distinction higher than his appointment; people will rush to compete for supremacy. If goods are prized beyond their usefulness, the greedy will rush to dig a hole in the wall and to search the chest for stealing, heedless of their lives. Therefore, if the desired goods are not visible, their hearts will not be distracted.

The heart embraces knowledge. The stomach embraces food.

The empty [heart] contains knowledge, but the full stomach does not.

Their bones without knowledge are the trunk; their will, causing trouble, brings confusion. If their hearts are emptied, their will will be weakened.

Keeping their truthfulness.

Those who know are those who know how to act.

Key terms

wisdom, knowledge 智 zhì

[p.c. $\[mu]$ $\[mu]$

Hatcher has several translations for this character. In chapter 3 he has (^) clever, crafty, cunning, smart, sophisticated in chapter 18, & ingenuity; (the) clever; sophists, intellectuals; in chapter 19 and 65, cleverness, knowledge, learning, sophistication; in chapter 27, "clever, informed, prudent, right, smart, wise";; in chapter 32, clever, learned (ness); intelligent, prudent (nce); in chapter 65, (^) cleverness, know(s, ledge); ^ clever, smart

Wieger has radical 72 日 sun + phonetic 334 知 to know and has the character as wisdom; cleverness goods 貨 huò

[p.c. 貝 sea shell, cowrie, [money] represents the meaning and 化 change, pictograph of a right-side up person and an upside-down person, depicting the meaning "turn around" or "transform" represents the sound]. Also means commodities, products; goods; money Linnell adds rare.

Hatcher has goods, items, commodities, products, things

govern 治 zhì

original meaning river in Shandong, [p.c. *i water* represents the meaning and 台 *platform* represents the sound].

Hatcher has (a, the) arrangement, government, jurisdiction, leadership, management, order, organization, regulation, rule, rulership; peace under good government; (to) administer, arrange, control, direct, govern, handle, manipulate, lead, manage, (put in) order, organize, work with, regulate, compare, rule, train; cure, heal, treat; pacify, punish, suppress (s, ed, ing); (to be) well-governed, in good order Wieger has radical 85 % abbreviated as ?) water + phonetic 127 $\stackrel{.}{\boxminus}$ to speak; to express one's self. In a lesson he has the mouth exhaling a breath. By extension to speak in order to make one's self known; I, one's self

Fenn has chih meaning to govern, rule, heal. Soothill has govern

sage, holy 聖 shèng

depicts listening Ξ to what is spoken \Box . Ξ straight; stand upright represents the sound stomach \hbar

[p.c. 月 *meat, flesh* represents the meaning and 复 *return* pictograph of a foot entering or exiting a building, representing the meaning "to return", represents the sound] Hatcher has *belly, stomach, gut, core; inner, inside (s)*

Chapter 4 🗵

Sentences 1 to 4

- 1. The Dao is like an empty container: it can never be emptied and can never be filled.
- 2. Infinitely deep, it is the source of all things.
- 3. It dampens the passion it unties the tangles it makes the flashing things harmonious it makes the dust merge together.
- 4. It is the essence of all things. No one can comprehend its origin.

As we cannot define Dao, this chapter attempts to show us what it is and is not.

Sentence 5

Was it too the child of something else? We can hardly tell. A substance-less image of all things seemed to exist before the progenitor that we hardly know of.

This sentence goes a little further to explain how Dao underlies the substrate of our reality, indeed, of all the universe. Keep in mind, Gautama suggested the Universe is inside our heads and everything else is illusion. 'Tis all very mysterious, but it is really only *another* way humans can cope with understanding of God/Dao, how we understand the Ineffable. A side note, there was a lot of *loaning of ideas* from Daoist thought when the Buddhists came to China. There is one interpretation/translation called *The Sutra of the Way and its Virtue*.

Chapter titles

Dao, Without Origin	Source Non-Existent	The Mystery of Emptiness
The Causeless	The Way Is Unimpeded Harmony	The Great Integrity
Without Source	The Nature of Dao	The Nature of the Dao
The Character and the Benefits of the Dao		

Wang Bi

To hold quantity for one's family does not make the family complete. To hold quantity for a nation does not make the nation complete. To exhaust one's strength to lift a weight is not one's [normal] function. Therefore, although a man knows how to govern all things, to govern without using the two principles of Dao is not enough. The earth has its shape but if it does not abide by heaven, it cannot possess complete tranquility. The heaven has the image of its spirit, but if it does not abide by Dao, it cannot preserve its spirit. When emptied

and used, it is never exhausted. To fill it is to make it full; and when full, it will overflow. When emptied and used, it is never exhausted. So it is infinite to the utmost. Although its form is vast, it does not burden the body. Although its appearances are many, they do not fill its capacity. If all things forsake this to seek a master, where can the master be? Is this not deep enough to be the forefather of all things? Sharpness dulled but not destroyed; tangles "sorted without labor; blending with the light without making the body unclean; becoming one with the dirt without giving up its innocence; is this not serene enough as if it hardly existed? The earth keeps its shape, and no virtue is beyond its support. The heaven enjoys its image, and no virtue is beyond its shelter; even heaven and earth cannot keep pace with it [Dao]. Didn't its existence precede God's? "God" refers to the God of heaven.

Key terms

ancestor, progenitor 宗 zōng

depicts a spiritual 示 edifice, like an ancestral shrine By extension, ancestors, a clan

Hatcher has ancestor(tral), progenitor; origin, precedent

Wieger has ancestors; kind; class; to follow; to honour; tow orship; religion

profound, deep, gulf 淵 yuān

originally depicted water inside of a deep pool. The left $\tilde{\gamma}$ (water) component was added later is the abbreviated radical for water and a phonetic for bouncing between two banks. The character means a whirlpool; a gulf, an abyss. It was derived from the ancient symbol for a whirlpool. Also means gulf, abyss, deep; surge up, bubble up, gush forth; deep pool; deep; profound

Hatcher has deep, profound, engulfing, bottomless, vast

Chapter 5 🗵

This chapter puts us in our place, we're just minutiae on the scale of things. It starts with the fact the universe/reality deals with us without regard. We are no more than straw dogs along with the 10,000 things. We can but put up with it, try not to let it rule over us. Try to let it happen, let it unfold as it will.

Sentence 1

Heaven and earth do not act from (the impulse of) any wish to be benevolent; they deal with all things as the dogs of grass are dealt with.

器 straw 狗 dog is an ancient Chinese concept, found once, only in this chapter. It is defined in English as something set up as being valuable which later, after use, is just trash. It originated in China as a way to sacrifice a dog without using a real dog. After the sacrifice, it was burnt or just thrown away. The character for straw is the radical for grass or herbs bound up, like a sheaf. Dog is a radical coupled with a near phonetic meaning sacrifice dog.

The Chinese had a strange relationship with dogs, they were worshipped, were pets, guards, herders, and food. Wieger says the Chinese considered them *strange* and related them to western barbarians. Why this is so is a mystery as evidence shows Asian people domesticated dogs as long as 16,000 years ago. Dog is an old Chinese word for Hun. Like the Huns, who used dogs to guard their encampments, Chinese used dogs as guards, both real and simulacra made of straw, stone and metal. Dogs were also used by barbarians as part of the attack and destruction of Chinese villages, usually accompanied by burning, so *foreign* dogs were considered fearful. In modern times *running dogs of imperialism* has been used to deprecate capitalists and people who are *yes men*.

 \mathcal{R} radical 94 dog, the character represents a dog; according to tradition, Confucius found the representation a very faithful one; this introduces us to believe that the dogs, in the times of the philosopher, were strange animals. Wieger

Sentence 2

The Dao is like a bellows: it is empty yet infinitely capable. The more you use it, the more it produces;

continues in this vein showing the Sage (or you) should also follow this inevitable valuation, Dao is constantly expanding and contracting, like a bellows. Always changing.

Bellows or sack *橐 tuó* appears only once, here in Chapter 5. Another only once character is also in Chapter 5, 籥 *flutes*. Both are associated with wood and air, the radicals for *wood* and *bamboo* being on the bottom.

Sentence 3

The wise man too is hard as nail; to him the people are but as straw dogs to throw.

The sage is not kind - Thus the 100 families become as straw dogs to him. Linnell

Sentence 4

Too much talk about it evaporates your understanding, though. Simply stay at the center of the circle.

shows all this talk and discussion about Dao is a waste to time. If you say you are a Daoist, you aren't. Rather than search for meaning in the World, look within yourself. This is similar to the gist of Chapter 47 which says you can learn all you need in your own house, understand the world without looking out your window. In other words, live in Dao and everything resolves itself rather nicely.

Chapter titles

Impartiality	The Utility of Hollowness	Measure of the Universe
Apprehending the Void	Heaven and Earth	Yin and Yang
Using Emptiness	Disinterested Interest	Holding to the Center
The Impartial Laws of Nature		

Wang Bi

Heaven and earth follow nature. Without action or creation, all things rule each other by themselves. Therefore they are without kindness. Kindness creates, upholds, administers, and changes, with grace and action. Created, upheld, administered, and changed, things will lose their true nature. With grace and action, things cease to co-exist. If things cease to co-exist, then there is not enough to support them all. The earth does not grow straw for the beasts, but the beasts eat the straw. [The heaven] does not produce dogs for man, but man eats the dog. Inaction in regard to all things means to let them do as they should. Then they will be self-sufficient. If one has to use wisdom, it will not work.

The Sage, joining in the virtue of heaven and earth, compares the people to straw dogs.

The bellows is a series of ranked bags; the stick is like a flute. A bellows holds emptiness, no passion, and inaction. Therefore its emptiness is interminable. When moved, it is never exhausted. Between heaven and earth, everything abides by nature. So, like a bellows, it will never be exhausted.

The more one does, the more he loses. Concerning the things, one reveals their ugliness. Concerning events, one says the wrong words. If one does not employ this, he does not know to pay attention to the amount exhausted. But keeping to the middle path like a bellows, he will never be exhausted. Denying oneself and letting things alone, everything will be in order. If a bellows intends to make its own sound, it cannot provide for those who request [sound].

Key terms

ten thousand things 萬事 wànshì

萬 $ten\ thousand$, originally a pictograph of a scorpion. The current meaning is a phonetic loan 事 matter, the characters 史 (history), 吏 (government official), 使 (cause; use; instruct), and 事 (matter; work; affair) are all etymologically related and all derive from the same ancient character, depicting a hand (又) holding a container for writing utensils. 事 and 史 were originally written the same, but later an extra mark was added to distinguish them

Hatcher has (the) myriad, ten thousand; all

100 families 百姓 bǎixìng also means ordinary people; "the person in the street"

百 one hundred [p.c. — one represents the meaning and 白 white represents the sound]

姓 one's family name [p.c. 女 woman represents the meaning and 生 life represents the sound]

• Chapter 6 回

And now for something esoteric. The three sentences of Chapter 6 refer to Dao as a mysterious female, something which gives birth to all things. All things, including Heaven and Earth rise from Dao, all things eventually come to an end, return to Dao. But Dao is eternal. Sentence one is sometimes translated as *the spirit of the valley does not die*. Immortal is shown as $\pi \not \vdash not dead$.

Sentence 1

The spirit of the valley never dies. It is called the mystical female.

The valley is formed by its very bottom, its *spirit*. You cannot see the spirit of the valley, you can only see the valley. It is a name that cannot be named, the essence of the valley, not the valley itself.

Sentence 2

The doorway of the Mysterious Feminine Is called Root of Heaven-and-Earth.

Sentence 3

It is invisible to the senses, yet totally permeates all things. It is inexhaustible and eternally available for any purpose.

Dao is the underlying substrate of everything, even though it has no form and no properties. It is limitless and enduring, take from it and it never diminishes. Inexhaustible and everlasting. This may be difficult to grok, but it is as close to an article of faith as one will find in Daoist thinking, but it also can be mostly ignored in most practical bases.

Later we are told that it is not an object that is useful, but its emptiness, i.e. a cup, a wheel hub. A valley is defined by its nature, an empty space between hills.

Chapter titles

The Infinitude of Creative Effort	Perfection of the Symbol	Origin of Becoming			
The Origin of Things	The Valley Spirit	Life's Spirit			
Completing Forms	The Mystic Female	Perceiving the Subtle			
Humility As the Basis of a Rich Life					

Wang Bi

The Valley Spirit is the center of the valley; therefore it is not the valley. Without shape or shadow, without rebellion or defiance, it lies low and motionless, keeps still and unfading, and thus forms the valley. It has no visible shape, yet it is ultimate. Lying low and un-namable, it is called the root of heaven and earth. Being interminable and seeming to endure, it can be used without toil. "The door" is the pathway of the mystic female. Following the pathway and uniting with the ultimate, it is therefore called the root of heaven and earth. If one says it exists, its shape cannot be seen; if one says it does not exist, it produces ten thousand things. Therefore, it seems to exist endlessly and nothing is left incomplete. It functions without effort. Therefore, it is used without toil.

Key terms

feminine, female 北 *pìn*female of species
Hatcher has *female*, *feminine*, *woman*valley 谷 gǔ
depicts an opening (口) between two mountain streams

Chapter 7 回

continues with the idea, as we all know, Heaven and Earth are constructs of Dao. It has no bounds, we cannot *know it*, remember.

Sentence 1

Heaven lasts long and Earth abides.

We are reminded Heaven and Earth endure. This concept is hard for most organized religions to accept. Eternal Heaven in Christianity is a tenet of the faith, only because it is eternal can a follower expect or achieve salvation, absolution, or reward. Of course, such a position requires the opposite, everything must have a counter balancing effect, so Hell, purgatory, and eternal damnation enter into Christian dogma.

Sentence 2

What is the secret of their durability? Is it not because they do not live for themselves That they can live so long?

Sentence 3

And so, the Wise Person: Puts himself last, and so finds himself in front.

brings us back to ourselves. If Dao is, and if all we know is part of Dao, then we can only accept this and act or not act accordingly. Regardless, if we advance we withdraw, if we continue on the Way all will *become apparent to us*.

Sentence 4

Reckons himself out. But finds himself safe and secure.

goes further, explaining if we stay on the Way we will do ok.

Sentence 5

As he does not seek his own advantage, everything turns to his advantage.

adds a final touch. Self abnegation has benefits. Making but not owning. Selfless 無私 wúsī also means altruistic, unselfish, and disinterested. Selflessness, in English, the quality of unselfish concern for the welfare of others has two characters in Chinese, selflessness 忘我 wàngwǒ and self-restraint 剋己 kèjǐ.

enupter titles						
Humility	Dimming the Light	Victory of the Selfless				
Hiding the Light	Heaven is Eternal, Earth is Everlasting	Modesty				
Sheathing Brightness	Self-Effacement, Self-Enhancement	The Power of Selflessness				
Selflessness as a Way of Life						

To live for oneself is to compete with other things. Not to live for oneself means all things will return [to him]. Selflessness means not doing anything for oneself Staying ahead and preserving, one achieves self-ful-fillment.

Key terms

selflessness, altruism 忘我 wàngwǒ

忘 forget [p.c. 心 *heart* represents the meaning and 亡 *death* represents the sound] 我 I, me original meaning *weapon*, pictograph of a weapon with a forked blade and long handle. The meaning "I; me" is a phonetic loan

self-restraint; discipline; selflessness 剋己 kèjǐ

剋 to beat, [p.c. 克 subdue represents the sound and $\iint knife$ represents the meaning] $\supseteq self$, origin unclear. Possibly a pictograph of a silk rope, in which case would be the original form of record 紀 ji, ji, the ancient Chinese used knotted cords for records of numeracy

Chapter 8 🗵

introduces us to the properties of water. We are mostly water. Water makes up most of the world in about the same proportion as it makes us up. It just is. Just as Dao just is, water closely approximates Dao in its behaviours, its characteristics, but, of course, while we can feel water we cannot put a finger on Dao.

Sentence 1

The best of man is like water, Which benefits all things, and does not contend with them, Which flows in places that others disdain, Where it is in harmony with the Way.

Sentence 2

In dwelling, live close to the Earth. In thinking, be open to new ideas. In relationships, be kind. In speech, tell the truth and keep your word.

In speech, the virtue is in being truthful. Linnell

emphasizes the need for impartiality and evenness. Stability, quietude, simplicity are all characteristics of living in Dao. So few of us do, or try to do, unfortunately.

Sentence 3

In leading people, demonstrate integrity. In daily matters, be competent. In acting, consider the appropriate timing.

continues this idea, providing further examples of life with and in Dao.

Sentence 4

When you do not try to prove yourself to others, You will be beyond reproach.

explains by not contending (back in Chapter 2 we were told elevating or overvaluing things causes contention and competition) things work well; relations are eased and cordial.

Chapter titles		
The Nature of Goodness	Yielding Nature	Metaphor of the Water
The Easy Nature	Higher Good is Like Water	The Highest Good
Harmony with Nature	Excellence and Non-Contention	Noncompetitive Values
Undiscriminating Benevolence		

Men despise low [places],

Dao is nothing; water is something. They are, therefore, "very close" [but not the same].

That is to say, all men should follow the Dao of governing.

Key terms

benefit 利, lì

depicts harvesting grain 禾 with a blade 引. Harvest was the main source of profit in agricultural societies

Hatcher has (is) (to) benefit, help, favor, serve (s, ing)

信 trust, truthful xìn

is a noun and a verb. It appears in the Dao De Jing in a number of chapters as one or the other. The character is made up of the radical for man and the character for speech or words, so, the quality that the words of every man should have. Faith, truthfulness; the effect produced upon a man by the words of another. A man of his word. A man is as good as his word.

Hatcher has (the, is) sincerity, trust, truth. good faith

The character appears 15 times with various pronunciations all relating to (a, the) assurance, belief, comprehension, confidence, collateral, conviction, credence, credibility, credit, credulity, (good) faith, faithfulness, reliance, reliability, sincerity, security, token, trust, pledge, promise (in, of), word of honour, truth(fulness); evidence, indication, message, sign, symptom.

Chapter 9 🗉

provides further allusions and metaphors to try to get an understanding of Dao. A series of notifications about excess in ordinary actions. This is reflected to some extent in Chapter 80, where it says "rule a great nation [yourself] as you would cook a small fish [the more you mess with it the worse it gets]."

This chapter is about the evils of excess.

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18

Sentences 1 to 4

- 1. It is easier to carry an empty cup than one that is filled to the brim.
- 2. Temper a (sword-edge) to its very sharpest, And the edge will not last long.
- 3. When gold and jade fill the hall, no one can protect them;
- 4. To be proud with honour and wealth Is to cause one's own downfall.

To have wealth and high rank, but with arrogance ... Linnell

Sentence 5

Withdraw, your work once done, into obscurity; this is the way of Heaven.

says *just* enough is *just* right; excess is a waste; excess leads to loss and ruin said the first four lines, now sentence five shows us how to temper our *wants* and *desires* to live evenly and successfully in Dao. This is a basic tenet of Gautama, *Desire causes suffering*. Hidden where the sun doesn't, or can't, shine.

Later, in Chapters 51, we will find we are to *create actions* but *not own* the results.

Moderation	Practice of Placidity	The Art of Observing Moderation

Making Things Equal	To Keep on Filling	Overfulfillment
To Go About at Ease	Avoiding Excess	Transcending Decline
Knowing When to Stop		

To hold means not to lose virtue. Not losing virtue but filling it [a cup] will make it overflow. So, if one cannot stop in time, it is better to have no virtue and no merit at all.

Hammering [an edge] to a sharp end and sharpening it to its keenest, one is likely to ruin it. Therefore, it cannot last long.

It is better to stop [collecting] them.

They cannot be retained for long.

The four seasons evolve in turn, each completing its role and then moving on.

Key terms

arrogance, pride 驕 jiāo

驕 spirited, haughty [p.c. 馬 horse represents the meaning and 喬 tall, originally written the same as 高 (tall). The top part of the character was altered to distinguish 喬 from 高, represents the sound] Hatcher has (to) (be) proud(ide), haughty(eur), arrogant(ce)

Chapter 10 🗵

This chapter asks us six questions regarding our ability to follow Dao and avoid excesses to which we might be prone. The most common examples are from Chapter 8, but how to avoid these, and even more pernicious desires, requires some esoteric thinking. These six processes are internal. They require great concentration and lifetimes of practice. The results of these practices allow the person practising to become as innocent and blank as a baby. Become *mindless*, without biases and emotional thinking.

The six questions can be listed as *qualities*.

Can you be steady and calm? Can you be relaxed? Can you be settled in your mind? Can you be equanimous and not want something back? Can you go with good and bad fortune? Can you remain indifferent regardless of what you know?

Sentences 1 to 6

Sentences 1 to 0
Q1. Can you keep the spirit and embrace the One without departing from them?
Q2. Can you focus your life-breath until you become supple as a newborn child?
Q3. Can you cleanse and purify your mystic vision until it is clear?
Q4. Can you love the people and govern the state by non-action?
Q5. When Heaven gives and takes away, can you be content to just let things come or go?
Q6. Can you understand all and penetrate all without using the mind?

Sentence 7

To produce things and to rear them, To produce, but not to take possession of them, To act, but not to rely on one's own ability, To lead them, but not to master them - This is called profound and secret virtue.

Live in Dao. Here's how. Chapter 2 is reflected here.

Craig notes: I read the first line as a statement of a general problem, and the next five lines as examples of specific practices that can work that problem. Sentence 7 is then, as Tor notes, an echo of Chapter 2 and its description of basic living in Dao. But here we are told that this is De, power/virtue. The problem is: how do we go about our daily lives while also "embracing the Unity"? "Sustain and manage your sentience/soul/life and embrace unity; is this possible with no separation/distinction?" Embracing unity might seem to be something that takes one out of one's daily life. Don't you have to sit still and meditate to let unity arise in your mind? Yet our life continues and must be sustained and managed, in all its complexity and flow. How can we integrate the mystery of unity in our daily life? Can we embrace the complexity of our daily doing as itself always also embracing unity? Here are some examples of practices we can develop that can help us integrate.

Sentence 2: "gather Chi to attain flexibility, can one become like an infant?" I think this refers to all sorts of physical/spiritual practices such as Tai Chi, and other so called martial arts. They help integrate spiritual focus into bodily movement. "Gather Chi" is a basic process of focused movement that one learns in martial arts. Every daily activity can become a practice of moving meditation which integrates "embracing unity" into basic living.

Sentence 3: "cleanse and open perception into mystery, can this be with no blemish?" This probably refers to a meditation practice. See my note in Chapter 2 about 'living in the gap', awareness in the space/moment in which opposites emerge simultaneously that can become a process. A 'blemish' would be an invasive 'mundane' thought. But if this awareness is a practice, can it be present in every 'mundane' thought, and so even in everyday life be 'without blemish'?

Sentence 4: "cherish all people and govern the nation, can this be no/empty action?" 'Empty action' here is *wu wei*. Can we actively love all people and work together to govern society while at the same time being detached from owning these relationships?

Sentence 5: "opening and closing heaven's door, can one be the feminine?" I think this refers to how we engage with 'fate', what the world throws at us as opportunities or obstacles. It may even refer to divination practices. But the point, I think, is to be receptive without expectation or claim.

Sentence 6: "elucidate and explain all four directions, can this be done with no/empty knowledge?" I think 'empty knowledge' is a construct like 'empty action'. Can we do science but with no expectation of having attained 'the truth'? In searching to explain and understand, can there be a practice of doing so with detachment of the mind?

So we have five practices that we can strive to develop: the body/spirit of engaging Chi, the mind of meditation, social love and equity/good governance, embrace what 'fate' brings, seek to understand but with no expectation of owning 'the truth'. Then Sentence 7 echoes Chapter 2: create but don't own, act but detach from results. Lead yet do not govern. "This is called mysterious De/power/virtue." De, then, the second theme of this whole book, is our everyday living in our own embodied, engaged, embrace of Dao within ourselves. We really can do this.

What is Possible	It Can Be Done	Virtue of the Serene Man
What is Possible	Carrying Vitality and Consciousness	Limitations
Ability to Do	Developing Through Discipline	Inner Harmony

Knowing When to Stop	

To keep means to reside in. The soul is where man constantly resides. "One" means man's true nature. This means a man can reside constantly in his house [soul], embracing the One with pure spirit, and never departing from it, Then all things will become but outsiders.

To be intense means to let go; to induce means to reach the utmost. This means by letting go and breathing naturally, the harmony of the utmost suppleness can be achieved. By behaving like a baby without any desires, all things will be perfect and their nature will be obtained.

The mystical is the ultimate of all things. It can wash away evil and disguise to achieve utmost vision. In not letting material things obscure the clarity and the flaw, is it not godlike? Then all is in accord with the mystical.

To use art to achieve the end and to employ destiny to uncover the hidden things is wisdom. To discern the mystical vision clean and pure is to abandon sagacity. To govern the state without wisdom means to abandon wisdom. Can one do without wisdom? Then the people will not deviate and the state will be governed.

The gate of heaven is where the world comes through. Opening and closing signify the moments of order and confusion. Opening or closing is the path of mandate to the world. Therefore it is called the opening and closing of the gate of heaven. The female responds but does not initiate, conforms but does not act. This means in the opening and closing of the gate of heaven, it is far better to assume the female's part. Thus all things will pay respect and one's residence is secure.

It means that if one who is inactive can let his discernment reach the four corners without confusion or uncertainty, then all things will be transformed. This is to say Dao is constant inaction. If the duke and king can adhere to this, then all things will transform themselves.

Not obstructing their sources, and not stifling their nature.

Do not obstruct their sources; then things grow by themselves. So who can claim the credit? Do not stifle their nature; then things are self-sufficient. So who can assert action? Things grow fully by themselves without our control. To have the virtue without the master; is this not profound? Profound virtue refers to having virtue without knowing its master; this comes from the mysterious world.

Key terms

able, to be able 能 néng

original meaning *bear*, pictograph of a bear. Based on the original meaning "bear". The meaning of this character has shifted over time to mean "strong" and "ability, power"

Hatcher has can (it/one/this be); (is it/this) possible

infant 嬰 yīng'ér

嬰 *infant*, original meaning necklace, depicts a woman 女 wearing shell ornaments 賏 around her neck. 賏 also represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "necklace". The meaning of this character has shifted over time and now means "infant" or "baby"

Hatcher has (as, of) (a, an, the) baby, infant, newborn

The text uses 嬰 in conjunction with $ext{\it H}$ son pictograph of a child $ext{\it L}$ with an opening in the top of its head $ext{\it D}$. Represents the soft spot (fontanel) at the top of young infant heads. The $ext{\it D}$ component is written like $ext{\it H}$

Hatcher has child, infant, baby, babe

Chapter 11 回

Now we leave internal matters and step back out into the world, we learn how it is not the *solidity* of objects but their *emptiness* that provides utility. As the chapter titles below indicate the idea of *emptiness* as having *usefulness* is a common one in the Dao De Jing.

Sentences 1 to 3

- 1. The thirty spokes join in their nave, that is one; yet the wheel depends for use upon the hollow place for the axle.
- 2. Clay is shaped to make vessels; but the contained space is what is useful.

3. The imperceptible holes, which make the doors and windows of a house, are its essentials.

Sentence 4

existence makes something useful but nonexistence makes it work

Chapter titles

The Value of Non-Existence	Utility of Non-Being	Usefulness of the Non-Existent
The Use of Nothing	Thirty Spokes	The Importance of What is Not
Use of the Immaterial	Practical Form, Useful Emptiness	Using What Is Not
The Enlightened Spirit of Not Clinging		

Wang Bi

A nave can unite the thirty spokes because of its void. From its void, it is able to receive all things. Therefore it can unite them.

"Wood," "clay," and "wall" constitute the three [examples] by utilizing nothingness. To say nothingness means that which exists is beneficial only by the use of that which is absent.

Key terms

empty 空 kōng

[p.c. $\not T$ cave represents the meaning and \bot work represents the sound]. This character does not appear in the Dao De Jing

Hatcher uses 無 as (the) lack, non-being/existence; what is not

Linnell uses 無 negative, no

hub 轂 gǔ, gū

[p.c. 車 vehicle represents the meaning and 殼 to strike from above, original meaning to strike a musical instrument, depicts a hand holding a mallet or stick 殳 striking a musical instrument. Based on the original meaning "to strike a musical instrument". The meaning later shifted to "to strike from above" represents the sound]

Hatcher has hub, nave, axis

The character appears only once in the Dao De Jing, in this chapter.

Chapter 12 🗵

More references to excess and its harms, this time directly on our senses.

Sentences 1 and 2

- 1. Too much colour blinds the eye, Too much music deafens the ear, Too much taste dulls the palate.
- 2. Too much activity deranges the mind. Too much wealth causes crime.

Some translators specify *five* for the phrase *too much*. \pm is the character for *five*. It is constructed from the *two principles of yin and yang, begetting the five elements, between heaven and earth*. If there are only five elements, then it stands to reason five of anything is approaching a limit. Approaching a limit cause distress, for as we know, reaching a limit causes return.

The five elements (五行 w \check{u} x \acute{i} ng) of Chinese philosophy (wood 木, fire 火, earth 土, metal $\hat{\Xi}$, water 水).

Sentence 3

Relinquish what is without. Cultivate what is within. Live for your center, not your senses.

We are told simplicity and the basics are the Way. No excess required.

Chapter titles

Avoiding Desire	Examination of Desires	Turning Inward
Shutting the Doors	Colours	Choices
Repressing Desires	Senses Versus Self	Controlling the Senses
Emancipation from the Enslavement of the Senses		

Wang Bi

To spoil means to lose. The function of the palate is lost; therefore it is spoiled. The ears, eyes, mouth, and heart follow their own virtues. Not following their virtues and hurting their nature, they will become blind, deaf, spoiled, and mad.

The rare treasures block man's right way; therefore they constrain his actions.

"For the belly" means to feed oneself with material things; "for the eyes" means to allow material things to enslave the self. Therefore the Sage does not provide for the eyes.

Key terms

colour, air; manner 色 sè, shǎi

original meaning *press down*, depicts a kneeling person \sqcap being pushed down by a hand Π . Based on the original meaning "press down", now written as 抑. The current meaning "colour" is a phonetic loan

Linnell has colours

Hatcher has colours, hues

five Ξ i. wu

origin unclear, originally an X shape

Hatcher has radical $7 \stackrel{?}{=} two + 2$ strokes which are not defined in Wieger

flavour 味

is the radical for mouth and the phonetic for a negation

Linnell has flavours

Hatcher has flavours, tastes

sound 音 wu

is the radical for *sound*, a musical note, tone, pronunciation. It is made up of the utterance of a sound from the mouth

Linnell has tones

Hatcher has tone, note, sound, pitch (s)

Chapter 13 🗵

again draws us back into ourselves and shows how to interact with the outside *reality* that surrounds us. Chance and fortune are front and center. Jiyu has this chapter in two categories.

Sentences 1 and 2 pose serious questions about how we deal with the normal changes in our lives. There are three things in the category; *Favour*; *disgrace*; and *dangers* [in some versions dangers are replaced by other metaphors]. The idea is what we perceive as dangers, honours, fears, etc. are just illusions inside us.

Sentence 1

Success is as dangerous as failure, and we are often our own worst enemy.

She knows there's no success like failure And that failure's no success at all. Dylan

This sentence is often interpreted as *High rank brings great suffering*.

Honour is depicted as a basket full of cowrie shells which were a near universal form of currency throughout the Pacific and Indian Oceans, appearing all through Africa, even into central North America, although their source there is debated and, of course, South East Asia. Other mollusc shells were used to make beads and decorations, or were drilled and worn as necklaces indicating wealth, nobility and power by groups of indigenous people; in North America clam shells were used. The American custom of calling the dollar *a clam* comes from this. Even mother of pearl objects in western culture probably stem from the intrinsic value of shells in prehistory.

Honour, in Chinese refers to what is given as a mark of respect. Another character for honour is an offering of a fermented beverage in a fancy container; shades of our raising a glass in honour of someone, perhaps.

Nobility is honour. Related is *praise* which is simply a mouth spewing words or air. Honour is ephemeral. Honour, we are told, can be bought and sold with words. Sycophancy is related to honour, I think.

Further on molluscs. The term *royal purple* comes from ancient times as a dye extracted from the mucus of Tyrian (found off Tyre in the eastern Mediterranean) snails. It was so expensive to make only nobles, emperors and kings could afford to have robes of this colour. The blue of the flag and priests garbs of Israel were also extracted from a related snail in the Murex family.

The murex dye industry was started by the early Phoenicians (centered on Tyre) about 1000 BCE and it was the key to their empire that lasted for a millennium, finally ending with the fall of Carthage in 16 BCE. Murex dye was traded as far east as Assyria and everywhere around the Mediterranean Sea.

Wealth is what is given and hoarded. Stuff you accumulate. We are told wealth is a nuisance because the more there is the harder it is to protect and the easier for others to steal. Wealth is tangible.

Whatever you most fear - abandonment, rejection, failure, loss, humiliation, has already occurred to you. The threats you perceive around you now, or coming at you in the future are the long shadow being cast by your past. D. Chopra: in *A Path to Love*

Sentence 2

Why say favour and disgrace look alarming? favour acts superior Disgrace acts inferior Being obtained it looks alarming Being lost it looks alarming Appropriately, say favour and disgrace look alarming.

explains why the first two concepts of sentence one are what they really are; empty.

Sentence 3

What does it mean that hope is as hollow as fear? Hope and fear are both phantoms that arise from thinking of the self. When we don't see the self as self, what do we have to fear?

deals with the danger part. And it introduces selflessness, or maybe humility, as a counteraction to thinking or perceiving danger.

Sentence 4

See the world as your self. Have faith in the way things are. Love the world as your self; then you can care for all things.

gives use a readout on what can happen if we can understand that all worldly concerns are phantoms. By caring for yourself above the world, you can rule the world. In this case we read the world as your own world, yourself and your immediate surroundings. The true secret to having a successful life is to live it and not encumber it with irrational fears, honours, or favours. How? By not seeking those or other things.

Chapter titles

Loathing Shame	Abhorrence of shame	Freedom from Ego
Preventing a Fall	Favor and Disgrace	Identity
Rejecting Shame	Selflessness and Leadership	Expanding Identification
Selflessness Brings Inner Peace		

Wang Bi

Favour is necessarily accompanied by disgrace. Honour is necessarily accompanied by trouble. Fear and disgrace are equal. Honour and trouble are the same. When an "inferior" regards favour, disgrace, honour and trouble with fear, he will not cause disorder in the world.

Great trouble is like honour and favour. Exerting too much for life, one must enter the territory of death. Therefore it is called great trouble. When a man deludes himself with honour and favor, the delusion is reflected in his body. This is the reason that great trouble is like one's body.

Because one possesses his body.

When it returns to nature.

Nothing can affect the body; this is to respect it. Then he can be entrusted with the world.

Nothing can hurt the body; this is to "love" it. Then one can be lodged with the world. Not letting favour, disgrace, honour, and trouble hurt or change the body, one can be charged with the world.

Key terms

honour, favour 其 qí

is a basket full of cowrie shells

suffer, suffering 患 huàn

[p.c. 心 heart represents the meaning and 串 string, pictograph of two objects on a skewer or strung together represents the sound], meaning affliction; a heart pierced, a series of troubles

Hatcher has adversity, worry, suffering, trouble(s); distress

wealth 富 fù

is a hut or dwelling stuffed with things

Chapter 14 回

takes us back to Dao, or at least, how we can appreciate it, given we can't actually know it. Go so far into something, then circle back to the beginning and come forward again. Cyclic, reiterative, esoteric, rote, are all forms of teaching and learning in traditional societies; oral history is telling the same story over and over.

Sentence 1

We look at it, and do not see it; it is invisible. We listen to it, and do not hear it; it is inaudible. We touch it, and do not feel it; it is intangible.

So, our senses cannot hold Dao for us. Gautama reportedly asked, *if we only know the world through our senses, how do we know our senses are not lying to us?* This is particularly cogent inasmuch as he also taught everything is illusory. Sentence one builds on these three sensory inputs, sight, hearing and touch pointing out if all three cannot perceive Dao, then ...

Sentence 2

These three cannot be further described, so we treat them as The One.

Sentence 3

Its highest is not bright. Its lowest isn't dark. It is infinite! Continually emerging, completely beyond description, It returns again and again to nothingness.

shows the pervasiveness of Dao and how it is the Great Emptiness, things arise from it and return to it, just as it, Dao, is nothing, acts, and returns to nothing.

Sentence 4

Thus, it is called the formless form, The image of no-thing. This is called the most obscure. Go to meet it, you cannot see its face. Follow it, you cannot see its back.

further describes Dao, making sure we understand it has no definition or qualities we can perceive.

Sentence 5

Keep to the Dao of the ancients and so manage things happening today. The ability to know the ancient sources, this is the main thread of Dao.

gives us some practical advice on how to deal with our inability to deal with Dao and how to use it to deal with life.

Hold fast to the Way of the ancients In order to master the present moment. The ability to know the ancient beginning – This is called the main principle of Dao. Linnell

Chapter titles

In Praise of the Profound	In Praise of the Mysteries	Returning Home to the One
Praising the Void	When You Look at It, You Don't See It	Beyond Reason
Making Clear the Mystery	The Invisible Thread of Dao	The Essence of Dao
The Ancient Path		

Wang Bi

Having no shape, no image, no sound, and no voice, there is nothing it cannot penetrate and no place it cannot go. Unknown even to my ears, eyes, and body, I do not know how to name it; thus it cannot be investigated further, but merges together to make one.

If we speak of its non-being, everything comes from it. If we speak of its being, its shape cannot be seen. So it is called the shape without shape, the image without object.

It cannot be determined.

Existence means existing phenomena.

Without shape or name, it begets all things. Ancient are different, time has moved and customs have changed, still everything follows this principle to accomplish order. So one can grasp the Ancient Dao to manage present existence. Although the Ancient is far-removed, its Dao still exists. So although we exist in the present, we can know the beginning of the Ancient.

darkness, hidden, to conceal 昧 mèi

[p.c. \Box *sun* represents the meaning and 末 *not yet*, original meaning tree trunk, similar to 木 (tree), with extra branches added. Based on the original meaning "tree trunk", now written as 枚. The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]

Hatcher has dark, obscure(ity), gloom(y); darkness

to govern, to resist 御 yù

original meaning to use, control, depicts a person \square using a pestle +. + also represents the sound. The $\not\equiv$ (walk) component was later added to emphasize action. Based on the original meaning, "to use, to control". The meaning later shifted to "to govern"

Linnell uses control, manage.

Hatcher has manage, master, negotiate; govern, rule, tame

investigate 詰 jié, jí

詰 question [p.c. 言 speech represents the meaning and 吉 lucky, original meaning solid, difficult to break, depicts a weapon. Based on the original meaning "solid, difficult to break". The meaning later shifted to "good" and "lucky", represents the sound]

Linnell has investigate

Hatcher has investigate, examine (d, ation); inquiry, study

inaudible, faint 微漠 weimò

微 *small*, original meaning *go out and hide*, [p.c. *if walk* represents the meaning and *hide* represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "go out and hide". The meaning later shifted to "conceal" and "tiny", represents the sound]

漠 desert [p.c.? water represents the meaning and 莫 do not, original meaning sunset, depicts the sun 日 shining through vegetation 茻. Based on the original meaning "sunset", now written as 暮. The current meaning is a phonetic loan]

intangible, incorporeal 無形 wúxíng

無 *negative*, pictograph of a person 大 dancing with decorations 革 hanging from his arms, conveying the meaning "dance". Original form of 舞 (dance). The current form is a phonetic loan

形 form, shape [p.c. 乡 hair represents the meaning and 井 well represents the sound.

復 or 歸 or 復 歸 or 反 "returning"

the DDJ uses four different symbols to refer to the concept of returning, and it is used many times; beyond the everyday meaning, in the DDJ; creatures and people often return to their source, true nature, or original state of pure and unformed potential; sometimes they just "return", and from where or to where is not specified.

Hatcher has end, back, rear, trail, aftermath, consequences

Chapter 15 回

Those who lived in Dao (Sages, Ancient Masters, Skilled Warriors, *the enlightened*) were hard to figure out. Generally they were self-effacing and simple; leading quietly and aloof from honours, etc. Remember Chapters 12 and 13. But we can allude to their character just as we have alluded to Dao. More metaphors.

Sentences 1, 2 and 3

- 1. In old times the perfect man of Dao was subtle, penetrating and so profound that he can hardly be understood.
- 2. The best one can do is describe his appearance: The sage is alert as a person crossing a winter stream; as circumspect as a person with neighbours on all four sides; as respectful as a thoughtful guest;
- 3. He is yielding, like ice that is going to melt; He is simple, like wood that is not yet wrought; He is vacant, like valleys that are hollow; He is dim, like water that is turbid.

Sentences 4 and 5

- 4. Why "chaotic as a muddy torrent"? Because clarity is learned by being patient in the heart of chaos. Tolerating disarray, remaining at rest, gradually one learns to allow muddy water to settle and proper responses to reveal themselves.
- 5. Those who aspire to Dao don't long for fulfillment. They selflessly allow the Dao to use and deplete them; They calmly allow the Dao to renew and complete them.

turns us back to ourselves, providing directions as to how to be a Sage, perhaps, or at least how to live so as to be considered a Sage. It is also part of the general instruction of *know thyself*. Maintain quiet.

Chapter titles

That Which Reveals Teh	Virtue Revealed	Model of the Sages
Exhibiting Virtue	Skilled Warriors of Old	Linking with Ancient Times
Manifesting Virtue	Mystical Masters	The Power in Subtle Force
The Early Masters		

Wang Bi

Crossing the river in winter, one is cautious about crossing or not crossing; this describes the emotion which cannot be seen.

When the neighbors on four sides join to attack the master in the center, they do not know what his intentions are. Regarding the man with the supreme virtue, his intentions cannot be seen also. So his virtuous intent is not visible, exactly like that.

The use of "as" or "as if" is a way of description, since its name or shape cannot be determined.

Using the dark to analyze things, obtain brightness! Using tumult to calm things, obtain clarity! Using the inert to move things, obtain life! This is the nature of Dao! "Who can" suggests the difficulty. "Gradually" suggests being meticulous and cautious.

To be filled is to overflow. Shelter means to cover.

Key terms

follow 法 fǎ

[p.c. \nearrow water represents the meaning and $\not\equiv$ go away, depicts opening the mouth \square wide $\not\equiv$ to let a yawn leave the mouth, represents the sound]

Linnell uses follow and in one case emulate.

Hatcher has follow, model, exemplify (s); takes ^ as law

muddy [waters], turbid flow 混 hùn, hún

[p.c. ? water represents the meaning and 昆 elder brother, original meaning insect, depicts an insect. Based on the original meaning "insect", now preserved in the word 昆虫. The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]

Linnell uses blend.

Hatcher has (is, are) (inter-) mingle, mix; join, (con) fuse (d)

○ Chapter 16 🗵

continues with more practical advise on how to live in and with Dao.

Sentence 1

Attain complete vacuity. Maintain steadfast quietude.

Attain the utmost emptiness. Maintain a profound stillness. Linnell

Most versions use *attain* and *maintain* in this sentence. There are a few others: *If you can empty yourself of everything, you will have lasting peace* and *Effect emptiness to the extreme. Keep stillness whole.* Basically they all mean the same. Attain and maintain. In modern community development there is a popular strategy that is *de rigeur*, recruit and retain.

Sentences 2, 3, and 4

- 2. All things come into being. And I see thereby their return. All things flourish. But each one returns to its root.
- 3. This return to its root means tranquility. It is called returning to its destiny. To return to destiny is called the eternal (Dao). To know the eternal is called enlightenment. Not to know the eternal is to act blindly to result in disaster.
- 4. But when you know What eternally is so, You have stature And stature means righteousness And right-

eousness is kingly And kingliness divine And divinity is the Way Which is final.

show us the eternal cycle of things coming into being from Emptiness and then returning to Emptiness.

Note one translation specifically says when you realize where you come from ... you [become as] dignified as a king.

In a note: The "Eternal" obviously is fundamental to all the great religions. In Buddhism, the Eternal (常) is the first of the four qualities that a path-seeker should aspire for. The others are true happiness, true self, and true purity(樂、我、淨). In most other religions the Eternal is called God. But the Eternal is really Nameless. In the Old Testament, God told Moses on Mount Sinai: "I Am That I Am." The fact is that the Eternal is beyond description and beyond all names. The main thing about knowing the Eternal is not knowing its name but laying down our egoistic instincts in our daily lives so we will be receptive to the inner calls from within us. It is such reflections that set us free and make us happy. Ho

Sentence 5

Tao leads to what is long-lasting. Be without a body, lack danger.

tells us life in Dao, with Dao, sustains us and brings longevity.

Chapter titles

Returning to the Source	Return to the Root	Closing the Circle
Going Home	Attain the Climax of Emptiness	Tranquility
Returning to the Root	Stillness and Constancy	Knowing the Absolute
Rediscover the Eternal		

Wang Bi

This means to attain the ultimate of empty things, and maintain the true rectitude of tranquil things. All things move and grow.

With emptiness and tranquility, one observes the return of all things. All being starts from emptiness. All movement, from tranquility. Therefore, although all things move together, they ultimately return to emptiness and tranquility. This is the utmost single-heartedness of all things.

All things return to their beginning.

Returning to their origin means rest. It is called tranquility.

Tranquility means returning to their fate, therefore it is called

Returning to their destiny." Returning to their destiny means to achieve the constancy of life. Therefore it is called eternity.

Eternity is a thing without bias or illustriousness, without decay or obscurity, and without warmth or cold. Therefore, to know eternity means enlightenment. Only this return can embrace and contain all things. If one loses this and moves on, then the perverse will enter and cause division. Then all things will disintegrate. Therefore, not knowing eternity is to do evil things blindly.

Nothing exists which cannot be embraced.

If everything that exists can be embraced, then one can attain immense justice and equality.

From immense justice and equality, nothing is universally inapplicable.

If nothing cannot be universally applicable, one can identify with heaven.

Sharing virtue with heaven, one embodies Dao with great communication, reaching the point that he will be with the utmost of nothingness.

Searching for the utmost of nothingness, one obtains the eternity of Dao, then one reaches the point that he has nothing but the ultimate.

Nothingness is something which water and fire cannot destroy, metal and stone cannot injure. When applied to one's heart, the tiger and the rhinoceros have no place to thrust their teeth and horns, and war weapons have no place to have no place to stab their sharp points. Then what danger and harm will one have?

Heshang Gong

Ancient Chinese doctors observed that the kidneys, liver, heart, spleen, and lungs were harmed by fear, anger, euphoria, anxiety, and sadness, respectively. Heshang Gong shows in chapter 16 that silence-and-stillness (iing. ###)) is the root from which the nourishment of Heaven, Earth, Virtue, and Dao reaches the body and

mind. By abstaining from strong emotions and moving away from desires, we clear the paths through which this nourishment will travel. By connecting to this root, we also reconnect with the spiritual intelligence (shen ming), housed within the heart-mind. This spiritual intelligence allows the heart-mind to gain sovereignty over the emotions and thereby become the active leader in our lives – rather than a reactive head, and leader in name only. Reid

Key terms

attain 致 zhì to lead to; to create; to cause; to bring about

[p.c. abla tap, abla is a component form of <math>
abla . Depicts a hand (又) holding a whip or a staff, represents the meaning and abla reach, pictograph of an arrow hitting its target, represents the sound] Hatcher has bring about, result in, attain, reach, complete. He has radical 133 abla + a 3 stroke phonetic but this seems wrong.

Wieger does not show the character in the list formed by radical 133 Ξ to go to; to reach; till; as for; utmost; best; solstice. In a lesson he describes Ξ , it represents a bird that, bending up its wings, darts down from straight forward to the \neg earth and the character as to go, to send, to make a person go or do

maintain 守 shǒu

Hatcher has hold, keep, maintain, observe, remain, stay. Also means defend, protect, guard, conserve; to guard; to defend; to keep watch; to abide by the law; to observe (rules or ritual); nearby; adjoining Wieger has radical 40 - roof + phonetic 27 寸 spoon

destiny 命 mìng

[p.c. \square *mouth* represents the meaning and $\widehat{\neg}$ *command* represents the sound and meaning. Based on the original meaning "command". The meaning later shifted to "fate" and "life"] also means *life; fate, luck; an order, instruction; order or command; to assign a name, title etc.*

Linnell uses natural order.

Hatcher has (to) life, destiny; (a) higher order/law/purpose

king Ξ wáng, wàng

is a radical meaning the man [the vertical line] who connects heaven, earth and man [the three horizontal lines].

It is used for: (a, the) king, lord, leader, prince, sovereign, ruler; founder, authority (s); rule(ership), royalty, sovereignty; epitome; command, dominion; (to) be king over, govern, rule (s, ed, ing); (to be) grand, great, kingly, princely, regal, royal, sovereign; (the) sovereign's, king's, ruler's Linnell uses kingly.

Hatcher has command, dominion, royal(ty), sovereign(ty)

Chapter 17 🗵

Three sentences show us how Dao works when we live in it and what happens if we don't. Later, in Chapter 38 we are told when Dao is lost, virtue follows. When virtue is lost, benevolence follows. When benevolence is lost, righteousness follows. When righteousness is lost, ritual follows. Ritual, therefore, is the attenuation of loyalty and faith and the outset of confusion.

Sentence 1

The best leaders the people barely know. The next best they love and praise. The next they fear. And the next they hate.

Linnell has *ridicule* instead of *hate*.

While directed at *leaders*, the first sentence shows the results of gradients of Dao possession by people in charge. Think you, your workplace, your neighbourhood or your family. Interestingly the *spectrum* of relationships between rulers and people is *indifference*, *love*, *fear* then *hatred*, depending on the leader's behaviour.

Sentence 2

If you don't trust the people, you make them untrustworthy.

If the ruler does not trust enough, then he will not have anyone's trust. Linnell

shows how the best leaders must trust and those who don't trust resort to promises of favours to get things done (more money?). The best boss is the one who forgets what you do and who you are because your work is always done properly; there is a mutual trust between you.

Sentence 3

But of a good leader, who talks little, When his work is done, his aim fulfilled, They will all say, 'We did this ourselves."

Finally, the good leader get things accomplished but takes no credit (see Chapter 9). Of course, these are instructions on how to comport yourself, to be your own leader.

Chapter titles

Simplicity of Habit	The Atmosphere of Simplicity	Wisdom of Leadership
Being Natural	Very Great Leaders	Leaders
Plain Teachings	Qualities of Leadership	The Way of Subtle Influence
The Unseasoned Mind Knows the Eternal		

Wang Bi

"The best" means the great man. The great man is above the rest; therefore he is the best. The great man, being above, resides in inaction, gives instructions without words, lets all things develop without his initiation. Therefore the common people barely know of his existence.

Being unable to reside in inaction and instruct without words, he upholds goodness and lets it prevail, so the people can love and praise him.

Being unable to return to gratitude and kindness, he relies on authority and power to command.

Being unable to regulate the people with laws of justice, he governs the state with shrewdness. The people know how to avoid him and evade his orders, thus they "despise him."

That means to emulate the man on top. If, in regulating the body one destroys its quality, then disease will prevail. If, in aiding all things one destroys their true nature, then disaster and rift will rise. If one's credibility is inadequate, people will not have trust. This is the way of nature. If one is lacking in his conduct, shrewdness cannot help.

The signs of nature cannot be seen; its inclinations cannot be discerned. Nothing can change its words. The words must have consequences. Therefore, one must take time to honour his words. Residing in inaction, instructing without words, and not upholding form over substance, he accomplishes his tasks and completes his work, but the people do not know what has happened.

Key terms

fame 譽 yù

[p.c. \equiv speech represents the meaning and 與 together with, {昇, depicts four hands working together, represents the meaning and $\exists tooth$, depicts top and bottom teeth touching each other, represents the sound} represents the sound]

Linnell uses praise.

Hatcher has ^) praised, honored, admired, respected

ridicule 侮 wǔ

Hatcher has (is/are)(^) ridicule, revile, despise, scorn (ed)



So, what happens if Dao is not followed, or, worse, is not part of life? Chapter 18 lists the cascading effects of when Dao is missing in our family, our society and our nation. Compare these to the cascade of effects of *losing* Dao in Chapter 38.

Sentence 1

When the great Way is forgotten, the doctrines of humanity and morality arise.

When the great Dao is abandoned. There exists kindness and morality. Linnell

Linnell uses *abandoned* for five characters in the Dao De Jing. Obviously five characters were used specific to their context or subject matter; what was being *abandoned*, how was it being *abandoned*.

'When the great Dao is abandoned, there is humaneness and righteousness': This does not at all mean that human beings can simply be inhumane and unrighteous. It simply means that within the 'great Dao,' people are naturally humane and righteous, which is the genuine form of humanness and righteousness. As for the kind of humaneness and righteousness acquired through learning and training, these are always partly the result of imitation. In comparison to a naturally present genuine humaneness and righteousness, they are of a slightly lower order. When we read in the Laozi that 'Higher de [virtue, efficacy] is not de [virtue, efficacy]' (Chapter 38), this is what is meant. Feng Youlan

When humankind strayed from the natural way of life, relative social disciplines began to appear. Hua-Ching Ni

Sentence 2

When wisdom and intelligence appeared, They brought with them a great hypocrisy.

When intelligence and wisdom arise, There exists a great deal of deception. Linnell

Sentence 3

When there is no peace and harmony within the family, a facade of devotion and obedience is perceived.

Sentence 4

when the states and clans fell into disorder, loyal ministers appeared.

Chapter titles

The Palliation of the Inferior	Social Decadence	Turning Away from Dao
Patching Up	Degeneration	The Paradoxes of Abandoning the Great Integrity
A Vulgar Overgrowth	Losing the Instincts	When the Great Way is Deserted
Hypocrisy		

Wang Bi

Abandoning inaction and further using wisdom as the best way to promote things.

To employ craftiness and use knowledge to discern treachery and hypocrisy induces people to see the appearances of things and know how to avoid them. So when knowledge and wisdom arise, there is great hypocrisy. The most beautiful name is born of the greatest evil. That is to say: virtue and evil come from the same source. The six relations are father and son, older and younger brother, and husband and wife. If the six relations are in harmony, and the country is self-regulated, then filial piety, paternal affection, and loyal ministers have no need to exist. The way fishes do not know each other in rivers and lakes yet have to have the virtue of spit.

According to Chinese legend, fishes in rivers and lakes do not know each other, but when the waters dry up, they have to join together and live by breathing each other's spit. This is the virtue of spit, arising from the fishes' needs. Paul Lin

Key terms

abandoned 廢 discard, abandon

[p.c. Γ roof represents the meaning and 發 send out, depicts a hand pulling back an arrow 殳 in a bow 弓. % legs, depicts two feet, represents the sound, represents the sound]. Also means abrogate,

terminate, discard; to abolish; to abandon; to abrogate; to discard; to depose; to oust; crippled; abandoned; waste

Hatcher has abandoned, dismissed, forgotten, turned from

confusion 劑 luàn

depicts two hands \nearrow , \nearrow organizing tangled threads, also means *state of chaos, revolt; create chaos, revolt; in confusion or disorder; in a confused state of mind; disorder; upheaval; riot; illicit sexual relations; to throw into disorder; to mix up; indiscriminate; random; arbitrary*

false 偽 wei

[p.c. 1 person represents the meaning and 為 do, pictograph of a hand 又 guiding an elephant 象 to do work (in ancient China elephants were tamed to do work). Based on the meaning "to work; to do" represents the sound]

Linnell uses deception.

Hatcher has falseness, hypocrisy, duplicity, pretense (s)

forgotten 遺 yí

[p.c. <u>i</u> walk represents the meaning and 貴 expensive {p.c. 貝 sea shell, cowrie, money represents the meaning and 曳 basket represents the sound} represents the sound]

Linnell uses *lost*, *lose*, *loss*, but admits that *forgotten* is an acceptable translation.

Hatcher has inheritance, legacy, consequence; abandon

Chapter 19 回

returns to those things that are indicative of processes that result from missing Dao. There are three double characteristics involved, religion and cleverness, humanity and morality, and skill and profit. These follow from Chapter 18 and are *remedies* for not living in Dao.

Sentences 1 to 3

- 1. Abandon sageliness and discard wisdom; Then the people will benefit a hundredfold.
- 2. If we forgot our benevolence and our justice, they would become again like sons, folk of good will.
- 3. If we could renounce our artful contrivances and discard our (scheming for) gain, there would be no thieves nor robbers.

絕 Linnell uses *renounce* and Hatcher uses *cut out* and, in his lexicon, has the character as *discontinue*; *cut off/out/through*; *excise*.

棄 Linnell uses *abandon* and Hatcher uses repudiate once and abandon twice *and in* his lexicon has the character as *abandon*, *forsake*, *reject*, *renounce*, *repudiate*. Hatcher provides (to) abandon, abstain, annul, cast aside, cease to, deny, desert, desist from, discard, disdain, eliminate, expel, forfeit, forgo, forget, forsake, give up, neglect, reject, relinquish, renounce, throw away/off, waste, waive (s, ed, ing); (to be) wasteful for the character.

The things we are to abandon, discard, reject, that is *not use, deprecate*, are more consistently translated as *religion and cleverness; humanity and morality;* and, *skill and profit.* The reasons for doing this are also similar; *to benefit people; to allow people to return to the grace of home and family;* and, *to thwart thieves and robbers.*

Some versions use just one word, *abandon*, instead of *abandon and discard*. But Lao Tzu must have used two words, two different characters, in the same sentence for a reason, abandon religion and discard cleverness; abandon humanity and discard morality; abandon skill and discard profit. Religion as *the belief in and reverence for a supernatural power or powers, regarded as creating and governing the universe*, that is a role played in an external system while cleverness is an internal characteristic. Similar analyses might be found between humanity (external) and morality (internal) and finally between skill and profit; although this last pair is not as clear.

Abandon is an intransitive verb, discard is transitive, and this makes sense with Craig's analysis below. You abandon a practice (an intangible) but you discard the *stuff* (the tangibles) associated with it.

Chapter 20 starts with *abandon learning*. Linnell uses learning only in chapter 20; Hatcher has learning as a verb in Chapter 32 and as a noun in chapter 48.

Overall a peculiar set of instructions. Ho and Wang Bi make it a little bit clearer.

In a note: The direct translation would be "Cease learning, and you will be free from worries." It is clear, however, that Laozi is not against all kinds of learning. He teaches people to get prepared, referring to farmers as a fine example to emulate (Chapter 59). If one does not learn something one cannot be prepared. Gu (1995) translated these lines as "Discard cultural knowledge, and worries will disappear." But what is cultural knowledge? Cultural knowledge is a concept, a name. Learning how not to learn, on the other hand, is practical. Ho

Forget those clever techniques and self-improvement programs, and everyone will be better off. Do not promise to cure people, to make people feel good, to make life sane or fair or humane. Do not offer programs that appeal to selfishness, programs that teach how to be rich, powerful, sexy - and greedy, paranoid, and manipulative. Heider

Abandon clever argumentation and the people will be able to obtain a hundred times more advantages. Forsake hypocrisy and pretense and the people will be able to recover their innate filial piety and parental care. Abandon trickery and material profits and robbers and bandits will automatically disappear. (Wisdom and disputation, hypocrisy and pretense, and ingenuity and profit), these three pairs of things are external embellishments and are not enough to govern the world. Therefore, in order to cause the people to ascribe [to the state'], preserve simplicity and reduce selfish desires. Chen

Sentence 4

However, these three things are ornaments (wen) and are not adequate.

The practice of these behaviours are constructs and not beneficial; they create suffering, they cause problems.

Sentence 5

What is most important is what happens within: look to what is pure; hold to what is simple; let go of self-interest; temper your desires.

How to get the benefits of a life in Dao? Internal and external; what surrounds you and what you feel; follow your nose, follow your heart. Curbing your desires (Gautama said *Desire Causes Suffering*) has to happen outside and inside you.

Craig notes: Sentence 1: 'discontinue/excise sageliness, abandon/reject learning/know-ledge' – 'sageliness' is the same character as 'the wise man' *sheng ren*, as in chapters 2, 3 and 5, for example. The 'wise man' in chapter 2 is the one who practices *wu wei*, empty action. So 'sageliness' is a practice which we are here being told to stop doing. In contrast, 'learning/knowledge' is stuff we know, science or what have you. As stuff, we are told to abandon it, leave it alone. So the contrast in this sentence is between a practice and a pile of stuff. We are being told to stop the practice and dump the stuff. Similarly, in Sentence 2, the contrast is between a practice and some stuff, kindliness, the practice of being kind, and morality, the stuff of moral rules. And again we are told to stop the practice and dump the stuff. Again, in Sentence 3, the contrast is between a practice, skill, and some stuff, the profit we gain from exercising the skill. And again we are told to stop the practice and dump the stuff.

Sentence 4: 'these three are useful in developing a culture but they are not the foundation'. What are the three? They are three pairs where each pair is a practice and its associated stuff. They are useful in a culture. They are the day to day glue of life within a culture: the sagely practice of knowledge, the kindly practice of interpersonal relations, the skilful prac-

tice of making things. But they are not the foundation. So then how do we engage with the real foundation?

Sentence 5: 'therefore to ensure there is purpose and belonging, see the simple, embrace the un-carved block, diminish self-interest, reduce desires.' Why are there four things to do here while in the preceding there are three? I think the first, 'see the simple', is generic, and the following three refer to the previous three, in order: the simplicity of the sage is to embrace the un-carved block, the simplicity of kindness is to let go of the self, and the simplicity of skill is to reduce desires.

Chapter titles

Return to Simplicity	Return to Innocence	Eliminate Sagacity, Abandon Knowledge
Reverting to Nature	Return to Genuineness	The Paradoxes of Returning to the Great Integrity
Returning to Purity	Plain and Simple	Return to Simplicity
Live Naturally and Simply		

Wang Bi

Sagacity and wisdom are good talents; benevolence and righteousness are good human qualities; profit and benefit are good management. To say that they must be banished means that these expressions are especially not enough and one cannot know what they denote. Therefore, those three [expressions] are not enough as words and must be properly placed to show the people where they belong: with plainness, simplicity, and the restraint of desires.

Heshang Gong

Lao Zi and Heshang Gong speak to what Chogyam Trungpa (1939-1987) more recently termed "spiritual materialism." This is the trap of letting the materialistic desire to possess things leak into our spiritual development – using our spiritual development as cultural capital or status symbols, and wearing it like a three-piece suit, showing everyone how successful we have become, and feeding this progress to the ravenous ego rather than allowing it to grow and blossom. Lao Zi and Heshang Gong repeatedly warn of displaying our virtues, in hopes that we learn not to bite the hand (Virtue) that feeds us. Reid

Key terms

Sentences 1, 2 and 3 verbs abandon 純 jué

depicts a knife 刀 cutting between threads 絲 (Dong)

Linnell has renounce for this character. Also means cut, sever, break off, terminate; to cut, sever, break off, terminate; to cut short; extinct; to disappear; to vanish; absolutely; by no means.

Hatcher has discontinue; cut off/out/through; excise. According to Hatcher it is radical 120 % silk plus radical 19 $\not\supset$ power, force and phonetic 76 \boxminus to wish, depicts a person grabbing something with their hand

discard, abandon $\mathfrak{F} qi$

Linnell and Hatcher have *abandon*. Some people use *discard*. Also means *discard*, *renounce*, *dump* private; self-interest; selfishness, partiality $\Re s\bar{r}\acute{e}n$

original meaning private {p.c. $\hat{ }$ grain stalk represents the meaning and \triangle private, selfish, a small circle depicting personal space or things revolving around oneself, represents the sound, the current meaning is a phonetic loan]

Sentence 1 nouns

sacredness, sageliness 聖 shèng

depicts listening Ξ ear to what is spoken \square mouth. Ξ stand uprtight represents the sound. Hatcher has holiness, piety, sagacity, sanctimony, wisdom

wisdom, knowledge 智 zhì

[p.c. 知 know, {p.c. 口 mouth represents the meaning and 矢 arrow represents the sound} represents the sound and 甘 sweeetness, pictograph of something sweet inside the mouth 口, represents the meaning]

Sentence 3 nouns

kindness 仁 rén

depicts a kind relationship between two $(\stackrel{\frown}{-})$ people $(\stackrel{\frown}{1})$. Also represents the sound. Also means humaneness, benevolence, humane; kernel

morality; righteousness and justice 義 yì

義 justice [p.c. . 羊 sheep represents the meaning and 我 I; me represents the sound. In ancient China sheep 羊 were associated with goodness and beauty, which is why 羊 is a component in characters like 美 (beautiful), 善 (benevolent), and 義 (justice). Also means right conduct; Italy; justice; meaning; foster (father etc); adopted; artificial (tooth, limb etc); relationship; friendship. Hatcher has righteousness, morality, principle, justice

Sentence 5 nouns

cleverness 巧 qiǎo

[p.c \perp work represents the meaning and \neg axe handle represents the sound]. Also means skillful, ingenious, clever; opportunely; coincidentally; as it happens; skillful; timely.

Hatcher has clever, artful, skillful, ingenious (ness)

profit 利 lì

depicts harvesting grain π with a blade \parallel . Harvest was the main source of profit in agricultural societies. Also means *gains*, *advantage*, *profit*, *merit*; *surname Li*; *sharp*; *favorable*; *advantage*; *benefit*; *profit*; *interest*; *to do good to*; *to benefit*.

Hatcher has advantage, benefit, gain, profit, reward, worth (s)

Chapter 20 🗉

gives more instruction on how to simplify life and remain in Dao. This time it involves our tendency to want to know everything all the time. It starts with knowledge and two important duads (remember Chapter 2) where different sides, opposites, all stem from the same source and cannot exist one from the other. The various interpretations and translations are indeed *various*. Jiyu claims Lao Tzu was being ironically cynical and this chapter reflects his being somewhat intolerant of the times in which he lived. Lao Tzu eschewed ontology.

Sentence 1

Abandon learning and there will be no sorrow. How much difference is there between "Yes, sir," and "Of course not"? How much difference is there between "good" and "evil"?

Renounce learning and be without worry. "Yes" together with "yeah" – What is their mutual distance or nearness? Beautiful together with ugliness – What is their mutual distance or similarity? Linnell

Sentence 2

What humans fear cannot not be feared. Futile! Not focused yet.

brings us into even more personal space. What do we fear? What do I fear? Merel used as sentence one, *What is the difference between fearsome and afraid?* Well, that's a good one, isn't it?

In the character for anxiety, 憂, a heart is caught between the two parts of 夔 a *one legged monster*, certainly an adequate description of anxiety. It appears only once, in Chapter 20. Fear is a human emotion.

In Chinese, fear is more properly translated as *dread*. Fear is a noun (my fear) and a verb (I fear). *Awe* is sort of like fear, but whereas fear has an implied threat, awe is not threatening.

Mountains create awe; tiger claws create fear. Awe of great power, or powerful rule has tangible aspects; fear is often of the unknown.

Afraid, coincidentally, also has three definitions: *filled with fear or frightened*, being averse or unwilling in regard to something [an object, a person, a task?], and *filled with regret or concern*.

Lao Tzu seems to be talking about borrowing fear from others. Why must I fear what the rest fear, he asks? Fear drives us *off the head* is an old Newfoundland expression. A sketch show thespian once said of a character under much normal angst and stress, a housewife with migraine headache, perhaps, *The light is penetrating me eyes and the children got me drove off the head*.

Sentences 3, 4 and 5

- 3. The multitude are merry, as though feasting on a day of sacrifice. Or like ascending a tower in the springtime. I alone am inert, showing no sign (of desires), Like an infant that has not yet smiled. Wearied, indeed, I seem to be without a home.
- 4. The multitude all possess more than enough. I alone seem to have lost all. Mine is indeed the mind of an ignorant man, Indiscriminate and dull!
- 5. The people are bright and certain, Where I am dim and confused; The people are clever and wise, Where I am dull and ignorant; Aimless as a wave drifting over the sea, Attached to nothing.

This chapter seems to be the sage-like author poking fun at himself, describing how he appears to ordinary people who don't understand him; the "very's" scattered throughout the chapter are implied by repeated symbols. Linnell

Very tired and worn out!, as if without a place to return to. I am very mixed up and confused! Common people are very observant and alert. Linnell

The word *very* has many Chinese characters including 很 and 太 and a lot of compounds, often indicated by a doubling of the character, e.g. 菲菲 *very fragrant*, 慢慢吞吞 *very slow*.

These three sentences show how living in Dao removes us from the hurly burly of emotions, fear and awareness of everything around us all the time, trying to control the world; being *in* the world! Removing oneself from the day to day concerns and activities of the rest of people makes life in Dao simple and comfortable, but according to them, we are somehow lacking or invidious.

Sentence 6

The multitude all have a purpose; I alone seem to be stubborn and rustic. I alone differ from others, And value drawing sustenance from Mother (Dao).

concludes with how the previous sentences set the person living in Dao apart from fellow man, as life in Dao is sustaining and to be preferred. Dao here becomes, once again, the *Great Mother*, the source of all. It is what gives birth to the 10,000 things and to which the 10,000 things eventually return. More about return is in Chapter 16, and later, we will come across *Return* again and again. *I alone*, as a theme, reoccurs in Chapter 41.

Chapter titles

Aside from the Masses	Different from the Madding Crowd	The Opposite of the Commonplace
Holding Aloof	Developing Independence	The Sadness of Superficialities and of the Unfulfilled Great Integrity
Differing from the Vulgar	Being Different	Detach from Learning and You Have No Worries

Wang Bi

A following chapter indicates that those who pursue learning will improve daily, and those who pursue Dao will diminish daily. Therefore, learning is to improve one's ability and increase one's knowledge. If one is satisfied without desire, then why should one seek more? If one hits the target without knowledge, then why should one seek improvement? Swallows and sparrows are a match for each other; turtledoves and pigeons hate each other; folks in poor villages certainly know about wool and fur. To be natural is sufficient. To add more only results in sorrow. Therefore lengthening the legs of wild ducks is not different from shortening the necks of cranes. To advance for fear of one's fame is not different from for fear of punishment. Between "yes" and "no" or "good" and "evil," what makes the difference? Therefore, what the people fear I should fear too, but I cannot rely on it in applying myself.

Sighing over one's distance from the common people.

The common people are obsessed with beauty and advancement and deluded by honour and profit. Their desires growing and their hearts striving, they are joyous as if having a big feast and ascending a tower in spring. That is to say: unrestricted, I have no shape to speak of and no omen to establish, like a baby who does not yet know how to smile.

As if having no place to reside.

The multitudes fill their chests and hearts with ambition and will, so they have plenty. Only I am free, without action and without desire, seeming to be left out.

For an absolutely foolish man, his heart knows no difference, his will shows no desire, and his emotions are not seen. I am likewise dispirited.

Undifferentiated or unrecognized, it cannot be named.

Shining their brightness.

To differentiate means to know the difference.

My passion is not visible.

There is no tie, no anchor.

Purpose means function; they all want to function or apply themselves.

There is nothing I desire to do. Indifferent and dull, I seem to know nothing. Therefore, I alone am stubborn and despicable.

Getting nourishment from the Mother is the root of life. The people forsake the root of their lives and treasure trivial and artificial splendours. Therefore, I alone prefer to be different from the people.

Key terms

alone, widow 寡 guǎ

original meaning living alone, depicts a person living alone in a house $\overset{\iota}{\hookrightarrow}$ (roof). The decorative strokes around the 頁 [head, used here to depict a person] component corrupted into the unrelated \mathcal{G} [a knife used to cut two things apart] hence the added meaning widowed

Linnell uses fewer.

Hatcher has & have fewer; less(en); reduce [numbers of]

Wieger has alone, the sovereign, widow, few, seldom

fear 畏 wei

pictograph of a ghost 鬼 wielding a stick 卜, which is a fearful sight to behold. 鬼 is also a sound component, later it became a man frightened by adding a man

Hatcher has (hold in) awe, revere(nce); respect; dread, fear. Hatcher errs in his use of radical 102 \boxplus field as the top of this character.

Wieger has 鬼 as radical 194 meaning *manes*, *ghosts*; *devils* and phonetic 548 meaning *ghosts*; *devils* learning 學 *xué*

depicts two hands 臼 teaching a child 子 under a roof 宀. 爻 represents the sound.

Wieger doesn't have this character, the two hands \boxminus are radical 64, a hand shown in profile or half face, and mirrored,\; roof \dashv and child \dashv are radicals 14 and 39. The hands are holding $\not \boxtimes$ diagrams for divination, the solid and broken lines of the eight trigrams, which Fenn has as radical 89 intertwine

multitude 眾 zhòng

depicts a crowd of people (K) standing under the sun (H)

Chapter 21 🗵

treats life in Dao as a wellspring of wellness and rectitude. This is another *return* to explaining what Dao is and how it works. There are 19 chapters assigned by Jiyu to the category *On Dao*.

Sentences 1, 2, 3 and 4

- 1. All-embracing power proceeds only through the Way.
- 2. What is called the Way is elusive and intangible. Intangible and elusive, yet within it are thought-images. Elusive and intangible, yet within it are objects. Deep and obscure, yet within it is the life-force. The life-force is very real, and within it is certainty.
- 3. From the ancient times till now its manifestations have never ceased, by which we may see the beginning of all things.
- 4. How do I know that the beginning of all things are so? Through this (Dao).

confirm all that has come before. Repetitive lessons always work best. It takes many iterations, in Buddhist terms, many lifetimes, to fully *grok* most things. This was apparently as true 2,500 years ago as it is now. It speaks to being human.

The words elusive and vague; intangible and vague refer to types of confusion, internal and external. Elusive means *Difficult to define or describe*. Vague means *Not thinking or expressing oneself clearly*. Intangible means *Incapable of being realized or defined*. The Chinese characters refer specifically to confusion, either in what is going on around you or what is happening inside you. This internal/external dichotomy is really one in Dao.

Wang Bi's commentary is particularly helpful in understanding sentence 2.

Vague doesn't appear in Linnell, he uses *indistinct*. All these words have multiple characters, depending on context.

My high school yearbook editors wrote of me, He thinks too much, such men are dangerous. They mistook my confusion for thinking. They got it wrong, but then they, like me, were young. It was another year or so before I discovered Dao De Jing and realized I was just muddled.

德 *De* is the radical for [purposeful] *step* with the radical for *heart* and the phonetic for *rectitude*. Literally *moral conduct as directed by a righteous heart*. Follow your heart.

All power and effectiveness come from following the law of creation. There is no substitute for knowing how things happen and for acting accordingly. Everything, like it or not, is bounded by this principle. The single principle is manifest everywhere, all the time. Heider

Chapter titles

The Heart of Emptiness	Hollow Heart	Strength of Virtue
The Empty Source	The Countenance of Great Virtue	The Great Integrity is a Paradox
The Empty Center	The Pregnant Dao	Knowing the Collective Origin
The Mark of the Virtuous		

Wang Bi

[&]quot;Great" means empty. Only regarding emptiness as a virtue can one act according to Dao.

[&]quot;Elusive and vague" means to exclaim over its shapelessness and unrestraint.

Things originate in shapelessness and complete in unrestraint.

Thus all things begin and complete without knowing why. Therefore, it says: elusive and vague, vague and elusive, in it is the image.

"Obscure and dim" refers to that which is deep and far-reaching. Deep and far-reaching, it cannot be seen, but through it all things can be seen and their true nature can be determined. Therefore, obscure and dim, in it is the spirit.

Credibility refers to empirical evidence. Things return to the obscure, which is the utmost of their true spirit, as by the nature of things. Therefore, the spirit is truly genuine; in it is credibility.

The ultimate reality cannot be named; namelessness is its name. From the ancient to the present, nothing is complete without it. Therefore, from ancient times until now, its name has never disappeared.

"The beginning of all things" means their origin. Its namelessness indicates the beginning of all things.

As is stated above, how can I know that all things originate from nothingness? I know it by this!

Key terms

confused, absent-minded, indistinct 惚 hū

惚 absent minded

Linnell has *confusing for this character*.

Hatcher has mysterious, indistinct, obscure, vague, dim.

cave depicts a cave opening and 幼 young, infant, someone who is young has weak 幺 tiny, pictograph of a twisted thread, strength 力 power. 幺 represents the sound

Hatcher has obscure, hidden, arcane; secluded, withdrawn

Wieger has radical 116 穴 a cave, a den, a cavern + phonetic 171 幼 young, immature, growing. The character means obscure, deep, retired, tranquil, composed

seemingly; absent-minded; disappointed; flurried; indistinct 忧 huǎng

[p.c. † heart represents the meaning and 光 light pictograph of fire on top of a person represents the sound]. 恍 is a variant of 怳 wild, mad; flurried

Hatcher has (the) elusive, evasive, faint; flurried, mad, wild

Wieger has radical 61 † heart (when appearing on the left side of a character) + phonetic 222 光 light; bright; glory; naked; only. In a lesson he says, it is probably a man carrying a torch.

Chapter 22 🗵

gives us really practical things to improve our lives. And, an explanation of the benefits that accrue from following Dao, as best you can. Remember, the Sage is you and the World is also you; the Sage *inside* you, the World *outside* you, perhaps. Use these guidelines and your life will be better. Again the use of alternates (remember Chapter 2 - if something is beautiful then something must be ugly) provides a middle ground, grounded in Dao.

Sentence 1

The imperfect is completed. The crooked is straightened. The empty is filled. The old is renewed. With few there is attainment. With much there is confusion.

Linnell adds this line before sentence 1: What is wrong then becomes whole and perfect, which he repeats in sentence 5.

Sentence 2

Therefore the wise embrace the One and become examples for the world.

Sentence 3

They do not display themselves and are therefore illumined. They do not justify themselves and are distinguished. They do not make claims and are therefore given credit. They do not seek glory and therefore are leaders.

To prove oneself through deeds and actions completed. But deeds that are not actively promoted or talked about. Deeds without motive.

Sentence 4

Because they do not compete, the world cannot compete with them.

The Sage, you, must not preen or pull rank. Remember Dao is not definable, so if you go around, puffed up on your *living in Dao*, you are well off the Path, deep into quagmires. If you say *I'm a Daoist*, you aren't. Keep calm, have a cup of tea. Don't be quarrelsome, or want to be right all the time.

Craig notes: this is about striving to achieve, rather than about preening or boasting or claiming to be this or that. So it's about actually trying to do something rather than trying to appear to be something.

When I give up trying to impress the group, I become very impressive. But when I am just trying to make myself look good, the group knows that and does not like it. Heider

Sentence 5

The saying of the men of old Is not in vain: "The crooked shall be made straight - To be perfect, return to it.

sums it pretty well.

Chapter titles

Increase by Humility	Strength to the Humble	Completion through Surrender
Increasing the Small	Be Tactful and You Remain Whole	Celebrate paradox!
Abundance through Humility	Yield and Become Whole	Following the Pattern
The Enlightened Way of Life		

Wang Bi

By not holding to his view, his name* may be whole.

By not being self-righteous, his righteousness may be manifested.

By not being boastful, his credit may be recognized.

By not being arrogant, his virtue may last long.

The Dao of nature is like a tree. Turning too much will make it go far away from its roots. Turning less will make it obtain its roots. Turning too much is far from its truth; hence it is confused. Turning less, it may obtain its roots; hence it is called "to obtain."

Heshang Gong

"One" is the utmost of smallness. "Example" is for people to emulate. While solitude offers great potential for self-cultivation and realization, for Lao Zi and Heshang Gong, the Sage did not permanently escape the world but lived amongst the people. Rather than escape to the mountains, the Sage lived in such a way that allowed him to manoeuvre through the conflicts and difficulties of his day without bringing further danger or disharmony to himself or others. Doing so, he would inadvertently show another way, another path. Understanding the danger of "standing on tiptoes," or even being raised above others, the Sage accomplished his ends by remaining below others, even if they tried to raise him up above themselves. This is not the way of man, but the way of Heaven, the way of water.

Key terms

bent 枉 wǎng

[p.c. π tree represents the meaning and Ξ king, pictograph of an axe head, used as a symbol of the king's military authority, represents the sound]

prove, achievement 功 gōng

[p.c. \mathcal{D} power represents the meaning and \mathcal{L} work represents the sound] work that requires strength and therefore meritorious; work done, achievement, merit

strive, contend, compete, contest 争 zhēng

depicts two hands $\[\bigcap X \]$ grabbing the same plow, $\[\bigcap X \]$ is a component form of $\[\bigcap X \]$, which depicts a hand or claw pointing downwards. Think fighting tooth and nail

wrong ## bent, crooked

pictograph of a bent object

Hatcher has (the) bent, humbled; yield, accommodate (ing); he mistakenly links it to radical 73 \boxminus say Wieger has phonetic 190 \boxplus crooked; perverse; songs and in a lesson represents a piece of wood that is bent. It was later on replaced by radical 23 \square enclosure raised up. By extension, curved, crooked, oblique, not straight

Chapter 23 🗉

Natural things, like someone talking emotionally, or wind and rainstorms, never last long. Jiyu says the first sentences predate Lao Tzu. They fall into the category of common knowledge or common sense (axioms).

We must make an effort to look at the *positive* and *negative* aspects of things in our purview, this applies also to internal aspects, especially, or maybe even particularly, *emotions*.

Inherent in this process is the principle of non-action and advance by means of retreat.

In a note: This chapter will sound familiar to those who know the New Testament, in which Jesus says "Knock, and the door will be opened for you." Jesus also often referred to people who had little faith or who did not believe at all. This chapter also advises that empty words produce no reward. Only those who are truthful and who actually live a humble life and who respect nature and life will benefit. Ho

Sentence 1

To speak little is natural. Therefore a gale does not blow a whole morning Nor does a downpour last a whole day

Sparing are the speeches from nature. Hatcher

To live with sparse words is to live with nature. Ho

Sentence 2

What causes them? Nature. If even Nature's utterances do not last long, how much less should human beings'?

Sentence 3

Those who follow the Way are one with the Way. Those who follow power are one with power. Those who abandon it are one with abandonment.

Sentence 4

Those one with the Way are welcomed by the Way. Those one with power are welcomed by power. Those one with abandonment are welcomed by abandonment.

Sentence 5

If you won't trust, you won't be trusted.

has some reality check items, related to staying in the present and not making an issue of it.

Chapter titles

Emptiness and Non-Doing (Wu wei)	Emptiness and Non-Being	Speaking Rarely
Non-Identification	To Speak Rarely Is Natural	Sincerity
Emptiness; Nothingness	Brief Speech, High Expectations	The Steady Force of Attitude
The Dao Will Not Fail the Serious Seeker		

Wang Bi

"Listened to, it cannot be heard. It is called 'soundless.". A following chapter indicates that the words of Dao are flavorless and bland. Looked at, it cannot be seen; listened to, it cannot be heard. Thus flavorless, unheard words are the truest words of nature.

That is to say: violent speed and glorified undertaking cannot last long.

"Dealing with" means acting and abiding by Dao. Dao, without form or action, completes and aids all things. Therefore those who deal with Dao must master with inaction and teach with no words. Dao is interminable and everlasting; all things obtain their essence and embody Dao. Therefore they become one with Dao. To obtain is to have little; to have little is to obtain. Therefore, it is called "obtaining." To practice virtue is to embody "obtaining." Therefore, it resembles "obtaining."

"Loss" refers to one who accumulates too much. To accumulate too much is to lose. Therefore it is called "loss." To act the loser is to embody "loss." Therefore it is one with "loss."

Wherever one goes, he receives the corresponding results.

If one does not show enough loyalty and credibility to his subordinates, he will not be trusted by them.

Key terms

minimal 希 xī

this character has a very amorphous meaning

original meaning *hope*, composed of 爻 (cross shape) and 巾 (cloth). Originally depicted a type of cloth. The meaning later shifted to "sparse", "rare", and "hope". Also means *rare*; *hope*, *expect*, *strive for*; *to hope*; *to admire*

Linnell uses minimal words for to speak little.

Hatcher has brief, few, rare(ly), sparse(ing), sparse; ^ seldom. The character appears in chapters 14 as (the) faint(ness); rare, inaudible (ity); 41 as (is, are) (the) faint, rare, strange (est); rarely; 43 as rarely, seldom; (very) few, not many v (have); 70 as few, infrequent, rare, scarce, uncommon; and 74 as (^ how, etc.) rarely, seldom; few, not many (^). Hatcher gives the character, in his lexicon, (to be) (very) brief, far between, few, loose, not

many, precious, rare, scarce, scattered, spare, thin, uncommon; faint, inaudible; curious, strange; (a, the) ... -ity, -ness; much, very; (to) hope/strive/wish for; pause, cease; anticipate, expect (s, ed, ing); rarely, seldom

Wieger has few, rare, seldom, to hope. Wieger in lesson 35D: the interstices of a woven material, between the crossed threads; loose, not close, thinly, scattered, infrequent and gives the top part as radical 89, lines of the diagram, a reference to the I Ching, perhaps, which Fenn has as intertwine

natural 自

is the radical for from, commencing at, spontaneously, meaning things that happen naturally, without effort

rain 雨

is a radical which shows drops of rain falling from the sky and clouds

trust 信 xìn

conveys trusting $\stackrel{\triangle}{=}$ what a person $\stackrel{\triangle}{\setminus}$ says $\stackrel{\triangle}{=}$. $\stackrel{\triangle}{\setminus}$ is also a sound component Hatcher has *belief, confidence, promise, trust, truth*

Wieger has radical 9 \(\) man + radical 30 mouth with a tongue sticking out of the mouth

• Chapter 24 回

Why do we stand on *tiptoe*? To see further? To see more? Both these are efforts to gather to oneself more of the outside world than is necessary. The lingering *look* at accidents and catastrophes. War reportage on television. Curiosity. Wanting, needing, to know more.

Show me the blood, but not too much. This is *desire*, *and* remember, desire causes suffering.

Why do we rush ahead (act *speedy*)? To get ahead? To be early? To be noted as *first*? When we walk in a rush we lengthen our stride, as if that is going to get us *there* faster. Long strides soon wear us out. Mom used to say, *more haste less speed*.

Vainglory (pride in one's accomplishments or qualities) accomplishes nothing and brings catastrophe.

Raising your heels to stand on tiptoe, you cannot stand firm. Rushing ahead with big strides, you will not get very far. Flaunting your own opinions, you will not make yourself seen. By considering yourself to be in the right, you will not be able to shine forth. By bragging, you will not achieve success. By being conceited, you will not endure. Chen

Sentences 1 to 4

- 1. Those who stand on tiptoe are not steady. Those who strain their strides cannot long keep up the pace.
- 2. Those who display themselves do not illuminate. Those who justify themselves are not distinguished.
- 3. Those who make claims are not given credit. Those who seek glory are not leaders.
- 4. According to the Way these are like extra food and waste, which all creatures detest. Therefore followers of the Way avoid them.

A sense of when you stand on tiptoe you are stopped. The character \hat{L} *tiptoe* has the meaning of *to plan a project* as well.

Sentence 4 another version

In the light of the Principle all these ways of acting are odious, distasteful. They are superfluous excesses. They are like a pain in the stomach, a tumour in the body. He who has principles (in conformity with the Principle), does not act like this.

Another version of sentence four to drive home the point that *NOT* living in or with Dao makes for *misery*. Living in or with it creates *transcendence*.

Linnell has unnecessary behaviour for superfluous excesses.

Chapter titles

Troubles and Merit	Bitter Favors	Avoiding a Wrong Attitude
Undesirable Honours	Those on Tiptoe Don't Stand Up	Avoiding Voids
Hindering Grace	The Failure of Ego	The Steady Force of Attitude
Excesses Deviate from the Dao		

Wang Bi

Anything striving to advance will lose its safety. Therefore, those who rise on tiptoe cannot stand. In terms of Dao, these people are like backsliders or banquet left-overs. Although originally good, they appear more ugly. Although originally creditable, due to boastfulness they become more like burdensome wens.

Key terms

stand 立. lì

pictograph of a person standing on the ground. It is radical 117, of which Wieger has to stand erect, to found, presently. Hatcher has (to) stand(ing) up(right)/firm/steady (ly)

tiptoe 企 qǐ

depicts a person 人 standing on their feet 止

Hatcher has (^) (to) stand(s, ing) on tiptoe(s)/toe tips

Wieger has radical 9 人 *person* + radical 77 止 *stop, to halt, to cease from, to be still, as object, only.* In a lesson he describes the character as *a man rising on his heels*

unnecessary 贅 zhuì

[p.c. 敖 ramble, stroll, roam, originally a pictograph of a person 人 taking a stroll amid plants 屮. The 攵 tap component was added later, represents the meaning and 贝 sea shell, simplified form of 貝. Pictograph of a cowrie shell. In ancient China such shells were used as currency, represents the sound]

Hatcher has & redundant, irrelevant, useless, superfluous

Wieger has radical 154 貝 *a cowrie, money, a shell, money, valuables* + phonetic 638 敖 *tall; proud.* The character he has as *overplus, appendix; an adoption*

Chapter 25 🗵

returns to Chapter 1. It outlines how Dao works, even though we can't actually point at it, or describe it. It says Dao is everywhere.

Sentence 1

There was something formless and perfect before the universe was born. It is serene. Empty. Solitary. Unchanging. Infinite. Eternally present. It is the mother of the universe.

Sentence 2

I don't know its name, so I call it by an alias: Dao. Forced to describe it, I only say, "It is great."

Sentence 3

Greatness means it goes; going means reaching afar; reaching afar means return.

Sentences 4 and 5

- 4. Therefore the Dao is great; Heaven is great; Earth is great; and the (sage) king is also great. In the universe there are four that are great, and the (sage) king is one of them.
- 5. Humanity emulates earth, earth emulates heaven, heaven emulates the Way, the Way emulates nature.

illustrate just how complete Dao is, how all pervasive, how wonderful! Dao is likened to Nature; that it *is* Nature, is always there, always was, and always will be. It is Nature, in individuals and in the world and in the universe. Dao is universal, Dao makes the universe, and the world, and us. Going up and down, zooming in and out of the relationship of Dao with us individually.

The stars are matter. We are matter. It doesn't matter. Don van Vliet

This chapter has six words/characters which appear only once in the Dao De Jing; few 寥, still 寂, change 改, circle, lap, cycle 周, letter, word, character 字, district, region, boundary 域.

Chapter titles

Describing the Mysterious	Symbol of the Great Origin	Nature of the Dao
Apprehending the Void	Something Undifferentiated	Naming the Nameless
Imaging the Mystery	The Dao Process	The Dao of Greatness
The Dao Emulates the Great Nature		

Wang Bi

Chaos cannot be known, but all things take shape from it. Therefore it is said to be "formed in chaos." It is not known whose son it was; therefore it existed before heaven and earth.

"Silent and solitary" means it is formless and matchless, therefore standing alone. Returning and adapting, ending and starting, without losing its permanence; therefore it is unchanging.

It can go around anywhere without peril and achieve the Great Shape. Therefore it may be the Mother of the world.

The name determines the form; formed in chaos and shapeless, it cannot be determined. Therefore we do not know its name

The name determines the form, but the style states its merit. "Dao" means the way from which all things come. Formed in chaos, it can be described as the greatest.

The reason I style it "Dao" is to show that among all things describable, it is the greatest. Regarding the source of this word, it is bound to the great. Anything great is bound to have divisions. Once it has divisions, it will lose its ultimate nature. Therefore, I name it great only with reluctance.

"Out-going" means moving—not restricted to a great system, moves around and reaches everywhere. Therefore it is called "out-going."

"Far-reaching" means to reach the ultimate. Going around there is nowhere it cannot go, but it does not go in one direction only. Therefore it is called "far-reaching." It doesn't stay where it goes; its body is free and therefore "returning."

In the nature of heaven and earth, man is valuable and the king is the chief of men. Therefore although his duty is not bound to the Great, he is also great. Matching the other three, the king therefore is also great. The four great things are Dao, heaven, earth, and king. All things that have names and titles are not ultimate realities. Dao has its own source. It is through this source that it can be named "Dao." The Dao which is the greatest of the namables is not as great as the Dao which is not namable. Unnamed, it cannot be obtained; therefore it is called the universe. Dao, heaven, earth, and the king are within the unnamed [universe]. Therefore, there are four great things in the universe.

The king is great because he is the master of men.

"Abide by" means conform to the rule.

Heshang Gong

Man does not violate the earth and thus achieves his security because he abides by the earth. The earth does not violate heaven and thus obtains its capacity to support because it abides by heaven. Heaven does not violate Dao and thus obtains its capacity to shelter because it abides by Dao. Dao does not violate its own nature and thus achieves its virtue because it abides by nature. Within the square, abide by the squareness; within the circle, abide by the roundness; never go against nature. Nature is an unnamed expression, the word for ultimate reality. To use wisdom is not as good as no wisdom. The shape is not as good as the image of the spirit; the image of the spirit is not as good as formlessness. Having principle is not as good as not having it. Therefore they abide by each other. Dao follows its natural way; thus heaven gets its assets. Heaven abides by Dao; therefore the earth gets its pattern. The earth abides by heaven; therefore the man gets its image. Therefore being their master to unite them together is the king.

Key terms

alias 字 zì

original meaning *raise up children* [p.c. *'¬ roof* represents the meaning and 子 *child* represents the sound. The *'¬* (roof) component is based on the original meaning "raise up children". The meaning later shifted to "educate", "word", and "writing"

Hatcher has (a, the) (^) word, alias, title, character(ize)

Wieger has radical 39 子 *child*, *seed* + radical 40 *roof*. The overall character he has as *to beget* or *rebellion*

change 改 gǎi

Hatcher has change, move, become (ing); change, renewal

Wieger has radical 66 支 tap + radical 49 self. Overall the character means aged, to examine circle, 周 $zh\bar{o}u$

original meaning *farmland*, the meaning later shifted to "circumference" and "cycle". Later the 口 component was added when 周 was used to refer to a geographical region to indicate that the character was only "mouthed", i.e. used for its sound. In simplified Chinese 周 is also used to mean "week", while in traditional Chinese this meaning is written with a separate character 週. Also means *everywhere; universally, comprehensively*

Linnell has circulates

Hatcher has ^ everywhere; universally, comprehensively

district, region, boundary 域 yù

[p.c. \pm earth represents the meaning and 或 area, original meaning area, depicts using a weapon 戈 to defend an area \square in a boundary \square . Based on the original meaning "area", the current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound

Hatcher has ^ (the) regions; frontiers, borders, horizons

Wieger has radical 32 ± earth + phonetic 364 或 or; either; if; supposing that; some; perhaps; doubtful

empty, alone, solitary, remote, vacant, lonely 寥 liáo

[p.c. *roof* represents the meaning and *to sweep away, to remove*, depicts a person 人 using a broom 彗 to sweep or remove things away. 乡 was added possibly as a decorative component, represents the sound

Hatcher has empty, alone, solitary, remote, vacant, lonely

Wieger has radical 40 roof + phonetic 629 翏 to fly

letter, symbol, word, character 字 zì

original meaning *raise up children* [p.c. *'-' roof* represents the meaning and 子 *child*, pictograph of a small child with its two arms outstretched, represents the sound. The *'-'* (roof) component is based on the original meaning "raise up children". The meaning later shifted to "educate", "word", and "writing"]

return, reverse, opposite, contrary, anti; inside out or upside down 反 fǎn

pictograph of a hand 又 climbing a cliff Γ . Based on original meaning "climb", now written as 扳. The meaning later shifted to "pull" and "reverse"

still, silent, quiet, peaceful, serene, tranquil 寂 jì

[p.c. roof represents the meaning and 叔 *uncle*, original meaning *to dig*, depicts holding a sharp wooden stick 弋 in the hand 又 to dig up dirt. Based on the original meaning "to dig". The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]

N.B. In regard to the returning of things when they go as far as possible, recent cosmology thinking includes this little note on the *observable* universe:

If the universe is finite but unbounded, it is also possible that the universe is smaller than the observable universe. In this case, what we take to be very distant galaxies may actually be duplicate images of nearby galaxies, formed by light that has circumnavigated the universe. It is difficult to test this hypothesis experimentally because different images of a galaxy would show different eras in its history, and consequently might appear quite different. Wikipedia

• Chapter 26 回

Phew! So far Dao and how it works has been fairly intense. In my opinion (I know I am repeating) Dao De Jing is a personal guide for each of us. Yes, it talks about kings and emperors. States. Nature. The Cosmos.

But now, in this chapter, we become grounded in our daily activity. We are again admonished not to become frivolous, distracted, or overly complicated. Not to become too involved in externalities. Keep it simple. Again, take this to heart because it is what you need to practice. The intimate relationship between Dao and De are outlined clearly. *Grok* this one, baby, and the rest falls into place.

Sentence 1

Heaviness is the root of lightness. Serenity is the master of restlessness.

Decorum is the foundation of rashness, serenity is the commander of impetuousness. Chen

This chapter was my first awakening to Dao. Gravity is the basis of lightness, stillness is the essence of speed. In a later chapter we will find anything big starts with a single seed, a journey begins with a small step, a great tower begins with a small pile of dirt.

Heavy-light, still-speed. You can't have one without the other. Both complement each other, both rise from Dao. These are *duads* similar to those items in Chapter 2 and those found in other chapters.

Heavy is root [to the] light, quiet is [the] monarch [to the] irritable. Ramsden

Centeredness is the cure for impulsiveness. Serenity is the master of restlessness. Hua-Ching Ni

Sentence 2

And so the Wise Person: Travels all day, not departing from the heavy baggage wagon although there are grand sights, he sits calmly aloof.

Baggage and heavy are euphemisms for what in English we call gravitas meaning seriousness in bearing or manner; dignity. The person who lives in Dao, remember, the Sage, carries a heavy burden. This chapter tells us to not be distracted, the load is too heavy to be dealt with frivolously or put aside, even for a moment. Two common varieties of this sentence use Infinity or Great Dao instead of baggage wagon.

Regardless of what is on offer, or in the way, ignore it and stick to Dao. In English we refer to those things, physical and psychological, which we carry around with us, from life to life, as baggage.

Remember, you are the Sage, Wise One, Master. Pass through the World without paying much attention to it. Your journey is more important than where you are at the moment, or where you think you are going. And, I suppose, from where you have come. As in picking berries, *Stick to your bush*.

The baggage wagon character appears only once, here, in this chapter.

Sentences 3 and 4

- 3. Why should the ruler of ten thousand chariots act with such frivolity in this world?
- 4. One who acts lightly loses her foundation. One who becomes agitated sacrifices her mastery.

tell us by acting lightly, as though nothing is important, bragging about our accomplishments, trying to be the *big* man on campus, a *star*, we are simply destroying ourselves. Vainglory is predictably offensive and always contains ramifications. No good can come of it. Agitation is a loss of mastery.

The centred and grounded leader has stability and a sense of self. One who is not stable can easily get carried away by the intensity of leadership and make mistakes of judgment or even become ill. Heider

In a note: Laozi advises that keeping one's weight can treat problems related to "not having taken a deep root," and keeping still can treat problems related to restlessness. How would one keep one's weight and not be moved by one's own emotions and peoples' words of praise or insult? One needs to have faith in the Dao—in the virtues of humility and down-to-earth preparations(example of the farmer). The Buddha is said to have the virtue of not being moved by the "eight winds," namely profit, loss, damage, honour, praise, jeers, unpleasant feelings, and pleasant feelings. Ho

Chapter titles

The Virtue (Teh) of Dignity	Gravity as a Virtue	Superiority of the Sage
The Virtue of Gravity	Gravity is the Root of Lightness	Seductions
Virtue of Gravity	Calm Stillness, Sound Basis	The Gravity of Power
Keeping One's weight		

Wang Bi

Anything light cannot carry heavy loads. Anything small cannot overpower the big. He who doesn't walk causes others to walk. He who doesn't move controls the movements of others. Therefore heaviness must be the foundation of lightness. Serenity must be the lord of rashness.

Heaviness is his base; therefore one never leaves it.

They do not engage his heart.

The light never overpowers the heavy. To lose the foundation is to forsake oneself. To lose lordliness is to lose a lord's position.

Kev terms

gravity (heavy) 重 zhòng, chóng

pictograph of a person 1 carrying a heavy basket 東 on their back. The man on the top tries to rise from the earth at the bottom. Hence, the idea of heavy, weight

Hatcher has (the) heavy, massive, weighty (ness); gravity

Wieger has radical 166 里 village + 土 earth meaning heavy, weighty, important, severe

lightness, grace 輕 qīng

[p.c. 車 vehicle, cart, wagon represents the meaning and Ψ warp, depicts weaving vertical (warp) threads on a loom, represents the sound]. The meanings of the character are: (to be) bearable, easy, facile, light, lighter, lightweight, simple, young; low, lowly, unimportant, worthless; fickle, flippant, frivolous, heedless, precipitate; (a, the) easiness, indifference (to); light carriage; (to) diminish, lessen, lighten, mitigate; disrespect, esteem/take/treat lightly, lightly take, ignore, make light of, slight, think little of, treat with contempt, underestimate, underrate (s, ed, ing); easily, flippantly, frivolously, gently, lightly

haste (speed), tense, jittery, twitchy, fidgety 躁 zào

[p.c. 足 *foot*, pictograph of a foot attached to a leg, represents the meaning and 桌, depicts three mouths 品 of birds chirping atop a tree 木, represents the sound]

Hatcher has ^ haste, agitation, rashness, restlessness

Wieger has radical 157 足 foot + phonetic 763 桌 twittering of birds, three mouths and a tree, although he says in a lessonj that the three mouths are not really mouths, just a symbol of many items

Chapter 27 🗵

Unassuming. Quiet. Living in Dao means we contribute and influence without returns of acknowledgement or power. Altruism must govern our interactions with others. Living in Dao means we leave little evidence of our presence. Remaining humble and unobtrusive in affairs.

Judge not lest you be judged. Jesus the Christ

Also, it is important when looking at situations to see both the good and bad; utility and non-utility. It reminds us things done properly, without fuss, are beneficial to both good and bad people.

Sentences 1 to 5

- 1.A good traveller leaves no trace. A good speaker makes no slips. A good accountant uses no devices.
- 2. A good door is well shut without bolts and cannot be opened. A good knot is tied without rope and cannot be loosed.
- 3. Therefore the wise are good at helping people, and consequently no one is rejected. They are good at saving things, and consequently nothing is wasted. This is called using the Light.
- 4. Therefore the good man is the teacher of the bad, And the bad is the material from which the good may learn.
- 5. Not valuing your teacher or not loving your students: Even if you are smart, you are gravely in error. This is called Essential Subtlety

Sentence 3. The Sage who is adept in saving people will abandon no one. He is adept in saving creatures and will abandon no creature. This is known as the Tradition of the Light. And in a note: The Buddha teaches that even as one performs good deeds one should not hold the view that one is performing good deeds (不 no, not 著 to make known 相 appearance). Ho

The group members need the leader for guidance and facilitation. The leader needs people to work with, people to serve. If both do not recognize the mutual need to love and respect one another, each misses the point. Heider

This chapter has three parts. In the first, people with Dao are described as being able to effect things without leaving trace or evidence of their superior skill and abilities. In the second, the Sage [is there a difference between the *good* persons of the first part and the Sage? Probably not] is described as practicing equanimity towards all, a practiced neutrality but also a neutrality based on awareness and appreciation. The third part explains how wisdom and knowledge can only cause confusion if the teacher doesn't love the student and the student doesn't respect the teacher.

The concluding statements give overarching descriptions of parts 2 and 3.

From sentence 3 是謂襲明

是 indeed, right

謂 so-called, what is called

襲 raid, attack, inherit Hatcher has double, practice(al), apply; appropriate (d, ing)

Wieger has radical 145 衣 clothes + phonetic 824 龍 dragon of which he says The dragon. When it ascends to heaven and flies, it rains; when it hides in the wells, there is a drought. Vapour and clouds personified, the ancient form is a representation sufficiently recognizable. The modern form is explained thus: on the right, contracted, the wings; on the left, at the bottom, the body; on the top is thought to be an artificial interpretation of a conventional abbreviation 竜 for the 212th radical, 龍 dragon; imperial; glorious

明 clear; obvious; unequivocal

This is called following your insight. Linnell

This may be called "practical wisdom". Hatcher

This is known as the Tradition of the Light. Ho

From sentence 5 是謂要妙

是 indeed, right

謂 so-called, what is called

要 necessary, essential Hatcher has (an) important, expedient, necessary, tactical

Wieger has radical 146 $\overrightarrow{\text{m}}$ cover, west + radical 38 $\cancel{\text{g}}$ woman. Of the character he says to want, to intend, necessary, a sign of the future

妙 mysterious, subtle; exquisite; clever; wonderful

This is called the essential subtle mystery. Linnell

This may be called a "tactical mystery". Hatcher

This is a key point that is often not understood. Ho

Chapter titles

The Function of Skill	Skillful Application	Enlightenment from Within
The Use of Skill	Good Works	Wisdom is Effortless Mutuality
Employing Skill	Respecting Competence, Treasuring Resources	The Skillful Exchange of Information
The Perfect Man		

Wang Bi

Proceed according to nature; neither institute nor initiate; then everything attains, leaving no trail.

Follow the nature of things without discriminating and analyzing; then one leaves nothing [for others] to pick holes in.

To follow the number of things without reference to form.

Follow the nature of things without fixing or interfering; then there is no need for bolts or binding and ropes; to keep things from being opened or untied. These five explain that one should neither institute nor interfere, but follow the nature of things and not control them with forms.

The Sage does not sort things by establishing norms. He does not favour the distinguished and forsake the defective by instituting directions. He helps things develop their nature without initiating.

Thus no one is forsaken. Prefer not the worthy and able, so that the people will not fight; prize not the rare treasure, so that they will not steal; exhibit not the desirable, so that their hearts will not be distracted. Always keep people's hearts from desires or distraction; then no one is forsaken.

Uphold the good man for the bad man to emulate. Hence he is the teacher.

"The material" means supply. The good man uses goodness to level badness, uses goodness to avert badness. Therefore the bad man is the material for the good man to take [work on],

Although one has knowledge, employing one's knowledge and not following the nature of things, he must lose Dao. Therefore, he is utterly lost in spite of his knowledge.

Key terms

necessary, essential 要 yào

also means necessity; to demand; to request; to coerce; important; vital; to want; to ask for

The character is made up of two radicals, on top is *cover* and below *woman*

Hatcher has (an) important, expedient, necessary, tactical

Wieger has radical 146 m cover, west + radical 38 女 woman; meaning to want, to island, necessary, a sign of the future

norms, propriety 分寸 fēncun

分 divide, depicts a knife 刀 being used to cut two things apart 八

 \overrightarrow{J} (hand), inch original meaning pulse point on wrist, pictograph of a hand with a line marking a spot on the wrist. In traditional Chinese medicine this spot on the wrist where the pulse can be taken is called the $\overrightarrow{J} \square c unk \delta u$

practical 實用 shíyòng

實 *real, original meaning* rich, plentiful, depicts a string of money 貫 under a roof 宀. Based on the original meaning "rich; plentiful". The meaning later expanded to "solid", "fruit", and "true". The 貫 component was changed to 头 for simplification

用 *use*, original meaning *bucket*, depicts a bucket with a handle on the right side. Based on the original meaning "bucket". The current meaning "use" is a phonetic loan

subtle *炒 miào* Also means mysterious, profound, fine, glorious, marvellous, wonderful, exquisite, ingenious, clever, *and* young

[p.c. 女 woman represents the meaning and 少 few represents the sound

Hatcher has beautiful, excellent, subtle, wonderful; mystery

Wieger has radical 38 女 woman, female + phonetic 80 few, less, diminish, to do without

Chapter 28 回

We must be in touch with our other side. Men should have an awareness of their feminine aspects, and *vice versa*. We are dualistic by design (or chance, take your pick) so we might as well be aware of both sides of ourselves. Know our *other*; be humble; be an example; don't exclaim; don't force. Remain in Dao, for it is there all things arise and all things return. By this we know we follow *Nature*.

Sentence 1

Know the masculine, Keep to the feminine, And be the Brook of the World. To be the Brook of the World is To move constantly in the path of Virtue Without swerving from it, and to return again to infancy.

Linnell uses *know your maleness* 雄, but *maintain your femaleness* 雌 for *integrate the male and the female*.

In a note: The direct translation is "Know the male, yet cleave to the female" (adapted from Waley) This and similar translations mystify Laozi's teachings. As earlier suggested, the juxtaposition of 雌 and 雄 often do not mean male and female, unlike the words 牝 and 牡. Rather they stand for weak as opposed to strong, and submissive as opposed to dominant. Ho

Know, perceive, comprehend; to know; to be aware $\mathfrak{A} zh\bar{\imath}$; [p.c. \square *mouth* represents the meaning and \mathfrak{K} *arrow* represents the sound]. Hatcher has *know*, *understand*; *be aware of*, *acknowledge*

Sentence 2

Knowing the white, keep the black; be an exemplar for the world. Be an exemplar for the world, and eternal power never goes awry, returning again to infinity.

Black means the mystery you create around yourself. It is related to the black/white yin/ yang symbol which represents the dark and light sides of your life, both contained within you from birth.

Sentence 3

He who is familiar with honour and glory But keeps to obscurity Becomes the valley of the world. Being the valley of the world, He has an eternal power which always suffices, And returns again to the natural integrity of un-carved wood.

Know your honour, but maintain your disgrace. Linnell

This refers directly back to Chapter 13 with added information on how to get past favour and disgrace, honour and dishonour.

Sentence 4

The un-wrought material, when divided and distributed, forms vessels. The sage, when employed, becomes the Head of all the Officers (of government); and in his greatest regulations he employs no violent measures.

The block of wood is carved into utensils by carving void into the wood. The Master uses the utensils, yet prefers to keep to the block because of its limitless possibilities. Great works do not involve discarding substance. Byrn

remains obscure to most readers. After much study it clarifies and tells us while we create tools from solid things, including people, we must always remain in touch with the original thing, the block of wood is a metaphor. We must keep to Dao, regardless of how we are pulled or pushed away from it. Regardless of how we use Dao it remains Dao.

This is another sentence with many interpretations and translations. There is a political one and a personal one. Is there a difference? I contend there is not. We all have to *make tools* to deal with our internal and external realities. Starting with Dao, and realizing our tools are part of Dao, and will return to Dao when no longer needed, gives rise to greater control of internal and external things, especially our emotions and their expression.

If wood is split then it is deemed an artifact. Sages use it and they are deemed officials and elders. Thus great systems don't cut. Hansen

Craig notes: I read this chapter similarly to Wang Bi. The first three sentences are explicitly about three ways for us to exercise our De, our virtue/power. 'If you do such and such, great virtue (*chang de*: 常德) will do such and such.' In each case we start with a pair of 'opposites' and are enjoined to 'merge' them, or 'be in the middle'.

Sentence 1: Know your maleness but maintain your femaleness. How? By being a stream to the world. A stream flows between maleness and femaleness. Be that stream. For the world. If you do, 'chang de', your inner Dao, will not depart and will return you to a state of infancy. Maleness and femaleness are not yet differentiated in infancy. If you practice being

the stream between maleness and femaleness you will return to a state where they are not differentiated.

Sentence 2: Know your brightness/whiteness but maintain your darkness. How? By being a model for the world. Bright light reveals the details, shade and shadow, edges and areas, of the surfaces of things, by its interplay with darkness, the parts of things that are not lit. White is the natural part of a thing turned towards the light. Black is the natural part of a thing turned away from the light. The shapes of things arise through the interplay of light and dark. Be the interplay between light and dark, the shape of yourself. Reveal your shape for the world, be a model. If you do, 'chang de' will not falter or go astray and will return you to a state of 'wu chi', 無極, empty ultimate, the un-bounded. Shapes are not distinguished there because it is before light and dark are born. Light and dark, white and black, are born as emerging from there together. See chapters 1, 2 and 10.

Sentence 3: Know your honour or glory but maintain your humility or disgrace. How? By being a valley for the world. A valley lies between two slopes. When the sun shines into a valley in the morning or evening, one side of the valley is in sunlight and one side is in shade. One side receives the glory of the sun and one side is ignored by the sun and remains in shadow. Yin and Yang are precisely this: the shady side and the sunny side: 陰, yin, is literally the shady side of the hill, and 陽, yang, is literally the sunny side of the hill. The valley lies between the sunny side of the hill and the shady side of the hill, honour and disgrace. Be that valley. For the world. If you do, 'chang de' will be sufficient to return you to the state of the un-carved block of wood. Sun and shade only arise where the earth has been carved by a valley. The valley can be un-carved. Sorry for being a bit fanciful here. Yes, a valley can be lit on both sides, at noon. But you get the point. Another interpretation here could be about judgement by others more explicitly. Honour is positive judgement, disgrace is negative judgement. But what is the valley then? Maybe the valley is 'the lowest point', below both positive and negative judgement? I don't know. I like pulling in Yang and Yin, lit and in shadow, here all the same.

Sentence 4 now swerves off on a tangent, or perhaps rises above these three pairs, by taking up the theme of carving, the theme of the un-carved block and what happens when it gets carved. What happens when the undifferentiated gets differentiated? "When the un-carved block gets carved or broken up it then becomes shaped into vessels, tools. When the wise man uses these, he or they, it is not clear which, then become shaped into senior officials. Therefore, the great system/regulation does not carve."

The metaphor of carving is deep in these characters. The phrase "then becomes shaped into" is *ze wei*, 則為, where *wei* is the familiar 'do, be, make', as in *wu wei*, and *ze*, 'then', is a character that contains the radical for knife, the two vertical lines on the right. It is a depiction of carving inscriptions onto bronze vessels with a knife and its oldest meaning is 'law'. Here the law is a kind of logical progression: therefore/thus/then. The character for 'carved or broken', applied to the un-carved block, is an image of trees being cut down.

The final part of this sentence, 'therefore the great regulation does not carve', is this: 故大 制不割. Literally 'therefore great (greatest) cutting not cut'. The characters for 'regulation' and 'carve' both also contain the radical for knife. Regulation or system, ze, is a depiction of cutting down a tree with a knife. The final character, ge, is a spear next to a knife, and can mean 'injure', which you see in some translations. I read this as an effective contradiction: the great cutting is not cutting. How can a cutting not be a cutting? How can a differentiation not be a differentiation? We live in a differentiated world, full of ten thousand things,

male and female, light and dark, praised and despised. We ourselves are such. Yet we can embrace both and transcend them. Be a stream. Be a model. Be a valley. Be carved uncarved. For the world.

I agree with Tor completely that this need not be interpreted in a political way, making it about rulers and officials and nations and laws. It is really about us and our practice of living in and with Dao through our De. The character for 'official', 官, is a depiction of a person sitting on their buttocks under a roof, i.e. someone who sits down indoors when they work. It can also mean 'organ of the body', i.e. a functionary, but of our body, inside our body, an organ of our body, not just an organ of the body politic.

Chapter titles

Returning to Simplicity	Return to Simplicity	Valley Floor of Life
Becoming a Child	Know the Male	The Fusion of Opposites
Returning to Simplicity	Balanced Simplicity, Constant Potential	Uniting the Forces
Great But Humble		

Wang Bi

The male belongs in the front; the female belongs in the rear. One who knows how to lead the world must stay in the rear. Therefore the Sage keeps himself behind and thus stays ahead. The river makes no demands on anything, but everything returns to it. A baby never uses his wisdom, but is attuned with the wisdom of nature.

"Model" means pattern.

"Deviate" means to be led astray.

That which cannot be fathomed.

Virtue resides in these three, namely constancy, returning, and staying behind, to perfect itself. As stated in a following chapter, returning is the movement of Dao; accomplishment cannot be claimed. The mother resides in constancy.

Unhewn wood preserves true nature. When true nature is dispersed, a hundred walks burst forth and different species, like vessels, spring to life. Based on their diversities, the Sage appoints chief officers for them; using the good men as teachers and the bad men as materials, changing traditions and customs and enabling them to return to the One.

The great system has the heart of the people for its own heart. Therefore it will not be cut apart.

Key terms

black, dark, evil 黑 *hēi*

pictograph of a person whose face has been tattooed. In ancient China criminals were punished by having their faces permanently marked. Later writers reanalyzed the character as a chimney being blackened by fire, so the bottom component was written to look like 炎 (flame)

Linnell uses darkness.

Hatcher has black, dark, secret, mysterious, obscure

Wieger provides radical 203 black, dark, evil means that which the fire deposits around the aperture through which the smoke escapes; soot. In primitive Chinese huts, the smoke found its way though the window. He goes on to show how the radical forms the character for Chinese ink, a substance made with soot

example, exemplar 式 shì

[p.c. 工 work represents the meaning and 弋 to shoot represents the sound] govern, rule 制 zhì

original meaning break, depicts cutting down a tree \pm with a knife $\, \, \Box$. Based on the original meaning "break". The meaning later shifted to "control" is the radicals for a hand holding a set of scales and a knife

This character appears only in chapter 28, here, and in chapter 32

honour (and glory) 榮 *róng*

荣 flourish, glory [p.c. 磐 glimmer, depicts two torches crossing each other, represents the sound and 木 tree represents the meaning]

Hatcher has honored, esteemed, glorified, embellished

obscurity 辱 rǔ

original meaning to use a farming tool for weeding, depicts a hand 寸 using a farming tool 辰 to remove dirty weeds. Based on the original meaning "to use a farming tool for weeding", now written as 耨. The meaning of this character has shifted over time and now means "disgrace" and "humiliate", Also means insult, abuse; dishonor; to insult; to bring disgrace or humiliation to; to be indebted to; self-deprecating

official 官 guān

depicts an official person 節 *teacher* working in a governmental institution *roof* according to Dong. The character he uses 節 is *teacher* is is made up of 自 *mound*, *pictograph of buttocks* and 市 *to go round*, unclear, possibly depicts the roots of a plant. 自 is an abbreviation for *teacher*. Elsewhere in Dong 自 is described as *to store up*, *to pile up*; *buttocks*

Hatcher has specialist, bureaucrat, official, manager (s)

Wieger has *an official; a mandarin; public; civic* i.e. someone who sits in a building. Radical 170 阜 *mound or dam* is similar to 自. Elsewhere 官 is described as *many rooms in a building*, a palace a government institution and it is related to 宮 mansion, house, temple, palace

tool 器 aì

origin unclear, it is the repeated radical for mouth and indicates clamour, noise, and [vessels] used for eating [and] in the middle, the dog that cleans them according to Wieger. The primitive meaning was probably earthenware, clay vessels, made by the potter. By extension, any utensil or tool Hatcher has artifacts, instruments, vessels, utensils; specifics

Wieger has vessels, utensils

Elsewhere it is described as a dog guarding four vessels

Chapter 29 🗵

Four sentences extol Dao and how not to screw it up by acting precipitously or for ulterior motive. It is possible to read world as yourself in this chapter.

Jiyu says Man has no alternative but to let things as they are. No matter what we do, we shouldn't go beyond our ability. Nor should we go to extremes.

Sentence 1

If any one should wish to get the kingdom for himself, and to effect this by what he does, I see that he will not succeed

Sentence 2

The world is a sacred vessel, not to be tampered with. Those who tamper with it, spoil it. Those who seize it, lose it.

Shades of the earlier N. Young lyrics to Love Is A Rose; lose your love when you say the word mine.

Sentence 3

In fact, for all things there is a time for going ahead, and a time for following behind; A time for slow-breathing and a time for fast-breathing; A time to grow in strength and a time to decay; A time to be up and a time to be down.

Therefore: creatures are Sometimes active, sometimes passive, Sometimes breathe heavy, sometimes breathe easy, Sometimes strong, sometimes weak, Sometimes oppressed, sometimes overthrown. Linnell

So some will lead, while others follow. Some will be warm, others cold Some will be strong, others weak. Some will get where they are going While others fall by the side of the road. Merel

With Dao, sometimes you move ahead and sometimes you stay back; Sometimes you work hard and sometimes you rest; Sometimes you're strong and sometimes you're weak; Sometimes you're up; sometimes you're down. Walker

So of things Some lead and some follow Some gust and some puff lightly Some are strong and some thin Some support and some destroy. Lindauer

There is some correlation in this sentence to Ecclesiastes, *a time for this and a time for that*. Interestingly, Ecclesiastes is dated to King Solomon (971-931 BCE), but probably not before 450 BCE. The latter date corresponds nicely with the accepted dates of Lao Tzu, 6th or 5th century BCE. There are no such things as coincidences. Further similarities between this chapter and Ecclesiastes is found in Appendix H.

Sentence 4

Therefore sages remove extremes, remove extravagance, remove arrogance.

Given the omnipresent flip flops portended in sentence 3, how do we proceed? We must embrace change so we can learn, we learn through change.

This is why wise ones avoid the extremes, Avoid the superfluous, Avoid the extravagant. Hatcher

The wise leader stays centered and grounded and uses the least force required to act effectively. The leader avoids ego-centricity and emphasizes being rather than doing. Heider

Chapter titles

Not Forcing Things (Wu wei)	Non-Action	Action Without Deeds
Non-Action	Should You Want	We Are the World
Nothing through Acting	Tampering With the World	The Way of Noninterference
Guard Against Vain Ambitions and Excesses		

Wang Bi

The sacred has no shape and no angles; the vessel is a composite substance. Being composed with no shape, it is therefore called the sacred vessel.

The virtue of all things is based on nature. Therefore it is subjected to follow, not to act, is able to communicate, not to hold. Things possess constant virtue; to impose and act upon them will spoil them. Things ought to come and go [naturally]; to hold them is to lose them.

These "either-or" expressions indicate that all things and events go together or in opposite directions, return or recur, and should not be acted upon, seized, or disrupted. The Sage reaches the ultimate in nature, flowing through the passions of all things. Therefore he appropriates without acting, follows without administering, removes that which deludes, eliminates that which confuses. Therefore his heart is not distracted and the nature of things is self-contained. Reid

Heshang Gong

The guidance in chapter 29 is reminiscent of the Yijing and Chinese martial strategy: knowing one's limits is of utmost importance when attempting to leverage one's power. A leader seeking harmony within the nation and within themselves must appreciate that dominance and force cannot engender this harmony. Thereby can they stive towards the Daoist political goal of bringing about voluntary cooperation.

A nation that reflects the ambitions of its people does not need punishments to obtain compliance. The people of such a nation take pride in something they feel they are a part of and helped to create. Knowing this, the sage leader avoids pride and extraneous desires so as to rid himself of any temptation to neglect or abuse the people while aggrandizing himself.

Key terms

arrogant 傲慢 àomàn

傲 proud [p.c. 1 person represents the meaning and 敖 ramble, stroll, roam, originally a pictograph of a person 人 taking a stroll amid plants 屮. The 攵 component was added later, represents the sound]

慢 slow(ly) [p.c. \uparrow heart represents the meaning and 曼 long, depicts a hand 又 covering \boxminus the eye \boxminus to gaze far away into the distance, represents the sound] arrogance (great) 泰 $t \grave{a} i$

Dong has water 米, radical 85, contained by a dam.

Wieger includes the character in his alphebetical list under *t'ai* as *large*, *extensive*, *liberal*, *extreme* and in the list of characters formed by the radical and a phonetic of five strokes. And as feng, to receive respectfully, with both hands, to pay one's respect; to flatter.

Hatcher has the character as affluent, extravagant, grand, extensive, liberal.

Fenn has *liberal; prosperous; exhalted*. The top character is obscure but appears to be Feng's phonetic 469 *p'eng, to hold up in both hands, offer respectfully* or 470 *feng, honoured, respectfully, received* Using two hands to scoop up water in a sort of dam, it is true, but how this relates to arrogant/arrogance is not clear

control 取 qǔ

pictograph of a hand X grabbing an ear Ξ . In ancient China, the ears of opponents in battle were cut off and collected as tokens of victory. The character means to lay hold, to take, to seize. A hand that holds an ear. In composition, to gather to combine. The shool teachers' favourite control device, a firm grip on the ear of who is to be controlled

extremes 甚 shén, shèn

original meaning *very peaceful and happy*, depicts putting something sweet in the mouth \exists with a spoon. Based on the original meaning "very peaceful and happy". The meaning later shifted to "excessive" "extremely"

extravagant 奢 shē

[p.c. 大 big represents the meaning and 者 one who represents the sound] remove 去 qu

depicts opening the mouth \square wide X to let a yawn leave the mouth

Chapter 30 🗉

continues on from Chapter 29 giving specific warnings and admonishments. This chapter is about the use of force, a common practice throughout history. Force is bad, we are told. Don't use it, we are told. We don't need to use it, we are told. Yet it is always near, always terrible. Always in someone else's hands.

Jiyu says, Lao Tzu didn't like war, but if it was an absolute necessity it should be entered into cautiously. On a personal level, we shouldn't enter into war with others, and if we rage at ourselves we are making an awful mistake.

Later we will find further ideas about how the best generals are not tyrannical or violent, the best soldiers not cruel and intractable.

Sentences 1 and 2

- 1. Those who assist human leaders with the Way do not coerce the world with weapons, for these things are apt to backfire.
- 2. Wherever armies are stationed, briers and thorns grow. Great wars are always followed by famines.

illustrate how the use of force always backfires. Be careful what you wish for. Excessive force, as exemplified by an army in the field, is destructive and causes ruin. Think of the battlefields of WWI. Or a modern cityscape laid waste in war.

Sentences 3 and 4

- 3. The skillful achieve their purposes and stop. They dare not rely on force.
- 4. He achieves his purpose but does not brag about it. He achieves his purpose but does not boast about it. He achieves his purpose but only as an unavoidable step. He achieves his purpose but does not aim to dominate

give us an alternative way to deal without force. There is nothing in force that attracts or doesn't come back to haunt one.

Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword, and one reaps what one sows. Jesus the Christ

Sentence 5

When things flourish they decline. This is called non-Dao The non-Dao is short-lived.

Why does force not work? What can we learn from living Dao and not using force or aggressive argument?

Leaders who push think that they are facilitating process, when in fact they are blocking process. They think that they are building a good group field, when in fact they are destroying its coherence and creating factions. They think that their constant interventions are a measure of ability, when in fact such interventions are crude and inappropriate. They think that their leadership position gives them absolute authority, when in fact their behaviour diminishes respect. Heider

Chapter titles

C114 P 0 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 0 1		
e Stingy of War	Moderate Use of Force	Winning through Non-Resistance
Declining from Strife	Assisting Human Leaders with the Way	Defence and Aggression
Sparing of wars	Achieving Without Conquering	Leading the Leader
Good Deeds Beget Good Results		

Wang Bi

Even those who aid the ruler with Dao do not use military force to conquer the world. How can the ruler who embodies Dao use it?

The initiator has to achieve merit to stir up events, but those with Dao have to return to inaction. Therefore, events are bound to return.

That is to say: armies are something evil and harmful. They can do nothing but bring disaster, robbing and injuring the people, and devastating the land. Therefore briers and thorns will grow.

Result means relief. That is to say: one who knows how to make good use of military force hastens to relieve calamity only, but will not use it to conquer the world.

Not preferring military force, I use it reluctantly; then what do I have to be arrogant or brag about?

That is to say: one who uses military force to hasten results and relieve calamities must do it with reluctance. When he has to use it again, he uses it for the purpose of quenching violence only, but never uses its results to show power

"Prime" refers to the rapid development of brute force, such as using the army to conquer the world. A whirl-wind does not last all morning; nor does a sudden shower last all day. Therefore rapid development is certainly not Dao; it is sure to die early.

Heshang Gong

In providing excellent guidance on how to prevent backlash after ending a conflict, Lao Zi draws an image of barren fields. This serves to remind that even "successful" conflicts have consequences. For example, someone may enjoy arguments and pride themselves on their ability to trounce their opponents, but in doing so may alienate everyone around them and end up desolate. Thus, we must be careful not to indulge in contentious impulses, and be careful of how and where we fight our battles, lest we destroy the vitality of our own fields, both internally and externally. Reid

Key terms

brambles 荊 jīng

a plant ** armed with thorns *!, radical for grass, herbs [plants, weeds] and the phonetic for torture, certainly torture is what happens when one finds oneself caught up in brambles, unless of course one is a rabbit. The phonetic is related to the radicals for moon and knife, but this is probably a pronunciation similarity

Hatcher has brambles, briars, thorns; thorny. The next character 棘 also means brambles, briars, (buck) thorns

It isn't clear what makes the difference between them. Linnell and Hatcher both have thorns and brambles

results, fulfill a purpose 果 $gu\check{o}$ pictograph of fruit growing on a tree Hatcher has *complete*, *conclude*, *finish*, *succeed* (s) thorn 棘 ji [p.c. 束 *thorn*, *stab* represents the meaning and the sound]

Chapter 31 🗵

More on force and its use, now in particular, the weapons used to apply force and control. Coercion. The business of standing to the left or right is interesting, if somewhat obscure. Think of the phrase *right hand man* and *on the right hand of God's throne*. Resorting to force creates fear. There is no need. To revel in the application of force is to go against Nature.

The greatest lessons of the widespread application of force are found everywhere in history. Although it oft lasts long, it never ends well.

Sentences 1 to 5

- 1. Now arms, however beautiful, are instruments of evil omen, hateful, it may be said, to all creatures. Therefore they who have the Dao do not like to employ them.
- 2. The superior man ordinarily considers the left hand the most honourable place, but in time of war the right hand.
- 3. Those sharp weapons are instruments of evil omen, and not the instruments of the superior man; he uses them only on the compulsion of necessity.
- 4. Calm and repose are what he prizes; victory (by force of arms) is to him undesirable. To consider this desirable would be to delight in the slaughter of men; and he who delights in the slaughter of men cannot get his will in the kingdom.
- 5. On occasions of festivity to be on the left hand is the prized position; on occasions of mourning, the right hand. The second in command of the army has his place on the left; the general commanding in chief has his on the right; his place, that is, is assigned to him as in the rites of mourning.

The meaning is obvious. The Chinese used left in the sense of *honour* in peace and the right in war. The general, the war chief, sat on the right, because as we know, war is always evil.

Chapters 30 and 31 explain about force, and the tools of force, weapons. Weapons might be considered *beautiful* but their use is always *ugly*.

Chapter titles

Chapter titles		
Avoiding War	Banning the Use of Force	World Without Arms
Ceasing from War	Fine Weapons	War
Ceasing from War	Sadness in Victory	The Use of Force
Do Not Glorify Military Victories		

Wang Bi

No commentary except a note to say "I doubt that this chapter was written by Lao Tzu."

Key terms

funeral 喪 sāngǐ

喪 *mourning*, depicts multiple mouths \square wailing to mourn the death \square , original meaning *tip of the blade*, of someone. 桑, *mulberry tree*, depicts the leaves of a mulberry tree 木. The leaves from a mulberry tree were the food silkworms would eat and \square death depicts the tip of a knife blade \square .

Similar in origin to 方. Based on the original meaning "tip of a blade", now written as 芒. The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represent the sound

Hatcher has (^) (a, the) funeral, mourning, bereavement here, but in Chapter 69 he uses lose, forfeit, forgo, surrender, destroy (ing)

gift 禮 lǐ

[p.c. 才 *show* represents the meaning and 豊 *abundant*, original meaning *ceremonial vessel*, depicts a decoration 丑 and a drum 豆 used for ceremonial purposes, represents the sound]

grief 悲 bēi

[p.c. \(\tilde{\to}\) heart represents the meaning and \(\dift\) not, depicts two people facing opposite directions, represents the sound]

Linnell uses weep with grief.

Hatcher has & lament, sorrow, mourning, grief, anguish

left and right 左右 zuǒyòu

左 pictograph of a left hand. The \bot (work) component was added later to represent the meaning "help; assist"

 \pm pictograph of a right hand. The \Box (mouth) component was added later to distinguish the character from X

victory 勝 sheng

[p.c. 力 power represents the meaning and 朕 pronoun "I" represents the sound]

Hatcher has (is) overcome, won; successful, triumphant

Wieger has the character under radical 19 为 power as to conquer, to outdo, to sustain, but doesn't provide further information on its phonetic components.

Chapter 32 🗵

Now we return to Dao. We've looked into its characteristics, how to live in it, what happens when we don't, and how that can be so bad. Try to internalize on a personal level these recommendations to princes and kings.

Sentence 1

Dao will always be nameless, an un-carved Block although it is a thing of no account, no one in the world can make it his subject.

Sentence 2

If leaders would hold to it, the whole world would serve them spontaneously.

Sentence 3

Heaven and earth come together in harmony and sweet rain falls everywhere. People cooperate voluntarily, without any instruction.

Embrace simplicity with inaction; never let the things disturb one's true nature; never let desire harm one's spirit; then all things will become guests by themselves and Dao will be attained by itself. Wang Bi

Sentence 4

When civilization arose, names began. With names, one should know when to stop. Knowing when to stop, frees one from danger.

takes us back to the cascade of stuff that happens when you try to *name* everything, try to control everything. Once humanity lived in a Natural state, or so it is said. What happened?

And so, begin to divide and you have names. Linnell

Craig notes: The point of the line, I think, is that regulation (rules/laws) entails names for everything. But with naming, one has to know when to stop. So the question would be: is it possible for civilization to exist without an overflowing of names. Is it possible for an advanced civilization to exist without an overflowing of names?

In a note: Knowing where to stop is knowing the limitations of these traditions and names. How true it is that ignorant people unaware of the limitations of these human-created traditions and names fight among themselves and keep killing and destroying one another! A well-known historical disaster is the Crusade that ended up killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people of a different cultural background in the Middle East. Ho

Sentence 5

The Dao's existence in the world Is like valley streams running into the rivers and seas.

Dao is everywhere. We were told earlier it is like water, unassuming, seeping and trickling into the earth, filling in the low parts. All water eventually ends up in the sea. Just so, all the world ends up in Dao. Return.

Chapter titles

The Virtue (Teh) of Holiness	Holy Virtue	Onefoldness of the One
Intelligent Virtue	The Way is Eternally Nameless	Is It Not Time to Unify the Fragments?
Intuitive Virtue	Simplicity and Its Loss	The Limits of Specialization
The Nameless Way		

Wang Bi

Dao, being formless, does not cling; being eternal, it cannot be named. Because its constancy is with namelessness, therefore Dao is constantly nameless. The unhewn wood is something with nothingness as its heart; it is also nameless. Therefore, if one wants to obtain Dao, there is no better way than to keep this simplicity. Then those who are wise can be led to serve competently; those who are brave can be directed to the military force; those who are skilled can be enlisted to work; and those with great strength can be made to carry heavy loads. The unhewn is something dull-witted, unbiased, and close to nothingness; therefore it cannot be subjugated. Embrace simplicity with inaction; never let the things disturb one's true nature; never let desire harm one's spirit; then all things will become guests by themselves and Dao will be attained by itself.

That is to say: when heaven and earth conjugate, sweet dew will drop without being requested. I keep my true nature and do nothing; then the people, without being ordered, act fairly.

The beginning of creation refers to the time when the unhewn essence was dispersed and chief officers were first appointed. First, the chief officers were given titles proper to their station to determine their rank. Therefore, in the beginning of creation, all were given names. From that time on, the people would fight for trivial points of a knife. Therefore, after names have been established, it is better to know the limits. If the name is allowed to master things, that is the mother of unruliness. Thus, knowing their limits will keep people free from danger.

Brooks and valleys seek out rivers and seas; but the rivers and seas do not summon them. Without summons or search, the former return to the latter naturally. Therefore those who apply Dao to the world would make it self-regulated without ordering, and self-fulfilled without seeking. Therefore, they are as brooks and valleys are to rivers and seas.

Key terms

dew 露 lù, lòu

[p.c. 雨 rain represents the meaning and 路 road {p.c. 足 foot represents the meaning and 各 each, original meaning arrive, depicts a foot 久 arriving at an entrance \Box . Based on the original meaning "arrive". The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound} represents the sound Hatcher has dew, dewdrop(s)

Wieger has radical 173 雨 rain + radical 157 足 foot + phonetic 230 各 each. He has for radical 157 the feet, enough, sufficient, to be satisfied with. Phonetic 230 各 is made up of radical 36 夕 evening, sunset on top of radical 30 mouth, meaning a name, an appellation; fame, the name, the personal appellation of a man from the mouth and evening because a dusk, it is necessary to give one's name to be known

[It is a good thing this character is a phonetic loan for in actual meanings it makes no sense as dew or anything else. The rain is evident, but the rest ...]

infinity 淼 miǎo

a wide expanse of water, water 水 everywhere. Radical 85 *water* tripled. Wieger has *ocean*; *immense*. Linnell uses 海 *ocean* in Chapters 20 and 32. Hatcher has (a, an, the) sea, ocean in chapter 20, 32, and 66

literate, civilized, elegant, culture $\dot{\mathbb{X}}$ is the radical for *literature* rain $\dot{\mathbb{N}}$ is a radical, pictograph of rain falling from a cloud sweet $\dot{\mathbb{T}}$ $g\bar{a}n$ is a radical, pictograph of something sweet inside the mouth \Box Hatcher has (a, the) sweet, pleasant, agreeable, delightful Wieger has sweet, agreeable, winsome, voluntary

Chapter 33 🗵

tells us our powers and abilities are best served when we live in Dao. These four sentences outline where we can go wrong and the antidote, or perhaps the preventative, to going wrong. For example, going wrong often involves using force or trying to control the external.

More duads, more comparative concepts.

Jiyu says these sentences stress one should be wise enough to know his own incompetence and foster his will to overcome the weakness.

Sentences 1 to 4

He who knows men is clever; He who knows himself has insight.
 He who conquers men has force; He who conquers himself is truly strong.
 Those who are contented are rich; those who act strongly have will.

4. If you don't lose your objectives you can be long-lasting. If you die without loss, you are eternal.

Linnell has wise for insight.

Craig notes: I read this chapter similarly to Wang Bi for the most part. The contrasts expressed are about 'lesser' and 'greater', not 'wrong' and 'right'. Living this way, doing this, is less than, or is more limited than, living this other way, doing this other thing. Sentence 1 contrasts 'knowledge about things' and 'real clarity'. Sentence 2 contrasts 'brute force' and 'supple strength'. The character for 'brute force' is an image of a plow, which requires force to use, while the character for 'supple strength' is a bow, which requires controlled and continuous flexible power. Corresponding to the contrast between others and self, I think we can see a contrast between something static and something dynamic, an achievement versus a process. Self mastery, self knowledge, is not something attained once and for all. It is a continuous process.

Related to the distinction between attainment and process, Sentence 3 contrasts between 'being satisfied' and 'acting strongly'. The character for 'strongly' is the very same 'supple strength' as in Sentence 2. If you are satisfied with where you are, you are rich. But if you practice continuous effort on the path, you have will/purpose/intention. The character for 'will', 志, can be read as 'the heart of a soldier/scholar'. It may seem strange to talk about effort and will as being greater than being satisfied in a text where we are often enjoined to 'do nothing' and so on. But I think the important contrast here is between static and dynamic. The mind of a person engaged with Dao is not static. Following Dao is a continuous process, not an achievement.

Sentence 4 is more difficult. The contrast appears to be between 'enduring long' and 'longevity', which don't seem very different. But I think we can tease something out. The character for 'enduring long' means 'a long time' or 'a long duration' while the character for 'longevity' means 'old age' or 'long life'. The meaning component of the latter character, 壽, is 老 *lao* which is a picture of an old person with long hair bent over and leaning on a stick. As an aside, it also happens to be the '*lao*' in Lao Tzu. It can sometimes mean 'always'. So I think the Muller translation, given above, gets something right with translating it as 'eternal'. And this makes for a more appropriate contrast, given the preceding lines, between 'a long time' and 'eternal'. If you don't lose your place you can last a long time. But if you die but do not perish, you can be eternal. Here too I think Muller is on to something with 'die without loss'.

Linnell notes that this particular phrase, 'die but not die', "has generated much speculation over the millennia". The four character phrase is '死而大亡'. The first character, si, is a picture of a person mourning over a carcass, and means 'to die'. The fourth character, wang, is a picture of the tip of a knife blade, and means 'to die'. But it can also mean, 'to lose', 'to flee', 'to be gone'. Hence Muller is not incorrect to translate this as 'to die without loss'. I am inclined to read this as another direct contradiction, intended to make us engage both Dao and not-Dao simultaneously. If one is living in Dao one is unencumbered. One is both engaged and disengaged. So if one is already 'dead', what is there to lose? Nothing. So death is not death. Death is not loss, because there is nothing to lose. And one is already eternal, just as Dao is eternal. I think this is what Wang Bi is getting at when he says: "Even when the body ceases to exist, Dao still lives, not to mention that his body exists and Dao does not perish." If we live in Dao we never perish because there is nothing to lose.

Chapter titles

The Virtue (Teh) of Discrimination	Discriminating Virtue	Nature of the Completed Man
Discerning Virtue	Those Who Know Others	Who Are You?
Discriminating the Virtues	Overcoming Self	Self-Mastery
Real Strength and Endurance		

Wang Bi

Those who know men are merely clever; they are less than those who know themselves and surpass cleverness. Those who conquer others display force only; they are less than those who overcome themselves and whose strength cannot be harmed by anything. To apply cleverness to others is less than to apply it to oneself. To use force on others is less than to use it on oneself. To have discernment in oneself means nothing can evade him. To apply force on oneself means nothing can affect him.

One who is self-contented will never lose; so he has riches.

To act diligently, one's will will prevail. Therefore, one who acts perseveringly needs will.

Investigating oneself with discernment, estimating one's strength before acting, maintaining one's position without losing it, one will last long.

Although one has died, if his way of living is not dead, then he can enjoy longevity. Even when the body ceases to exist, Dao still lives, not to mention that his body exists and Dao does not perish.

Key terms

self 自 zì

original meaning nose, pictograph of a nose. It is radical 132 *from, commencing at; self, I; my own; spontaneously*. It is a very complicated radical and *it is thought to resemble the nose* with many extended meanings. The nose is the forward point of the body, it arrives first. In racing jargon, *win by a nose*. Original form of radical 209 鼻 (nose, first). In China, when people point to themselves, they typically point to their nose.

Hatcher has ^ self(ves), themselves, one's/their own; self-; (^) ^one(s)/them self(ves); (their) own nature

Wieger explains this radical is thought to resemble the nose. Extended meanings -1. self, I, m own, personally; behaviour, to act, action; the nose being the projecting part, and in come ways the characteristic of the individual. 2. starting point, the origin, beginning, evolution; the nose being, according to the Chinese embryology, the starting point of the bodily evolution.

wise 智 wisdom, knowledge, intelligence

[p.c. 知 know represents the sound and 甘 depicts a mouth [with something in it] represents the meaning

Hatcher has clever, learned (ness); intelligent, prudent (nce)

Chapter 34 🗵

Dao is what it is we are reminded in this chapter.

Sentences 1 to 5

- 1. All-pervading is the Great Dao! It may be found on the left hand and on the right.
- 2. All things depend on it for their production, which it gives to them, not one refusing obedience to it. When its work is accomplished, it does not claim the name of having done it. It clothes all things as with a garment, and makes no assumption of being their lord; -
- 3. It is always desireless, so we call it the small.
- 4. The myriad things return to it and it doesn't exact lordship Thus it can be called great.
- 5. Therefore (the sage) never strives himself for the great, and thereby the great is achieved.

are like a summary, a recapitulation, of what we have been told so far about Dao.

Chapter titles

0110101010101010101010101010101010101010		
The Perfection of Trust	Natural Perfection	Greatness of the Dao
The Perfect Condition	The Great Way is Universal	Humility and Greatness
True Perfection	Small in Desire, Great in Action	The Evolving Dao
The Great Dao		

Wang Bi

That means Dao overflows everywhere and there is nowhere it cannot go. It may turn left and right, up and down, and around in its applications. So there is nowhere it cannot go.

All things are born from Dao, Having been born, they do not know their source. Therefore when the world is without desire, all things have their proper place as if Dao has nothing to do with them. Then Dao may be called "Small."

All things return to Dao for life, but it purposefully does not reveal their source to them. This cannot be called "Small." Then again it can be called "Great."

To become great from smallness; to attempt the difficult from the easy.

Key terms

clothes 衣 yī, yì

clothes, a cover, cloak representing on the top, the upper garment and sleeves. At the bottoms, the robes waving and draggling

depend (on) 恃 shì

[p.c. † heart represents the meaning and 寺 temple {p.c. 寸 (hand) inch represents the meaning and 之 go forwards, pictograph of a foot (止) going out of an area. The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "to hold", now written as 持}. The current meaning "temple" is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]

Hatcher has *cling*, *depend*, *rely*, *count*; *trust*; *adhere* (s)

Wieger has to cling on, to rely on

great, greatness 大

depicts a man standing with his arms and legs spread, by extension the stature of an adult compared to the stature of a child. It means great except in a relation to something else; in comparison.

left 左 zuǒ

pictograph of a left hand. The \bot work component was added later to represent the meaning "help; assist", now written as 佐. Also means *east; unorthodox, improper; the Left (politics); unorthodox; queer; wrong; differing; opposite; variant of 佐[zuŏ]*

right 右 yòu

pictograph of a right hand. The \square (mouth) component was added later to distinguish the character from X. Also means *west; right-wing; right (-hand); the Right (politics); west (old)*

left and right 左右 zuǒyòu

nearby; approximately; attendant; to control; to influence

Chapter 35 🗵

Remember back in Chapter 26 we were told the Sage stays calm and is not distracted by fairs and circuses, by offers of luxury or fancy food and drink? Now we are told living in Dao, in a way recognized by others, leads to peace and tranquility. Tranquility that is shared without trying to share. And the bland nature of Dao is reiterated.

Sentence two says music and dainties will make the passing guest stop (for a time) but in Chapter 26 we are told a sage ignores them.

Sentences 1 and 2

- 1. To him who holds in his hands the Great Image (of the invisible Dao), the whole world repairs. Men resort to him, and receive no hurt, but (find) rest, peace, and the feeling of ease.
- 2. Music and dainties will make the passing guest stop (for a time).

Sentence 3

But Dao is mild to the taste. Looked at, it cannot be seen; Listened to, it cannot be heard; Applied, its supply never fails.

It is everywhere, in everything, but is unable to be sensed.

Chapter titles

The Virtue (Teh) of Benevolence	Virtue of Benevolence	Sage and Worldling
The Virtue of Bounty	Holding the Great Image	The Consummate Food and the Ultimate Music
The Kernel of Virtue	Hidden Process, Inexhaustible Use	Sensing the Insensible
The Dao Does Not Attract Followers		

Wang Bi

The great image is the mother of celestial image. Neither cold, nor warm, nor cool, it therefore can encompass all things without incurring harm or hurt. If the king holds on to it, the whole world will follow. Without shape or cognizance, not biased or showy, all things therefore can follow without harm and hindrance.

This is to say: Dao is profound and great. When the people hear the words of Dao, [the words] are less than music and viand which cause their hearts to rejoice. Music and viand cause the traveller to stop, but the words of Dao are flavourless and bland. Looked at, it cannot be seen; so it is not enough to please the eye. Listened to, it cannot be heard; so it is not enough to please the ear. It seems useless; but when it is used, it cannot be exhausted.

Key terms

bland 淡 dàn

[p.c. ? water represents the meaning and 炎 flame, combination of two fires 火 represents the sound].

Hatcher has ^ indifferent, bland, insipid, weak, thin, plain

Wieger has *insipid*; *tasteless*; *colourless* and has for the doubled radical *a rising flame*, *fire that blazes* quiet \mathcal{G} \bar{a} n, an

also means peaceful, tranquil, quiet; surname An; content; calm; still; quiet; safe; secure; in good health; to find a place for; to install; to fix; to fit; to bring (a charge against sb); to pacify; to harbor (good intentions); security; safety; peace, depicts a woman otin safety safety; peace safety; pea

harm, to harm somebody 害 hài

害 *injure*, original meaning *spearhead*, pictograph of a pointed spearhead. The distinguishing mark 口 was added later. Based on the original meaning "spearhead", the meaning later shifted to "harm" and "injure"

Hatcher has do(es, ing)(v) harm, injury (s)

• Chapter 36 回

Because we seem to *grok* stuff better when we are shown two sides, this Chapter goes into some more duads. This time the idea of *return* comes into play.

All behaviours contain their opposites. Heider

Sentence 1

In order to contract, It is necessary first to expand. In order to weaken, It is necessary first to strengthen. In order to destroy, It is necessary first to promote. In order to grasp, It is necessary first to give

Sentence 2

Herein is the subtle wisdom of life: The soft and weak overcomes the hard and strong.

In a note: This line should not be taken at face value. Given the lines that follow and the lines that precede this, what Laozi most likely meant is "Do not use sheer display of force to win. If you know where to bend and how to hide your strength, you are more likely to win." This theory is demonstrated in Tai Chi Chuan (taijiquan) 太極拳, which is a martial art that never confronts the opponent with sheer direct force. Ho

Sentence 3

A fish cannot leave the water. The country's potent weapons Should not be shown to its people.

And, of course, remaining quiet and unnoticed is best. The reference to weapons implies that not showing them is more effective as a deterrence than brandishing them.

Chapter titles

Explanation of a Paradox	Faint Light	Law of Reversion
The Covert Agreement	Should You Want to Contain	Too Much Invites Disaster
Hidden Enlightenment	Weakness in Strength, Strength in Weakness	Concealing the Advantage
Refined Understanding		

Wang Bi

To eliminate burglars and gangsters, rely on these four. Following the nature of things, let them destroy themselves. Do not use punishment to eliminate those that one is "about to" eliminate. This is called subtle wisdom. When opened enough and left to suffice, one who tries to open it more will be shut out by the people. When not opened enough and left to change, the one who opens it more will receive the benefit and the one [who failed to open it enough] will be in danger.

Sharp weapons refer to weapons of benefit to the state. Following only the nature of things, never using form to manage things and allowing weapons to be seen; all things will have their proper place. This is called weapons of benefit to the state. To show them to the people means using punishment. Using punishment to

benefit the state is to lose it. Fish separated from deep water will certainly be lost. Sharpening the state's weapons to signify punishment of the people will certainly fail.

Kev terms

contract 歙 chi

to gather the harvest, to gather together

Hatcher has 叡 to contract, collect, compress, shrink, close ^ up

Wieger has radical 76 % owe, lack, yawn + phonetic 681 harmonious,; to unite; together; all. In a lesson he has the character meaning to gather the wings; union; harmony

Fenn has 叙 (hsia) in harmony, united: all

spread 張 zhāng

also means stretch [p.c. \exists bow represents the meaning and ξ pictograph of an old person with long hair using a cane to walk, represents the sound]

Hatcher has (^) (to) stretch, lengthen, extend, expand (ed)

Wseiger has radical 57 bow + phonetic 323 long of time or space. He has to draw a bow; to strtetch; to draw up; to display; a sheet; a numerative

weaken 弱 ruò

also means weak original meaning urinate, depicts two people urinating (尿). Based on the original meaning "urinate", now written as 尿/溺. The current meaning is a phonetic loan

Hatcher has to enfeeble, gentle, relax, soften, weaken

Wieger has phonetic 540 弱 feeble, fragile, slender. The wings of a young bird

Fenn has 溺 weak, pliable: weak of purpose

and

strengthen 強 or 彊 qiáng, jiàng, qiǎng

also means *strong* [p.c. 弓 *bow* represents the meaning and 畺 *although*, original meaning *type of* lizard [p.c. 虫 bug, insect represents the meaning and 唯 only, represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "type of lizard". The current meaning is a phonetic loan] represents the sound

Hatcher has ^) (to) fortify, strengthen, empower (ed)

Wieger has phonetic 668 強 strong; good

abandon 廢 fèi

also means discard [p.c. 广 roof represents the meaning and 發 send out, depicts a hand pulling back an arrow 殳 in a bow 弓. 癶 *legs* represents the sound, represents the sound]

Hatcher has to abolish, abrogate, dispense/do away with

Wieger has radical 53 广 a covering + phonetic 675 發 to send forth; to issue; to dismiss; to utter; to produce; to rise; to be manifest; to act. Wieger has radical *\footsteps, legs, as two [feet] in contrary directions; idea of two feet; or of separation, divergence, letting loose

Fenn has 廢 to cast aside, waste, cancel, void

and

interest 興 *xìng*, *xīng*

also means rise, flourish, depicts four hands 舁 working together 同 to raise something

Hatcher has (^) (to) establish, promote (d); set (^) up

Wieger has radical 134 臼 mortar, joint + phonetic 舁 to raise a thing, to lift it for presentation; to promote; actions, manners; all, whole. He has in a lesson that the object is placed between the two hands

Fenn has 興 to prosper, original, begin spelled hsing

seize 奪 duó

also means take by force, depicts a hand 寸 snatching a bird 隹. The top component was originally 衣 (clothes), depicting a person holding a bird in their clothes, but later it was reanalyzed as a phonetic component, written as either 兌 or 大

Hatcher has to deprive, despoil; usurp, seize, take away

Wieger has radical 37 大 big, very + radical 172 隹 bird, shirt-tailed bird + radical 41 寸 thumb, inch Fenn has 奪 to snatch, to carry off spelled to (dwo)

given, give 與 yǔ, yú, yù also means together with [p.c. 舁 depicts four hands working together represents the meaning and 牙 tooth, depicts top and bottom teeth touching each other, represents the sound] Hatcher has ($^{\wedge}$) (to) assist, endow, help, support (ed); given Wieger has radical 134 Θ mortar, join + phonetic 91 (and radical 92 tooth, fang) 牙 teeth

Chapter 37 🗵

Regardless, we must *grok* how Dao flows through the universe and us. Dao De Jing and the I Ching work on synchronicity, repeating cycles, things arise, things vanish.

Can you tell the difference between what is happening [principle] and how it happens [process]? Heider

Sentence 1

1. The Dao is always "not-doing" Yet there is nothing it doesn't do.

Dao ever-constantly practices non-action 道無為. Linnell

Sentence 2

2: "If the ruler is able to embody it Everything will naturally change. Being changed, they desire to act. So I must restrain them, using the nameless "un-carved block (original mind)." Using the nameless un-carved block They become desireless.

Sentence 3

3. Desireless, they are tranquil and All-under-Heaven is naturally settled.

In the state of the nameless un-carved block, Men also would be without-desire. Not desiring, thus they would be still – And the world would naturally settle. Linnell

We have come around (returned) to the beginning, Dao, what it is and how it works, yet again. How it is manifested in our behaviours and habits. Its benefits. If we replace *kings and nobles* with *ourselves*, then we must realize maintaining life in Dao is what makes the most efficacious way of life. Always keep the *unformed block* in mind when hatching schemes and plans, actions.

But, remember, hatching schemes and plans is like giving in to desire. To control interior and exterior events is a desire, a want or need. And we all know what desire brings – all together now – *suffering*.

Craig notes: I want to focus on the first sentence. It harks back strongly to chapter 1, and is similarly dense. It is eight characters long, two four character stanzas. The first stanza says 道常無為: "Dao constant/eternal empty action." The second stanza says 而無不為: "And empty not action." This is the famous wu wei but also something new: wu bu wei. Bu tends to be a pretty straight forward negation, while wu can have a range of flavours from 'no' or 'not' to 'empty' or 'without' or 'nothing'. Dao is constantly not doing and not not doing. The traditional reading treats the first wu as a close pair with wei, 'non-action' or 'empty action'. But it then treats the second wu as simply 'nothing', so that the second stanza says 'but nothing (is) un-done'. "Dao does nothing but nothing is undone." This reads the first wei'as present tense and the second wei'as past tense. But there is nothing in the text that actually indicates that.

I want to try and read both cases of wu as 'empty' and both cases of wei'in the present tense, so that wu wei and wu bu wei are treated as tight groupings. On this reading, wei and

bu wei might be something like ordinary action and ordinary inaction. Doing something or just sitting there. This reading of bu wei is supported by the few other occurrences of the pair in the text. For example in Chapter 47 the sage "does not act", bu wei. It also occurs in Chapters 3, 12, 34 and 63, where bu is clearly this sort of straightforward negation. With wu, these would then be 'empty action' and 'empty inaction'. The phrase wu bu wei occurs in one other place, Chapter 48, where it is again part of 'empty action and empty not action', and is again translated usually as something like "do nothing and nothing is undone".

I don't dispute that this translation is in harmony with lots of other places where everything gets completed while nothing happens. But this case feels to me to be sharper. Dao eternally and constantly is empty in both its action and its inaction. It is definitely sometimes active. It flows like a river. But it can also be still. In Chapter 16 when everything returns to its source there is profound stillness. "Attain the utmost emptiness. Maintain a profound stillness." Dao, in both its action and its stillness, is constantly empty.

How does this reading relate to the rest of the chapter? I think it relates well. "If rulers could maintain this emptiness in both action and inaction, the ten thousand things would naturally transform. Transform and create desire. We will contain this through the nameless un-carved block. Through the nameless un-carved block they would also tend to empty desire. With no desire they would become still. All under heaven would naturally settle." So none of this is about completion or getting done. This is about transformation that naturally tends towards stillness. And it is emptiness throughout this process, from transformation through desire to stillness, that sustains the naturalness of it all. Let it be. It will settle of its own accord. Because it's all empty.

Chapter titles

Administering the Government	The Way of Government	Order through Non-Action
The Art of Government	The Way Is Always Uncontrived	The Primal Simplicity
To Induce Good Government	Rightness and Simplicity	The Power in Desirelessness
Stillness of the Mind and Refined Action		

Wang Bi

To follow nature.

Nothing exists which is not governed or accomplished by action.

"If transformation raises desires"; "raises" means the desires are formed. I would suppress them with nameless simplicity without being the master.

Having no desires to contend with.

Chapter 38 🗓

This is usually the place where Dao has ended and *De* begun. Although, there is no clear distinction between the two (seemingly) arbitrary sections. The bi-partite arrangement is not a recent innovation. Some older versions start at Chapter 38 going to 81, followed by one to 37. Some versions have rearranged the sentences by their topic but this makes for difficult reading.

Anyway, this is often considered the *pivot point* because it is focused on *return* and *weak-ness* as the two primary functions of Dao. A little oblique overall, this chapter reminds us of the all-pervasive nature of Dao. The weight of this chapter is reflected in Wang Bi's comments, the longest of them all.

Paradox is evident throughout Dao De Jing. Often it is simply a this or that, a not this or not that. In this chapter however we find some complicated twists in Dao and how it is used.

'To acquire Dao' can be called 'to possess De'. Jiyu

Apparently we can acquire Dao. Apparently we can *lose* Dao. What does this imply about Dao? Or us? This chapter is meaty and dense, it sorts out the differences between substance and emptiness in a number of metaphors.

The overall importance of this chapter is obvious from Wang Bi. Craig and I have spent many hours parsing and developing an understand of what this chapter means for us, as individuals and for us as members of society. Watch for Wang Bi's use of the term *human-heartedness*.

Confucian thought uses \sqsubseteq *rén* meaning humanness, depicts a kind relationship between two \equiv people \uparrow . Humanness is the essence of being human.

Ren relies heavily on the relationships between two people, but at the same time encompasses much more than that. It represents an inner development towards an altruistic goal, while simultaneously realizing that one is never alone, and that everyone has these relationships to fall back on, being a member of a family, the state, the world, and ultimately the Dao. Wikipedia

Craig notes: Thus begins the second part. I read this chapter as having four sections: sentence one, sentences two and three, sentence four, sentences five and six. The sections relate in various ways but they are in other ways independent. The topic of all of them is virtue/power, De, and its high and low, superior and inferior, manifestations. Is Dao ever high and low, superior and inferior? Chapter 34: Great and small. Left and right. The sense of 'low' in this chapter is, in its lowest, as close to 'without Dao' as one can get, it seems to me. But even here there is Dao, because everything depends on Dao. So what does 'without Dao' look like when nothing is without Dao?

Sentence 1

High Virtue is non-virtuous; Therefore it has Virtue. Low Virtue never frees itself from virtuousness; Therefore it has no Virtue.

If you have power keep it hidden, then it is powerful. If you flaunt it, then it is powerless.

Upper quiescence [is] not quiescence, so [there] is quiescence. Lower quiescence [is to] not lose quiescence, so [there] is no quiescence. Ramsden

Craig notes: Sentence one: the text is stark, though translators try to soften it. High De is not De, this is why it is/has De; Low De does not lose De, this is why it is without/empty De. 'Not' here is bu, 'without' is wu. See my discussion of those two in Chapter 37. 'Is/has' is 有, you, and 'without/empty' is 無, wu. See Chapter 2 where these are Being and Non-Being. In the context of the chapter we are clearly talking about people here, so, trying to preserve the contradiction, we can say something like: 'When a person has High De it is not De, this is why they have De; when a person has Low De they do not lose De, this is why they are without De.' In order to have High De one has to lose De: Low De is low because it does not lose De. How does one lose De? One has to hold De and not-De together, and so let De go as it evaporates and burns up all having and not having. Thus one has De, not High De and not Low De, just De. The Dao within is neither High nor Low, it just is. But every 'is' has its 'is not', every Being has Non-Being. Being De has Without De. They are born together. How does one lose De to gain De? By holding De and not-De together. When I think "I have virtue" I have lost virtue by not losing it, by not letting it go. When I am my virtue without holding or grasping, by losing it, by letting it dissolve, I have virtue.

This idea of losing or letting go, 失, *shi*, which in this sentence is the way to gain virtue by letting it go, is the same idea as appears in section three of this chapter, where losing loses virtue by grasping it. Very strange. It has the connotation of forgetting, or letting go of, like forgetting one's keys while distracted. It is not something difficult. Holding on to things is always more difficult, ultimately, than letting them go.

Sentences 2 and 3

- 2. The finest Te: no working at it, no goal in mind the poorest Te: people work at it, with a goal in mind.
- 3. The finest Goodness: People work at it, but with no goal in mind the finest Morality: People work at it, with a goal in mind the finest Etiquette: People work at it, and, when none pay attention, they roll up their sleeves and go on the attack.

Like sentence one it posits when you *pretend* to use Dao you are not. When you act with motive you are going against Nature. There is a cascade effect in *acting* that goes from self-less acting to using force.

Craig notes: Sentences two and three: Sentence two says 'high De empty does and empty intends to do; low De does and intends to do.' 'Empty do' here is the famous wu wei. High De not only wu wei but also wu yi wei. Yi, 以, means reason or intention, why. In sentence one this character appears in the "this is why", 是以, "is why". Here it is by itself, adjacent to wei, and means intention. To do and to intend to do. In sentence three we will see these with and without Wu in various combinations. Here we have high De empty everywhere and low De full everywhere. This is Wang Bi's interpretation, and is the most common in translations we generally see. But there is a notable different text in some versions where low de wu wei and yi wei. There is even a strong dissenting tradition that suggests the second half of sentence two is a mistake, a later addition, and should be left out altogether. I'm going to stick with Wang Bi's interpretation, which is the "received" text. For a lengthy discussion and alternate reading, see Chen, pages 235 to 238.

I read the two halves of sentence two as establishing a scale, as it were, from 'best: High De', wu wei and wu yi wei, to 'worst: Low De', wei and yi wei. Then sentence three displays the intermediate values on the scale in terms of three kinds of 'virtue' that are 'lower' than 'High De': 'High humaneness' – wei and wu yi wei, and two versions of wei and yi wei – 'High morality' and finally 'High ritual'. The latter is so low that not only do they intend to act, if they encounter lack of interest or failure to comply on the part of others they will roll up their sleeves and force their ways upon them. Humaneness, kindness, is aware of itself, can say "I am kind", but has no motive in being kind. Morality can say "I am moral" and also has a motive to be moral. The motive is, for example, to satisfy moral principles 'because' they are principles. Ritual can say "I follow ritual" and certainly has a motive to follow ritual: ritual is 'what we are supposed to do'. But not only will people committed to ritual point out 'what we are supposed to do', they will bloody well force it on us if we ignore them.

But does even the lowest De, 'high ritual', have De in some sense? How could it not if everything manifests Dao? Wang Bi says "The man who cannot do anything through inaction has the lowest virtues, namely, human-heartedness, righteousness, propriety, and etiquette." He thus clumps all the other virtues together as 'low De', unable to *wu wei*. But any of these can be engaged with sincerity and personal integrity, engaged with one's own inner power, which is always there. And then they can be of value. Love and kindness can

be of value. Use of principles can be of value. Even ritual can be of value. "Utensils are fashioned by the carpenter; they cannot be the carpenter."

Sentence 4

Truly, once the Way is lost, There comes then virtue; Virtue lost, comes then compassion; After that morality; And when that's lost, there's etiquette, The husk of all good faith, The rising point of anarchy.

Another summary. A cascade of characteristics leading from losing life in Dao to the development of Chaos. Some interpretations use the phrase about how the loss of propriety gives rise to [propriety] rolling up the sleeves and throwing things. The end of the cascade from the highest humanity to the loss of propriety is always a bare arm using force.

Craig notes: Sentence four: "lose Dao then comes De; lose De then comes kindness; lose kindness then comes morality; lose morality then comes ritual; now ritual is the husk of loyalty and sincerity and the beginning of disorder." This places the scale expressed in Sentences two and three in a different light. In Sentence one we lose De to gain De. Here we lose in a different sense. In Sentence one the losing and gaining are one and the same, at the same time. Here the loss is in a temporal sequence: "then comes", 後, hou. Dao gives birth to heaven and earth and the ten thousand things and it all comes tumbling along in time. But Dao itself, the mother, remains timeless and empty. So in the first step, 'lose Dao', we enter the realm of time. This is the realm of differences and distinctions. And the first difference is between me, an individual, and the infinite Dao. So the first thing we get is De, which is the unique manifestation of Dao in each and every finite thing. It is my engine, my power and virtue. But now I am in a world with other people. And I have to relate to them. I am already dependent on them, as they are on me. But we are all only finite beings. So we cannot possibly sustain that burden of dependence and support. And from that follows limitations and promises and lies. And finally, we end up with merely the husk of an appearance of integrity, of sincerity and loyalty, and the beginning of disorder and chaos, ignorance and delusion. But even here there is still Dao. Because Dao gives birth to all.

Sentence 5

Foreknowledge is the flowering of the Way and the beginning of folly.

Ritual is the last bastion of those who live not in Dao.

Sentence 5 has a number of interesting variants:

propriety is that which is merely the appearance of loyalty and honesty, And the beginning of confusion. Linnell

The highest propriety acts on things and when nobody responds to it Then rolls up the sleeves and throws things: Hatcher

Ceremony and gentlemanly behaviour is the result of the thinness of faith and trust, and is the origin of many ills. Ho]

Sentence 6

Thus it is that the Great man abides by what is solid, and eschews what is flimsy; dwells with the fruit and not with the flower. It is thus that he puts away the one and makes choice of the other.

provides the way out. Stick with Dao. Live in Dao. Think here of religious leaders, churchmen, and priests.

Craig notes: Sentences five and six: 'Foreknowledge is the flower of Dao and the beginning of ignorance.' When we fill our heads with imagining what might or ought or could or should be we are still playing out the last bits of emergence from Dao, Dao's flower. But

this sputtering has no substance. It is but the foam on the crest of the wave and has no force. To rely on it is to be deluded and ignorant. 'Thus the wise abide and dwell in the substance and do not linger in the superficial. They dwell with the fruit and do not linger with the flower. They let go of that and take up this.'

Potent leadership is a matter of being aware of what is happening in the group and acting accordingly. Specific actions are less important than the leader's clarity or consciousness. That is why there are no exercises or formulas to ensure successful leadership. Three examples illustrate differing degrees of potency in leadership: - Potent: a conscious yet spontaneous response to what is happening in the here-and-now; no calculation or manipulation. - Less Potent: trying to do what is right. This is calculated behaviour base don the concept of right, and manipulative behaviour based on an idea of what should happen. - Least Potent: imposed morality. Imposed morality rests entirely on should and shouldn't. It is both calculated and manipulative, and meets resistance with punishment. It sheds no light on what is actually happening. It often backfires. Heider

Chapter titles

A Discussion about Teh	Discourse on Virtue	Pointer to the Essential Thing
Of Virtue	Power Without Motive	Distinguishing the Highest from the Lowest Morality
A Discourse on the Virtues	Rightness and Rites	Higher Virtue Is Not Ingratiating
Refined Way of Life		

Wang Bi

Virtue means gain. To constantly gain without loss, and to have benefit without harmfulness, then it is called virtue. How is virtue gained? Through Dao. How is virtue fully completed? Through the use of non-being. Through the use of non-being, nothing is left unsupported. Therefore, if things rest in non-being, then everything is regulated; if they rest in being, then there is not enough to spare their lives. Therefore, although heaven and earth are vast, they use non-being as their heart; although the Sage is great, he regards emptiness as his master. That is to say: if one sees with Return, he will discern the hearts of heaven and earth; if one meditates on the winter solstice, he can see the zenith of ancient kings. Therefore, if one subdues his selfishness and disregards his own body, then the Four Seas will pay him reverence, the far and the near will come to him. But if he distinguishes himself and becomes self-possessed, he cannot even preserve his own body, and his muscles and bones cannot tolerate each other.

Therefore the man with the highest virtue uses Dao only. Not displaying his virtue, not grasping, not applying, thus he can have virtue, and nothing is left undone. To gain without seeking, to achieve without action, although he has virtue, he does not acquire the name of virtue.

The man with the lowest virtue gains by seeking, achieves by action, and establishes goodness to govern things. Thus he acquires the name of virtue. Gain by seeking cannot avoid loss; achievement by action cannot avoid failure. When the name "goodness" is produced, badness may respond. Therefore the man with the lowest virtue acts and has intent to act. Having no intent to act means employing without partiality. The man who cannot do anything through inaction has the lowest virtues, namely, human-heartedness, righteousness, propriety, and etiquette. In order to make clear the differences between the highest and the lowest virtues, the lowest virtue is compared with the highest virtue to the ultimate, measuring below the lowest virtue which is the highest benevolence. When one reaches the point with no intent to act, one still has to act. Therefore one should act with no specific intent, for to act intentionally is the calamity of action. The root lies in inaction; the mother rests in the nameless. To discard the root, to forsake the mother, and to follow the son, though the achievement may be great, it certainly does not help. Though the name may be splendid, falsehood will surely arise. If one is not able to achieve without action, to rule without initiation, and still has to act, then he must administer to all with human-heartedness and love.

Loving without partiality, those with the highest human-heartedness therefore act with no intent to act. If love cannot be impartial, then curbing and resisting, rectifying and straightening will arise. Those with righteousness will detest the abuser and protect the righteous, helping this and attacking that. Everything, then, becomes intentional. Therefore, the man with the highest righteousness acts and has intent to act. To be right without moral devotion, then, those who like idle ornaments, elegant statements, and proper ceremonies would argue back and forth about the details, and disagreement between two opposing parties would arouse anger and grudges. Therefore those with the highest righteousness act, and if there is no response, they bare their arms to apply force.

The ultimate greatness is simply Dao! From this point on, nothing is worthy of respect! Therefore although those who have abundant virtue, plenty of property, and possession of all things can obtain their own virtue, they cannot achieve self-completion. Therefore, heaven cannot support; earth cannot shelter; man cannot be self-sufficient. Though all things are valuable, they must employ non-being and cannot cease to embody non-

being. Not being able to cease to embody non-being, they cannot be great. That is to say when Dao is lost, virtue ensues. To use non-being is to have the Mother. Then, one does not toil, and everything is in order. Below this, when the mother is disused, and one has to act, then the best thing is to administer to all. If one cannot administer to all, then the best thing is to uphold the righteous. If one cannot uphold the righteous, then one venerates ornaments and ceremonies. Therefore, when virtue is lost, human-heartedness ensues; when human-heartedness is lost, righteousness ensues; when righteousness is lost, propriety ensues. Propriety begins with insufficient loyalty and honesty, the secretiveness of communication, the insistence on appearance, and fight for control of trivialities. When human-heartedness and propriety arise from within, practicing them can still be regarded as hypocrisy. How can those devoted to external ornaments last long? Therefore, propriety means the thinness of loyalty and honesty, and the beginning of disorder.

Foreknowledge means to know before others do; it is one of the lowest virtues. Exhaust one's wisdom to claim foreknowledge; enslave one's intelligence to manage mundane affairs; though his passion is worthwhile, he is full of wickedness and cunning; though his praise is profuse, he only loses more of his devotion and honesty! He labors only to make things confusing, manages only to cause government disruption. Even using his sagacity to the utmost, he does more damage to the people. Forget oneself and let things alone; achieve peace without action; keep to simplicity and never follow laws and systems; let the people keep their gain and abandon what one has kept; recognize that the ornament of Dao is the beginning of ignorance. If one obtains the mother of achievement, then all things rise without his control; all things survive without his labor. Function without form and control without name; then human-heartedness and righteousness can be manifested; reverence can be manifested. Support with the great Dao, subdued with no name, then nothing is preferred and no intent is self-serving. Each carries his own purity and attends to events with sincerity. Then, human-heartedness and virtue are thick; the use of righteousness is just; propriety and reverence are pure. To abandon that which supports, to forsake that which gives life, to employ one's finished form, to enslave one's intelligence, then human-heartedness becomes hypocritical, righteousness competitive, and propriety contentious, Therefore the depth of human-heartedness and virtue is not measured by the use of human-heartedness. The justice of employing righteousness is not accomplished by the use of righteousness. The purity of propriety and reverence is not achieved by the use of rituals only.

To support with Dao, to manage with the Mother, to distinguish without preference, to be made known without competing: use no name, then the name is true; use no shape, then the shape is formed. Keep the mother to preserve the son; honour the root to uphold the end. Then both the shape and name are there, and the wicked cannot thrive. Great righteousness matches heaven, and the ornament does not rise. Do not keep the mother at a distance; do not lose the root. Human-heartedness and righteousness are the issues of the Mother; they cannot be the mother's model. Utensils are fashioned by the carpenter; they cannot be the carpenter. To forsake the mother and use the son; to abandon the root and follow the end; the names having their divisions and the shapes having their limits then though greatness is extended to the utmost, it must have not been completed; though goodness seems exuberant, there must be misfortune and sorrow. If achievement relies on action, it is not worth claiming.

Hua-Ching Ni

One of subtle universal virtue is not conscious of being virtuous, therefore, he is truly virtuous.

One of partial virtue attempts to live up to an external standard of virtue, therefore, he is not truly virtuous. One of whole virtue does not need to do anything in order to be virtuous, because virtue is the very essence of one's true nature.

But, one of partial virtue believes that something must be done in order to prove that he is virtuous.

Thus, partial virtue becomes prevalent when people fail to follow their own true nature.

Benevolence becomes prevalent when people fail to be naturally kind.

Etiquette becomes prevalent when people fail to be righteous and considerate.

When people find no response with etiquette, they roll up their sleeves and force others to respond to them.

When people stray from the subtle way of universal nature, they can no longer perceive their own true nature. Thus, they emphasize relative virtue.

When natural virtue is lost, society depends on the doctrine of humanism.

When humanity becomes corrupted, social and religious teachings appear and become powerful forces.

When social and religious teachings become corrupted, what is left behind is the empty shell of superficial ceremonies and artificial etiquette.

When etiquette is emphasized, it is because people lack the simple qualities of fairness and kindness.

This is the starting point of people of confusion.

All of these man-made, partial virtues are merely superficial flowers, a false nature.

When people begin to move away from their own true nature, it is the beginning of hypocrisy.

Therefore, one who integrates his own individual being with the deep nature of the universe sets his heart upon the root of reality rather than the husk, and upon the nourishment of the fruit rather than the fleeting beauty of the flowers.

Truly, he cherishes what is deep within rather than what is shallow without.

Knowing this, he knows what to accept and what to reject.

Key terms

ceremony, rites 禮 lǐ

[p.c. 才 *show* represents the meaning and 豊 abundant, original meaning *ceremonial vessel*, depicts a decoration 玨 and a drum 壴 used for ceremonial purposes represents the sound is the radical for reveal and the phonetic for a vessel used in sacrifice]

Linnell uses *highest propriety*

Hatcher has propriety, ceremony, ritual, protocol, etiquette

Wieger has radical 113 示 (which compnds as 才) to reveal, to teach (also means ancestor, venerate)

+ phonetic 744 a vessel used in sacrificing, also means ceremony, etiquette; presents; worship

Fenn has 禮 ceremony, etiquette; worship; offerings, presents spelled li

loyalty 忠 zhōng

[p.c. 心 heart represents the meaning and 中 central, depicts a flagpole. There is a circle in the middle marking the center of the flagpole. In older forms of the character, the flagpole has streamers at the top and bottom used to show the direction of the wind, represents the sound]

Hatcher has (^) loyalty, fidelity, constancy, dedication

Wieger has radcal 61 *heart* + phonetic 52 中 *middle within*; *to hit*, *to be hit* [on target] propriety 禮 lǐ

[p.c. . 才 show represents the meaning and 豊 abundant represents the sound]

Hatcher has propriety, ceremony, ritual, protocol, etiquette

Chapter 39 🗓

This is one of the longest chapters. Eight sentences to show how Dao is the basis.

Sentences 1 and 2

- 1. Of old those that obtained the One: Heaven obtained the One and became clear. Earth obtained the One and became tranquil. The spiritual beings obtained the One and became divine
- 2. The valley obtained the One and became full. The myriad things obtained the One and lived and grew. Kings and barons obtained the One and became rulers of the empire. What made them so is the One.

Of those who in ancient times attained oneness. Linnell

These things, from the beginning, have grasped wholeness. Hatcher

There is one universal formula that always works. Ho

The valley attained oneness, thus becoming full. The ten thousand creatures attained oneness, thus becoming alive. Nobles and kings attained oneness, thus serving the world faithfully. They attained it. Linnell

Sentences 3 and 4

- 3. The sky, without what makes it clear, is likely to crack. The earth, without what makes it steady, is likely to quake. The spirits, without what gives them powers, are likely to vanish.
- 4. If the fountains were not full, they would be likely to dry up; If the ten thousand creatures were not reproductive, they would be likely to come to extinction; If the barons and princes were not the sovereign rulers, they would be likely to stumble and fall.

If Dao is lost then things suffer.

Sentence 5

Therefore humble station is the basis of honour. The low is the foundation of the high.

Therefore: humility thus serves as the source of high rank; low thus serves as the foundation of high. Linnell

To sum up the previous, an important duad is presented. Like Chapter 26, where gravity is the root of grace, stillness the essence of speed, here stability is the root of the important things and those things which are low (remember Dao is like water, it sinks to the lowest parts and from it all things arise) are the base of things that are high. Reciprocal; one posits the other; everything is in balance.

Sentences 6 and 7

- 6. Therefore it is right that the emperor and the princes, the most exalted of men, should be designated by the terms sole, unique, incapable, without them being thereby degraded. For this reason kings and barons call themselves children without parents, lonely people without spouses, and men without food to eat. Is this not regarding humble station as the basis of honour? Is it not?
- 7. Therefore enumerate all the parts of a chariot as you may, and you still have no chariot.

Therefore: to attain exceptional popularity is to be without popularity. Linnell

Just as obtaining tallies of chariots will not be (real) chariots. Hatcher

Humility works!

The wise leader knows better than to be neurotic and self-centered. Potency comes from knowing what is happening and acting accordingly. Paradoxically, freedom comes from obedience to the natural order. Heider

Let me remind you again, the practice involves seeing how this works *inside*, in your *De*.

Sentence 8

Rather than jingle like the jade, Rumble like the rocks.

This sentence continues with the idea that simplicity and quietude works best in human affairs. The sentence says, rather than be a shooting star, be reserved and solid.

 \pm *jade* has been a Chinese *gem* for at least 8,000 years. It is so old the character is a radical by itself. It is used also in many characters, often indicating chimes. Jade pieces suspended will produce pleasant noises when they strike one another. Tinkle. The difference between jade and ordinary stone is pieces of jade tinkle or chime while pieces of stone just go thud.

石 *stone* is also a standalone radical but it forms some characters related to dullness and dead. We are warned to not jingle like jade but instead to rumble like rocks. Thud. Both these radicals are made up of five strokes.

Chapter titles

enapter titles		
The Root of Authority	Foundation of the Law	Light on Oneness
Tracing the Source	Ancient Attainment of Unity	Then and Now
The Root of the Law	On Unity	Oneness in Leadership
The Universal Formula		

Wang Bi

"Ancient" means the "beginning." "One" is the beginning of numbers and the utmost of things. Each thing is produced by One; therefore One becomes its master. All things obtain their forms from this One. Being

formed and completed, they stay in their forms. Staying in their forms, they lose their mother. Therefore, they are disrupted, exploded, dissolved, dissipated, perished, and fallen.

Each with the One becomes clear, tranquil, divine, replete, alive and rectified.

Use the One to obtain clarity, and not clarity to become clear. Keeping the One, then clarity won't be lost; otherwise, clarity will probably bring disruption. So the mother of achievement cannot be forsaken. One does not make much of his achievement, for fear he will lose his roots.

Clarity cannot become clear; fullness cannot become full. They all have their mother to keep their forms. Therefore clarity cannot be valued; fullness cannot be enough. The value lies in the mother, but the mother has no valued shape for distinction so humility is used as its root; for the high uses, the low as its foundation. Truly he who is most praiseworthy does not need praise. Jade or stone, beautiful or common, their substance is limited in their shape. So one doesn't want them.

Key terms

metal, gold 金 jīn

[p.c. \pm king, depicts two metal plates and \exists pitchpipe represent the meaning and \Rightarrow now, the top is a remnant of \Rightarrow , original meaning closed mouth represents the sound. \pm depicts a metal axe and \equiv depicts two metal plates]

Hatcher has (when, with) coins, riches, bronze, gold, metals

Wieger has radical 167 金 metal; gold

Fenn has 金 gold, metal, precious spelled chin

obtain, attain 得 dé, de, děi

depicts a hand \forall grabbing a shell \exists , used as currency in ancient China, to convey the meaning "get". Originally written as \exists . The \neq (movement) component was added later

Hatcher has to get, obtain, come by, find, acquire

Wieger has radical 60 彳 walk + radical 154 貝 shell + radical 又 and, again, right hand combined.

貝 and 又 are combined to form phonetic 397 导 to get; to effect Fenn has 得 enable to obtain or do spelled pei

oneness → vī

a single horizontal stroke, representing the number one

produce, fertile, productive 生 *shēng*

pictograph of a sprout emerging from the ground, is a radical meaning a plant that grows more and more. By extension, to bear, to spring, to live, to grow

Fenn has 生 to beget, produce; birth; raw

public opinion, popularity 輿 yú

a cart 車 carried on one's shoulder 舁

Hatcher has *chariot*, *vehicle*, *carriage*, *cart* (s); *basis*, *support*

Wieger has radical 159 車 *cart, barrow, coach, revolving engine* + but he doesn't include the phonetic, which Dong says is based on 异 *shoulder*, which is split by the cart character

spirit 神 shén

神 spirit [p.c. 才 show represents the meaning and 申 to extendrepresents the sound]

Hatcher has (the) spirit(s), divinity(ies), deity(ies); sacred

Wieger has the character as phonetic 853 a subtle substance; the spirit or energy of a being; soul; spiritual; a transcendent power

treasure 寶 *bǎo*

depicts an assortment of valuable things, including jade Ξ and shells Ξ , being stored safely under a roof $\overset{\leftarrow}{}$

• Chapter 40 回

Sentence 1

Returning is the movement of the Way. Gentleness is the method of the Way.

There is a sense that Return is inevitable.

The movement of Dao returns things. The function of Dao is to weaken things. Linnell

Sentence 2

All things in the world are born of being; being is born of nonbeing

Chapter titles

Avoiding Activity	Movement and Function	Back to the Source
Resigning Work	Return Is the Movement of the Way	All is Paradox
The Concealed Use	Returning and Yielding	The Way
The Uncommon Dao		

Wang Bi

The high regards the low as its foundation. Distinction regards humility as its roots. Being regards non-being as its function. Each is its opposite. If motion knows its own nothingness [opposite], then all things can be interchangeable. Therefore, returning is Dao's motion.

The soft and the weak can be interchangeable without limit.

All things in the world regard being as their life; being regards non-being as its roots. If one wishes to achieve perfect being, one must return to non-being.

The reverse of expectations is the Dao in action. The weak in appearance is the Dao in application. All living things are born of interactions in the world of existence. Interactions in the world of existence are born of emptiness or non-existence. Ho

Key terms

application, use 用 yòng

the radical for to *use*, *to employ*, *so as to*. It depicts a bronze, three-legged bowl or tripod used in making offerings to the ancestors, hence to use, usage

Linnell uses function

Hatcher has application, function, method, operation, use

Fenn has 用 effect, use, function spelled kung

movement 動 dòng

[p.c. 力 power represents the meaning. The sound component 重 heavy, pictograph of a person { carrying a heavy basket 東 on their back]. The character appears in chapters 5, 18, 16, 40, and 50 Hatcher has action, activity, movement, motion, conduct. Also means to exercise; to move about; to operate; to use connections (personal influence); loose; shaky; active; movable; activity; campaign; maneuver; behaviour

Wieger has radical 19 力 power, force + phonetic 437 重 heavy, important, severe Fenn has 動 conduct, movements spelled hsing

return 反 fǎn

original meaning climb, pictograph of a hand X climbing a cliff Γ . Based on original meaning "climb", the meaning later shifted to "pull" and "reverse". It is the radicals for cliff and right hand, meaning to turn back [always a sensible thing to do near the edge of a cliff] but also contrary, opposite, to rebel

Hatcher has reversal; coming/turning around/back

Wieger has phonetic 反 to turn back, contrary, opposite, to rebel

Fenn has 反 to return, revert, conform; a Buddhist word spelled kuei

weak(ness) 弱 ruò

original meaning *urinate*, depicts two people urinating \mathbb{R} , depicts a person leaning over \mathbb{P} and passing water 水. Based on the original meaning "urinate", now written as \mathbb{R} /溺. The current meaning is a phonetic loan. This is partially right.

It is the doubled radical 57 \exists bow.

Hatcher has softness, suppleness, weakness; yielding

Wieger has:

Note 1: The bows were kept by pairs, fixed upon a stiff piece of wood in a sheath. Hence it comes that, sometimes, in composition, two ∃ *mean a pair, or that which makes a pair, a second*

Note 2: ... the scribes fancifully wrote ¬ for another thing. ... Slender, fragile, weak. The wings of a young bird, with their first feathers. The skeletons of the wings resembles two ¬ bows. The two wings are represented as being torn out; the crook on the top represents the extremity by which they were once united to the body.

Chapter 41 🗵

So how do (should) we deal with Dao? Obviously not everyone *groks* it immediately. I was reading it for nearly 20 years before I stumbled on my *aha moment* reading Chapter 26. Probably for the thousandth time. Having got that, I then judged every other translation and interpretation on how the writer dealt with Chapter 26. Again, here, this chapter is a cascade of involvements, of understandings, between people and Dao.

Sentence 1

Scholars of the highest class, when they hear about the Dao, earnestly carry it into practice. Scholars of the middle class, when they have heard about it, seem now to keep it and now to lose it.

The superior scholar hearing of Dao works hard and practices it. The average scholar hearing of Dao seems to keep it, seems to lose it. Linnell

Regarding the phrase scholars of the highest class, Linnell and Hatcher use \pm shì as student or scholar. It is radical 33. Wieger has it as a learned man, a scholar, an officer. In lesson 24C, he said an affair, a thing. Because all things are comprised between the two terms of enumeration \rightarrow one and + ten. By extension, a sage, a man pointed out, by his learning, to become an official. Dong has scholar, gentleman; soldier; member of the senior ministerial class (old); scholar (old); bachelor; honorific; noncommissioned officer; specialist worker.

Hatcher has (a, the) student, disciple, adherent; officer (s). Linnell uses average for mediocre.

People live in Dao in different ways. Some are into it, some are cool with it, some are aware. It is hard work, living in Dao.

Sentence 2

Scholars of the lowest class, when they have heard about it, laugh greatly at it. If it were not (thus) laughed at, it would not be fit to be the Tao

Linnell uses *inferior*. The sentence looks at the rest, the fools and the unwitting. Living in their ignorance they can do else but sneer and laugh, and ridicule.

If he did not laugh, it would not be qualified to be Dao. Linnell

Without the laughter there would be no grounds to regard this as the way. Hatcher

The side character 下 $xi\grave{a}$, originally a small line or dot below a longer line, indicating "down". The vertical line was added to distinguish the character from 二 (two). Opposite of God, above 上, commonly means inferior. The chosen example here uses the word foolish, silly, idiotic $ch\bar{\imath}$ instead of inferior.

[A] high [level] scholar hears [about the] Dào [and] diligently walks [it], [a] middle [level] scholar hears [about the] Dào [and] kind [of] cherishes [but also] kind [of] ignores [it], [a] low [level] scholar hears [about the] Dào [and] laughs. [If he did] not laugh, [it does] not deserve [to be the] Dào. Ramsden

The superior scholar hearing of Dao works hard and practices it. The average scholar hearing of Dao seems to keep it, seems to lose it. The inferior scholar hearing of Dao laughs greatly at it. Linnell

Sentence 3

Therefore there is the established saying: The Dao which is bright appears to be dark. The Dao which goes forward appears to fall backward. The Dao which is level appears uneven. Great virtue appears like a valley (hollow). Great purity appears like disgrace. Far-reaching virtue appears as if insufficient.

says where they go wrong is predictable. The unwitting see Dao as dull and uninteresting, or as a lot of hard work without reward. They lazily pick holes, ignore, twist, rely on *their* per-

ceptions and knowledge to continue to ignore Dao. They argue. Obfuscate. They'd rather smoke cigarettes. Something's got to kill me, it might as well be something I enjoy (am addicted to).

Sentences 3, 4, and 5 are a bunch of sayings of old, Craig suggests, and their order is confusing. He suggests the three should be presented as one, but I prefer to separate them.

Sentence 4

Solid virtue appears as if unsteady. True substance appears to be changeable. The great square has no corners. The great implement (or talent) is slow to finish (or mature). Great music sounds faint. Great form has no shape.

Some more paradoxes that try to remove limits of our understanding. We are told that any pair of opposites, bright-dark, advance-retreat, and so on are all part of and all the same Way, man.

The greatest region is without borders. The greatest vessel is last to be completed. The greatest tone is a tenuous sound. The greatest image is without-form. Dao is hidden and without-name. Linnell

Sentence 5

Dao is hidden and nameless. Yet it is Dao alone that skillfully provides for all and brings them to perfection.

Just so we know, we are reassured, Dao is.

Now: only Dao is good at beginning and also good at completing. Linnell

The problem comes back to the fact that the principle is not a thing and cannot be defined. That does not make sense to some people. It is not easy to understand a person whose foundation is invisible. Heider

Chapter titles

<u> </u>		
The Unreality of Appearance	Similarity and Difference	Being and Appearance
Like and Unlike	When Superior People Hear of the Way	Observing and Nourishing Paradox
Sameness and Difference	Diligent Practice. Hidden Rewards	Mastering the Paradox
The Dao and Its Real and False-Followers		

Wang Bi

This refers to one who has his will.

"Established" means accomplished.

Luminous but not shining.

To keep oneself behind in order to stay ahead; to deny oneself in order to survive.

"Rough" means not smooth. The great smooth Dao follows the nature of things, but it never insists on smoothness and cuts things apart. Therefore its smoothness cannot be discerned, and it seems to be rough and uneven.

Never claiming its own virtue, it has nothing in its bosom.

Knowing its whiteness but keeping its blackness, great whiteness can then be obtained.

Broad virtue is never full. Expansive but formless, it can never be filled.

"Secret" means "to compete." The sturdy virtue, following the natural course of things, doesn't establish or employ. Therefore it appears "to compete [secretly]."

Pure substance never boasts of its purity; therefore, it seems fluid.

The square has never been cut; therefore, it has no corners.

The great vessel completes the world without insisting on its own distinction, so it must be late in completing. Listened to, it cannot be heard; it is called soundless—its sound cannot be heard. Having sounds means having different divisions; being different, it is either kung or shang. So different sounds cannot include all sounds. Therefore, any sound cannot be the great sound.

Having shape means having divisions; when there are divisions, it will be either warm or hot, either hot or cold. Therefore a shaped image is not the great image.

All those good things are completed by Dao. In terms of image, it is the great image. The great image does not have shape. In terms of sound, it is the great sound. The great sound sounds faint. Things are completed by it but they do not see its shape. Therefore it hides itself in namelessness. In rendering, it does not provide only for one's needs; once rendered, its virtue lasts forever. Therefore, those who are good in rendering and completing things do not cut them as a carpenter does, so that nothing cannot adhere to its shape. Therefore this is called "good in completing."

Key terms

average 中 zhōng, zhòng

depicts a flagpole. There is a circle in the middle marking the center of the flagpole. In older forms of the character, the flagpole has streamers at the top and bottom used to show the direction of the wind. Also means *central*

Hatcher has (when) average, in-between, mediocre, middling

Wieger has it represents an arrow fixed in a target, in middle, centre

Fenn has + center, inside, in spelled chung

completing 成 chéng

original meaning city, depicts defending city walls T with an axe $\not \equiv \mathbb{R}$. T also represents the sound.

Based on the original meaning "city", now written as 城. The current meaning is a phonetic loan

Hatcher has achieve, accomplish, complete, fulfill (ment, ing) Wieger has to finish; to accomplish; to become; to succeed

Fenn has 成 to complete, accomplish, perfect, become spelled ch'eng

form, shape 形 xiàng

pictograph of an elephant. Also means ivory; figure, image; shape; form; appearance; to imitate

Hatcher has form, shape, figure, contrast, outline, contour

Wieger has phonetic 59 多 bristle, beard + phonetic 49 井 well

Fenn has 形 form, figure, to give form gesture

hide, hidden 隱 yǐn, yìn

[p.c. | hill represents the meaning and 憲 careful {p.c. hide represents the sound and 心 heart represents the meaning} represents the sound]

inferior *⊤ xià*

Originally a small line or dot below a longer line, indicating "down". The vertical line was added to distinguish the character from $\vec{\bot}$ (two). Opposite of $\pm up$.

Hatcher has (when) inferior; (the) common, mean, low (est)

laugh 笑 xiào

[p.c. kk bamboo represents the meaning and \mathcal{F} die young, depicts a person walking quickly. Relation to current meaning unclear represents the sound]. The phonetic meaning a rhythmic movement like that caused by the wind blowing through the bamboos

Hatcher has *laugh(ter)*; *ridicule*, *deride* (*v*); *mirth*; *derision*

Wieger has to laugh; to be pleased; to ridicule

start 始 shǐ

[p.c. 女 woman represents the meaning and 台 platform represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "elder sister", the meaning later shifted to "first" and "start"]

Linnell has this character enclosed in brackets and uses beginning.

Hatcher doesn't use the character

Chapter 42 🗵

Just how does Dao do everything and be everywhere and yet be insubstantial and indefinable? No wonder Jiyu put this chapter in two categories. Dao is the source of all things and retreat is the natural function of all things.

Sentence 1

Dao produced the One. The One produced the two. The two produced the three. And the three produced the ten thousand things.

The Dao produced One; One produced Two; Two produced Three; Three produced All things.

All things leave behind them the Obscurity (out of which they have come), and go forward to embrace the Brightness (into which they have emerged), while they are harmonized by the Breath of Vacancy. Legge

The principle is not a thing. Call it zero.

The principle in action is the unity of creation. This unity is a single whole. Call it one.

Creation consists of pairs of opposites or polarities. Call these polarities two.

These polarities become creative when they interact. Their interaction is the third element. Call it three. Heider

Chapter 42 starts out with some cosmic mumbo-jumbo about Dao making one, one making two, two making three, and three making everything else. I don't know what it means, and, frankly, I wouldn't worry about it too much. Hogan

This is a form of Genesis; let there be light, then the cleaving into light and darkness, and so on. This Chinese version is ancient and profound. And simple. Dare I say understandable?

What they all have in common is creator, manifestation and spirit. Although the Daoists put the spirit in the middle.

It is like man, in his befuddlement over his dualistic nature, needs to add another component to get past it, instead of retreating into Dao.

Wieger said there was not a proper character for *myriad* which was pronounced *wàn*, but as this is the same sound as *scorpion*, ever since *myriad is written with two claws* and a tail. It means (a, the) ten thousand, myriad, host; (to be), countless, many, numerous; all, all of the; wholly; absolutely, positively. Ten thousand was the largest number ancient Chinese would normally use, anything bigger, would be in factors of 10,000 e.g. 12,000 would be 10,000 plus 2,000.

Sentence 2

The created universe carries the yin at its back and the yang in front; Through the union of the pervading principles it reaches harmony.

A reminder that while there may appear to be two things, in reality there is only Dao, everything else is simply Dao manifested. Yin is a burden we all bear, it is inside. Yang is also inside, it is inspiration, light, illumination. We can mix together, pour them together, to achieve harmony. Yin and yang are innate, simply being human means we contain both.

Everything in bright light casts a shadow.

Yin and yang are the two most important concepts in Chinese thought, the polarities *day* and night, life and death, male and female, etc. They are like seeds within us and need to be balanced to live in Dao. These two characters appear only once in the Dao De Jing, in Chapter 42: *The ten thousand creatures* [literally all under Heaven] *carry Yin and embrace Yang*.

So the sun shines on something and the other side is in shadow. Yin is like your centre of gravity, it gives you weight.

Direct your feet to the sunny side of the street. Yang is your inborn inspiration, it is to be cherished, accepted, held precious.

Sentence 3

To be "orphaned," "lonely" and "unworthy" is what men hate most. Yet the princes and dukes call themselves by such names.

brings us back to humility and simplicity. Good people, powerful people who live in humility are the best. Because they live humbly, they are powerful.

Sentence 4

So it is that some things are increased by being diminished, and others are diminished by being increased.

Some interpreters avoid this sentence for some reason. Perhaps in some contexts it just doesn't make sense. A loss-gain dynamic exists whereby giving up stuff brings reward; taking stuff brings loss of character. Hoard not wealth and treasures for you cannot stop thieves. The same holds true for character and personal values. Create but do not own.

Therefore: creatures Sometimes lose, yet they gain; Sometimes gain, yet they lose. Linnell

Sentence 5

What other men (thus) teach, I also teach. The violent and strong do not die their natural death. I will make this the basis of my teaching.

Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Jesus the Christ

And now for something completely different. This sentence uses two characters for the word I, we. It appears more than 22 times in the Dao De Jing as Ξ $w\acute{u}$ (scattered throughout 15 chapters and 19 times as \Re $w\acute{o}$ in seven chapters (seven times alone in Chapter 20).

Chapter titles

The Transformation of Dao	Dao and Transformation	Less is More
The Changes of Dao	The Way Produces One	The Principles of Transformation
Transformations of the Dao	Achieving Balance	Knowing Polarity
Harmony through the Dao		

Wang Bi

Myriad things have myriad shapes but return to the One. How can they become One? Because they are from nothingness. From nothingness comes One; this One may be called nothingness. Once it is called "One," how can it not be described? Having One and describing it, are there not two? Having One and two, then there is three. From non-being to being, the numbers end here. From this point on, nothing flows from Dao. Therefore regarding the birth of myriad things, I know their master [Dao]. Though with myriad shapes, they blend breaths into one. People have their hearts, different states have different customs, but One is obtained so kings and dukes become their masters. With One as their master, how can it be forsaken? The more One multiplies, the further are the people from it: to be diminished is to be near the One; to be diminished to the utmost is to reach the ultimate. Though it has been called "One," it adds up to three. Those whose roots are more than One, can they be close to Dao? "To diminish it in order to augment it." Are these merely words? I do not force the people to follow me, but use nature to point out the true reason: following it will bring fortune, violating it will bring misfortune. Therefore the people teach each other that he who violates it will bring misfortune on himself, just as I teach the people not to violate it.

The violent and the fierce cannot die a natural death. The people teach each other to be violent and fierce just as I teach them not to be violent and fierce, pointing out that the violent and the fierce cannot die a natural death. Teaching by these means, those who follow my teaching will be fortunate. Therefore I can obtain those who reject other teachings, and then I become the father of teaching. [Paul Lin: I will consider them [the people] the father of teaching.]

Key terms

benefit 益 yì

original meaning *overflow*, depicts food or drink filling up a container III. Based on the original meaning "overflow". The meaning later shifted to "increase" and "benefit" Linnell uses *gain*.

Hatcher has *add*, *gain*, *grow*, *expand*; *increase*, *augment* ten thousand, a myriad 萬 wàn

originally a pictograph of a scorpion. The current meaning is a phonetic loan

Hatcher has (a, the) myriad, ten thousand; all

Wieger has ten thousand; an indefinite number; wholly

yin, the shadow, darkness, inertial, mysterious 陰 yīn

[p.c. \Rightarrow now, original meaning closed mouth, depicts a closed mouth. Upside-down \boxminus . The meaning "now" is a phonetic loan, and $\overrightarrow{\preceq}$ clouds, depicts a swirl of clouds up \bot in the sky represent the sound, while $\ifmmode{1}{l}\ifmmode{1}{l}\ifmmode{1}\ifmmode{1}{l}\ifmmode{1}$

Wieger shows β is also an abbreviated form of radical 163 *a walled city*, the only difference between them being whether they are placed on the left or right side of the character.

yang, the light, sunshine, dynamic, known 陽 yáng

[p.c. \mathbb{F} hill represents the meaning and \mathbb{F} bright, original meaning sunshine, depicts rays \mathbb{F} of sunligh \mathbb{F} shining through tree branches \mathbb{F} represents the sound] orphaned, alone, helpless 孤 $g\bar{u}$ [p.c. \mathbb{F} child represents the meaning and 瓜 melon represents the sound], the phonetic melon refers tp cururbitaceous plants, gourds, cucumbers, watermelons, which grow one fruit per plant, hence fatherless; no protector; solitary

Hatcher has (the) light, sunshine, dynamic, known

Wieger as above for yin

is the radical for mouth plus the phonetic for the five elements that arise from the yin and yang. It is an appellation to design[ate] one's self. 吾 is the I you show the world

I, me, we, us; my (own), our (own); myself 我 wǒ

original meaning weapon, pictograph of a weapon with a forked blade and long handle. The meaning "I; me" is a phonetic loan. 我 implies that you can only have self-awareness through (with) recognition of others. I (the ego) cannot exist alone. It is the I you know yourself and use internally. Craig notes it is two weapons crossed, hence "I" only arises in conflict/contrast with an other.

Chapter 43 🗵

Another short chapter. Some argue it is a leftover, stuffed in; that it rightly belongs with another chapter. Regardless, it is extremely important and deserves its own platform. The idea of *non-action* or *wu wei* is discussed. *Wu wei* really means *empty action*, as being alive implies *action is* anyway. Remember earlier discussion about water, how it permeates into every space and eventually ends up in the sea. The idea a steady drip of water will eventually erode stone is presented here as well.

Think peaceful demonstrations by social groups and disenfranchised people. Think M. Ghandi and M.L. King.

This chapter is setting the stage for the rest of the De, which is how we live in Dao inside us. In our day to day life, humility and compassion are practical and achievable. Some Buddhist strains are evident in this – Chinese Buddhism borrowed many ideas from Daoist thought it seems.

Sentence 1

The softest things in the world overcome the hardest. Non-being penetrates even where there is no space. Through this I know the value of non-action.

From this we can appreciate the benefits of not contriving. Ho

Sentence 2

There are few in the world who attain to the teaching without words, and the advantage arising from non-action.

Not contriving and being empty are like synonyms. The idea is to forget about the self, and to humbly follow the Law of Nature. Ho

The teaching of no-talking, The benefit of non-action – Few in the world attain these. Linnell

Few leaders realize how much how little will do. Heider

Teaching without words. Teaching by example. This is an ideal but not commonly found anywhere.

Craig notes: "the teaching of no-talking" occurs twice in the text, here and in Chapter 2. Here, it is beside "the benefit of non-action". And of both it is said: few attain these. In Chapter 2 it is beside "lives by non-action", and both are what the Sage does. So what is "the teaching of no-talking"? When asked "what is Dao", the Sage replies with silence. What could they say? Dao is empty. How do we know that? How do we learn that? Silence. Emptiness.

Chapter titles

C1101P101 010100		
The Function of the Universal	Universal Application	What Few Men Know
Unlimited Usefulness	What Is Softest in the World	The Value of Minimums
All-pervading Use	Still and Quiet	Subtle Powers
The Benefits of Being Empty		

Wang Bi

There is nothing that the air cannot penetrate; there is no passage that the water cannot go through. Emptiness, nothingness, softness, and weakness: there is nowhere they cannot go and nothing they cannot penetrate. The softest thing cannot be broken; and projecting this, one knows the benefits of inaction.

Key terms

speed 馳 chí

[p.c. 馬 *horse* represents the meaning and 也 *also* represents the sound]

Linnell uses overrun.

Hatcher has swiftly, speedily, quickly, rapidly

teaching 教 jiào, jiāo

depicts teaching a child 子 math or divination 爻 using a rod 攵

Hatcher has (the) teaching, doctrine, instruction, lessons

Wieger has to teach; and doctrines; sects; schools; to cause; to make

It appears here in chapter 43 and chapters 2, 12 and 42

tap, rap 支 or 攵 pū

depicts a hand X holding a whip or a staff. The whip or staff was later reanalyzed into the sound component \land .

Wieger has *To teach*, *the master armed with a rod acting upon his disciple*. [The traditional song, 'reading and 'riting and 'rithmetic, taught to the tune of a hickory stick", the Zen master's stick with which he berates his students, the English schoolboy's 'teacher', the cane, come to mind about this character and its uses.]

The character doen not appear by itself in the Dao De Jing, only as part of a compound character.

Chapter 44 🗵

presents us with some very basic questions about how we live our lives (moderation seems important). And about our values. It starts with three choices (wishes?) and then explains

how these choices play out in our lives. And, most importantly how to live in Dao and not be faced with any of the choices, because they don't exist. We make them up.

Sentence 1

Fame or your life, which do you love more? Life or material wealth, which is more valuable? Loss or gain, which is worse?

Like other chapters, we are given a series (three) of options to illustrate how life in Dao operates. These are not, as elsewhere, duads that oppose each other, instead are more subtle sides of singular ideas.

Reputation compared to life, which is dearer? Life compared to property, which is (worth) more? Gain compared to loss, which is (more) distressing? Hatcher

Are you doing this work to facilitate growth or to become famous? Which is more important: acquiring more possessions or becoming more conscious? Which works better: getting or letting go? Heider

In a note: These questions would not really bother someone who follows the Dao. Such a person would not even raise any of these questions because he would have given up the calculating mind. Ho

Sentence 2

Therefore those who desire most spend most. Those who hoard most lose most.

This sentence makes a return to Chapter 3, again pointing out that great riches, hoards of valuable goods, can only lead to theft. Chapter 53 makes reference to great riches promoting robbery and brigandage.

Extreme desire must lead to great expense. Collecting too much must lead to substantial loss. Linnell

Sentence 3

A man content is never shamed, And self-restrained, is not in danger: He will live forever.

Chapter headings

Chapter neutrings		
Precepts	Self-Imposed Abstinences	What is Better
Standing Still	Name of Body	Riches and Fame, Self and Contentment
Established Cautions	Choices	The Power in Needing Less
Knowing When to Stop		

Wang Bi

One who prefers fame and high positions will certainly neglect his body.

One whose greed is never satisfied leaves very little for his body.

To obtain great benefit and lose one's body, which is more harmful?

Loving in excess will destroy one's communication with things; hoarding too much will prevent one's sharing with things. Then there will be many requests and attacks, which cause the sickness of things. Therefore it is called "no great cost" and "heavy loss."

Key terms

affliction 病 bìng

[p.c. $\sqrt[n]{}$ sick represents the meaning and $\overline{\bowtie}$ third, original meaning pedestal, depicts a platform to put things on. The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound].

Hatcher has *distress(ing)*, *afflicts(ion)*, *hurt(s)*, *sickens*

fame 名 míng

depicts a mouth \square saying their own name at night \mathcal{D} when it is too dark for others to see them. Also means name, rank, title, position; name; noun (part of speech); place (e.g. among winners); famous; classifier for people

Hatcher has distinction, fame, name, rank, reputation, title; being, body, individuality, life, person, self Wieger has a name; an appellation; fame

gain 得 dé, de, děi

depicts a hand 寸 grabbing a shell 貝, used as currency in ancient China, to convey the meaning "get". Originally written as 导. The 彳 (movement) component was added later. Also means *obtain*, *get*, *gain*, *acquire*; *to obtain*; *to get*; *to gain*; *to catch (a disease)*; *proper*; *suitable*; *proud*; *contented*; *to allow*; *to permit*; *ready*; *finished*; *structural particle*: *used after a verb (or adjective as main verb)*, *linking it to following phrase indicating effect, degree*, *possibility etc*; *to have to*; *must*; *ought to*; *to need to*. This seems wrong as the upper character appears to be radical 73 日 *say*

Hatcher has gain(ing); possessing(ion), finding, winning

Wieger has to get; to effect

greater 多 duō

depicts two pieces of meat together to convey the meaning "much" or "plentiful". In ancient China meat was a rare treat. It is radical 36 \mathcal{D} evening, sunset doubled.

Hatcher has (counts, worth) more (important); greater

Wieger has two \mathcal{I} , meaning symbolically, reduplication, multiplication, multitude, many. The old character (two nights) in this sense, on account of its simplicity

original meaning tip of a blade, depicts the tip of a knife blade (刀). Similar in origin to 方. Based on the original meaning "tip of a blade", now written as $\stackrel{\text{\tiny cl}}{=}$. The current meaning is a phonetic loan. Also means *death*, *destroyed*; *lose*, *perish*; *to die*; *to lose*; *to be gone*; *to flee*; *deceased* Hatcher has *loss*, *deprivation*, *forefeiture*; *losing*

Wieger has radical $8 \stackrel{.}{-} lid$ which he says is but a corruption of the 11^{th} radical $\stackrel{.}{\nearrow} enter$, come in (to), $join + \stackrel{.}{-} , curve$; to cover, to conceal (a variant of radical $5 \stackrel{.}{\nearrow} second$ of the ten heavenly stems, second which he says means a cyclical character; to mark). He has the character $\stackrel{.}{\sqsubset}$ as primitive meaning to hide. Now meaning to enter. Derived meanings, to die, to perish, to vanish

love 親 qīn, qìng

original meaning chestnut tree [p.c. 木 represents the meaning and 辛 represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "chestnut"]. Also means relatives, parents; intimate the hazel nut or filbert tree a thorny tree; intimate; parent; one's own (flesh and blood); relative; related; marriage; bride; close; in person; first-hand; in favor of; pro-; to kiss; (Internet slang) dear; parents-in-law of one's off-spring

Hatcher has *closer*, *nearer*, *dearer*; *kinship*, *affinity*

Wieger has as the body, one's self, personal, pregnant

property 貨 huò

[p.c. 貝 *shell, cowrie*, pictograph of a cowrie shell. In ancient China such shells were used as currency, represents the meaning and 化 *change*, pictograph of a right-side up person and an upside-down person, depicting the meaning "turn around" or "transform" represents the sound] Hatcher has *goods*, *wealth*, *property*, *commodities*, *money*

Chapter 45 🗐

Sentence 1

What is most perfect seems to be incomplete; But its utility is unimpaired. What is most full seems to be empty; But its usefulness is inexhaustible. What is most straight seems to be crooked

Sentence 2

The greatest skill seems to be clumsy. The greatest eloquence seems to stutter.

More about Dao (great perfection, great abundance and great truth) and how it works. It makes all things but isn't apparent. These five are almost paradoxes.

Sentence 3

Movement triumphs over cold. Stillness triumphs over heat. Clarity and tranquility set the whole world in order.

Restlessness conquers cold. Stillness conquers heat. Purity and clarity along with stillness makes the world proper and correct. Linnell

Restlessness overcomes cold, Stillness overcomes heat. Clarity & stillness act as measures to the world. Hatcher

Motion overcomes cold. Stillness overcomes hot. Clearing up the muddiness of the mind by allowing it to settle down to its natural stillness, will restore all things to their proper places. And in a note: Scientifically sentences two and three are valid. The implication of the lines is to live the middle way: not too cold, and not too hot, and the middle way is achieved by keeping a clear mind. Ho

Chapter titles

The Virtue (Teh) of Greatness	Grand Virtue	Criterion of the Sage
Indefinite Virtue	Great Completeness Seems Incomplete	Illusion and Reality
A Flood of Virtues	Looking Behind Appearances	Using Emptiness
Natural Stillness		

Wang Bi

To complete by following the things means not to keep to one image. Therefore it seems imperfect. Great fullness means plentiful enough to give according to the needs of things, without reservations or care. Therefore it seems empty.

Maintain straightness by following the things: this kind of straightness cannot be unified in one. Therefore it seems bent.

Great craftiness follows nature in making vessels without creating anything out of the ordinary. Therefore it seems clumsy.

Great eloquence is to follow the expressions of things, not to say something for them. Therefore it seems stuttering.

Through hastiness, the cold can be overcome; serenity and inaction overcome the hot. Projecting this, calmness and serenity become the rectitude of the world. Serenity preserves the true nature of things; hastiness violates the virtue of things. Therefore, only calmness and serenity can achieve the above great things.

Key terms

clarity, clear 清 qīng

[p.c.] water (an abbreviation of 水) represents the meaning and 青 green or blue represents the sound]. Also means pure, clean; peaceful; distinct; quiet; just and honest; pure; to settle or clear up; to clean up or purge

It is the abbreviated radical 85 *water. Green or blue* are radical 10 *life* and phonetic 49 *well.* Hatcher has *clarity, purity, lucidity; resolve, resolution*

Wieger has radical 85 water + phonetic 358 青 (not found in Wieger; Dong has *life* and *well*, but this seems wrong for *greeen*, *blue*)

cold 寒 há

depicts a person \bigwedge under a roof $\stackrel{\hookrightarrow}{\hookrightarrow}$ surrounding himself with grass bedding \ncong to try to stay warm in the cold weather. The \nearrow (ice) component was added later

conquer, victory 勝 shèng

remnant of 朕 pronoun I, original meaning seal up a crack, originally depicted two hands H holding an object I to patch up a hole in a boat H, representing the meaning "seal a crack". The current meaning is a phonetic loan, the sound component in H, with an added sound component H, life, pictograph of a sprout emerging from the ground

heat, hot 熱 rè

[p.c. ____ fire represents the meaning and 埶 hold in hand represents the sound] Hatcher has (the) hot, heat, fever, ardor

restlessness 躁

[p.c. 足 foot represents the meaning and 梟 chirping of birds represents the sound] set, do, act 為 wei, seems 若 $ru\grave{o}$

original meaning conform, obey, pictograph of a kneeling person smoothing out their unkempt hair with their hands. Based on the original meaning "conform, obey". The \Box (mouth) component was added later when the character became more abstract

Hatcher has (may, might) appear, look, seem (s) (tobe) noting it is radical 62 plus two strokes Wieger has radical under radical 30 \square mouth, $\not\vdasha$ right side. The top component is, according to Dong an iconic, characterless component. He includes the character in his list of Usual Groups as

having 9 strokes and in a lesson describes the character as *jao* meaning primitive sense, to pick eatable herbs, in order ot eat them. He has the cvharacter as phonetic 454 to be as; if; as to; to follow; much

Feng shows the top character as an abbreciation for radical 140 μ grass, (four strokes) when appearing on the top of a character or component in traditional Chinese

stillness 靜 jìng

Dong treats this character cursorily.

Hatcher has calm, stillness, patience, serenity, tranquility

Wieger has quiet, tranquil, peaceful

Chapter 46 回

When Dao is not present in the World, there are certain signs and consequences. Remember when we were told brambles and misery cover ground used in war. Here we are given known examples of how loss of Dao affects our environment. The *horse* was an important symbol in Chinese culture. In Newfoundland, during the Great Depression, a family ate every animal they had to get through the winter, except the horse. Why not the horse? You can't eat your horse, a horse is Christian flesh.

Sentence 1

When the world has the Way, running horses are retired to till the fields. When the world lacks the Way, war-horses are bred in the countryside.

Riding horses are nonetheless used for manure. Linnell

Retired racehorses are useful for manure. Hatcher

Horses will roam freely, and their droppings will be found anywhere. Ho

Sentence 2

There is no evil worse than ambition; no misery worse then discontent; no crime greater than greed.

Desire causes suffering, said Gautama. Here we are presented with an array of the faults, calamities, miseries that befall when certain actions are made. The original Chinese has been re-interpreted many times with different words. The third, *greed*, present in most is missing in some, and the order is changed in others.

There is no vice greater than submitting to greed. Hatcher

[There is] no greater crime then desire, [there is] no greater disaster then not knowing [what is] enough [and there is] no greater mistake then having desire. Ramsden

Nothing is more insidious than possession. Nothing is more dangerous than desire. Nothing is more disastrous than greed. Hogan

Chapter 67 describes Three Treasures. This chapter describes three *sins*. Three things that can only bring suffering and put you a long way off your Dao path.

Sentence 3

Therefore the sufficiency that comes from knowing what is enough is an eternal sufficiency

Chapter titles

Limitation of Desire	Moderation of Desire	Contentedness Gives Peace
Cursing Desire	When the World Has the Way	Enough is Enough?
Sparing of Desires	Achieving Contentment	Knowing Enough

Knowing One's True Needs	

Wang Bi

In a world with Dao, the people know what is sufficient and when to stop. Without seeking the external, each cultivates only his internal quality. Therefore racing horses are drawn back to carry dung for the field. Having unquenchable greed and never cultivating internal quality, everyone seeks the external. Therefore war horses are raised outside the city.

Kev terms

manure 糞 fèn

[p.c. 米 *rice* represents the meaning and 異 *different*, original meaning carry on the head, depicts two hands putting something on top of the head. Based on the original meaning "carry on the head". The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]. The phonetic different for to finish, end, put away, meaning literally two hands removing with a shovel the dung of animals Hatcher has (*haul*, *make*)(*ing*) *manure*, *dung*; *fertilize*(*r*).

Wieger has ordure

desire 慾 or 欲 yù

Hatcher has appetite, craving, desire, passion (s); greed

Wieger has radical 76 欠 owe, lack, yawn + radical 150 and phonetic 284 谷, which has two meanings, 1. the upper lip and 2. a valley; a ravine; the bed of a torrent. In a lessson he further defines it as a deep hollow; a gorge; a torrent

Linnell and Hatcher both use the Modern Chinese \Re desire which Hatcher makes out to be radical 76 \Re owe, to be wanting in (it is also phonetic series 44) beside radical 150 \Re valley; the heart radical is left out

Hatcher has (the) appetite, craving, greed, longing, hunger

Wieger has radical 76 and 150 as to wish, to covet, to like

Chapter 47 🗉

Sentence 1

One can know the world without going outside. One can see the Way of heaven without looking out the window. The further one goes the less one knows

This short chapter (one of four with only two sentences) points out when we limit our world to the immediate one around and inside us, there is no need to look elsewhere for anything. Your have it already. All you need. In abundance. Always being aware of what is happening and how it is happening is understanding in Dao.

The farther you go out, you know even less. Linnell

... one's experience not only fails to lead to knowledge, but on the contrary, is detrimental to cognition. Jiyu He who goes to a distant land in search of the Truth Will only distant himself from the Truth.

And in a note: "He who travels a longer distance knows a lesser amount." The line, however, should not be taken literally, since he who travels longer distance certainly sees more and hears more about the outside world. But he is also likely to know less about the Truth, which requires insight and reflection. Ho

Sentence 2

Therefore the Sage knows without running about, Understands without seeing, Accomplishes without doing

Chapter titles

Seeing the Distant	Far Seeing	Aiming at Insight
Looking Abroad	Without Even Going Out the Door	Going Beyond
Surveying the Far-off	Knowing All By Looking Inward	Cultivating Inner Knowledge
The Truth Lies Within		

Wang Bi

Each event has its origin and all things have their master. Coming from different roads to the same place, with many different preoccupations, they achieve the same goal. Dao has its great constancy. Reason has its own great induction. Grasping the Dao of the Ancients, one is able to control the present. Although living in modern times, one is able to comprehend the beginning of the Ancients. Therefore, without going out-of-doors and peeping through windows, one can comprehend.

Nothingness resides in the One, but is drawn from the many. Dao, looked at, cannot be seen; listened to, cannot be heard; and grasped at, cannot be obtained. But if one knows it, he need not go out-of-doors; if one does not know it, the farther he goes, then more confused he becomes.

Having grasped the ultimate of things, though one does not go anywhere, he knows them through his fore-thought. Having comprehended the origin of things, though one does not see them, he can name them based on the principle of right and wrong.

To discern the nature of things is merely to follow it; therefore although one does not act, he makes them complete.

Key terms

go out 出 chū

pictograph of a foot \perp exiting a cave \sqcup . This is apparently wrong.

Wieger has it as phonetic 117 to go forth; to issue; to beget; to eject, which he also places under radical 17 \sqcup receptacle. He gives it as springing of plants, the small plant \dashv formed a second pair of leaves and thrusts itself out

window 牖 yǒu

made of 片 *slice* + 户 *door* + 甫 *begin*

Hatcher has window, lattice

Wieger has radical 91 $\not\vdash$, a leaf; a strip; a bit; a section; a moment + radical 63 $\not\vdash$ door or window; dwelling; a man; treasury + phonetic 271 to begin; just now; a name

Chapter 48 回

Interesting, Jiyu puts this chapter in two categories. He also notes it is a continuation of Chapter 47, ... knowledge comes out of practice and asserts that it is only through mystical intuition that one can realize the Dao.

Sentence 1

The pursuit of learning is to increase day after day. The pursuit of Dao is to decrease day after day.

While I can't wholesale agree with sentence one, I do get the drift. I am a lifelong learner but I don't know I have not increased myself in tangible ways; yet, I don't pronounce erudition, or claim I am well read, or I always know the questions to Jeopardy. So, I feel OK with more learning as long as it for yourself, not for position, pride, power, or psychosis.

Beginners acquire new theories and techniques until their minds are cluttered with options. Heider

In a note: "Learn" here has a specific meaning, which includes acquiring a calculating, discriminating, and dishonest mind, a mind that distinguishes one's self as distinct from that of others. Certainly we all need to learn to be truthful and straight again. Ho

Sentence 2

Less and less is done, until one arrives at nonaction. When nothing is done, nothing is left undone. The

world is won by letting things take their own course.

Well, here is the call to *wu wei* again. *Empty action*. As you live in Dao you decrease says sentence one. So. If you completely diminish, you will eventually arrive at non-action. Be careful, however, in extreme reduction could lie *nihilism* (*The doctrine that nothing actually exists or that existence or values are meaningless*). Of course, there is always Dao.

Then, having let go all exterior influence and awareness, the world (your world) will go along just fine without your involvement. This concept of empty action is a fundamental part of the guidance of Dao De Jing. The idea is to do but not with motive, purpose, or to control the world outside.

Like in sentence one, I learn for inner knowledge, spiritual knowledge. There is no need to spout about it. There is no one to impress around my table.

Sentence 3

When one is compelled to do something, The world is already beyond his conquering.

To win the hearts of all under heaven, We must always leave people alone. Ho

Of course, we all *do*, don't we. Fear not says this sentence, do if you have to but remember no matter how hard you try, the harder you try, the less you accomplish. This sentence is interpreted and translated in many different tones. It is easy to see why the teaching is seen as essential, but the meaning is confused by the background, the type of the writer's external involvement, the writer's position on the philosophical spectrum.

I've always taken it personally, to wit, if you are involved in the world, not living in Dao, then you can't rule your internal world. McDonald adds *inside or outside*.

Craig notes: I don't believe there's any implication in the Dao De Jing that there's anything wrong with the pursuit of knowledge. However, it is strongly contrasted with the 'pursuit' of Dao. The pursuit of Dao must ultimately be not to pursue at all. Can we 'do' both? Can we pursue both knowledge and Dao? Of course. We always do, because it's impossible to live in the world without actually doing things, walking, eating, making a living. All of these things require knowledge. But if they are done without Dao, they can be selfish, greedy, ambitious, and so destructive, and ultimately a failure.

This chapter and Chapter 37 contain the only occurrences in the Dao De Jing of the phrase wu bu wei, 'not do and not not do'. See my discussion there. The usual translation is something like 'do nothing and nothing is not accomplished'. I propose to read this as 'empty-do and empty not-do'. And I think it can work here too. Sentence 2 then becomes something like: "Decrease and decrease more, to arrive at empty doing. Empty doing and empty not-doing. You gain the World always by empty activity." 'Empty activity' here is wu shi, where shi is 事, with the pair getting translated as 'non-interference' or something like that. But the character means something like 'matter, work, affair' (Dong), a generic reference to 'activity or business of any sort'. "Gaining the world is an empty affair." Whether you do or don't, whether you are active or inactive, be empty. Doing and not doing are both activity, being in the world, some affair or other. They can both be empty. Dao is empty. You can be too. In sentence 3 we have the corresponding you shi, having/full affairs, and the corresponding loss of the World: "When you are compelled to have or grasp affairs, that is never sufficient to gain the World."

Chapter titles

To Forget Knowledge	Forgetting Knowledge	Learning or Essence
The Distress of Knowledge	For Learning You Gain Daily	All is Done without Doing
Neglecting Knowledge	Simplify	The Art of Nonaction
How to Win the Hearts of People		

Wang Bi

One wishes to improve his ability and increase what he learns.

One wishes to return to nothingness.

Doing something, one is likely to miss something else; therefore, to do nothing means nothing cannot be done by it.

To move constantly is to follow.

To create a problem by oneself.

Because the basic principle of governing is lost.

Key terms

learning 學 xué

depicts two hands 臼 teaching a child 子 under a roof 宀. 爻 represents the sound

Hatcher has *learn(ing)*; *study*, *lesson (s)*; *(the) academic*

While Hatcher and Fenn put the character in the realm of radical 66 *rap, tap,* Wieger places it under radical 39 *child, son.* He explains: *a new born child swathed up; it is the reason the legs are not visible.* By extension disciple; then as sage, a teacher, because the ancient emperors, in order to honour them [sages, teachers] *call them sons*

Chapter 49 回

Living in Dao means diminishing one's external and internal involvements. Here we also find the Buddhist concept of *compassion* as a value to our life. Also, remember the King can be scaled from the *King of Something* to the *king of yourself*; follow your heart.

Sentence 1

The sage has no invariable mind of his own; he makes the mind of the people his mind

The phrase 100 families meaning common folk occurs in Chapters 5 and 17 as well.

The sage does not have a constant heart/mind. Thus the 100 families' heart/minds become his heart/mind. Linnell

The Sage's self is not a self for itself; He makes the people's self his self. Ould

The Sage who tries to serve the country must put himself in the shoes of everybody else. This corresponds with the "representative individual" paradigm discussed in Ho (2000). Ho

Sentence 2

Those who are good, I am good to them those who are not good, I am also good to them - Te is good

I am good to the good; To the bad I am also good. For how shall Virtue express itself if not in goodness? Ould

Someone who lives in Dao, *inside and outside*, is unaffected by values like good and bad, or any variant of human foibles exhibited by fellow human beings. Equanimity, tolerance, acceptance, compassion, empathy, are the rewards of life in Dao.

Sentence 3

Those who are honest, I am honest with them those who are not honest, I am also honest with them - Te is honest.

Sentence 4

Sages in the world inhale Inhale, act, mix with the mind of the world. The one hundred families concentrate their ears and eyes Sages are each being children.

In a note: Interestingly, Jesus also asks people to preserve this innocence. Ho

The Wise, people who live in Dao, live peacefully and in harmony within the external world. Again, this sentence is open to many variants of terms.

One version uses *dear* in relation to other people. Those most dear to a person are loved ones and family. The translator/interpreter seems to have gotten it right, in my opinion.

Being open and attentive is more effective than being judgmental. This is because people naturally tend to be good and truthful when they are being received in a good and truthful manner. Heider

The last two lines seem to mean more than the various translations let on. Is there an oblique reference to the eyes and ears being closed by the people themselves, a form of self-delusion, or are they being deceived by outside agency, the sage, perhaps?

This chapter has three functions, self, altruistic not egotistic; compassion with equanimity and always truth.

Craig notes: The first and last sentences of this chapter are quite difficult to parse. In the case of the first sentence most translators read Wu as 'not'. I would like to read it as 'empty'. "The sage has an eternally empty mind/heart. But he/she adopts the minds/hearts of the one hundred families as his/her own." That's not so different in sense from the way most translate it. But it emphasizes the idea of the emptiness of the Sage. This idea of the Sage's empty mind also makes sense of the fourth sentence: "The Sage lives in the world gathering and becomes merged with the mind/heart of the world." The Sage can gather and merge with the mind/heart of the world because their mind is empty. But this gathering and merging does not make the Sage's mind any the less empty. Incidentally, this reading is supported by Chen, where the order of the three characters is changed, in order to say "constant/ eternal no/empty heart", instead of the common text, which has "no/empty constant/eternal heart".

Thus in sentences 2 and 3, the Sage is good to or honest with those who are good to or honest with them and equally with those who are not. The Sage's goodness and honesty are not dependent on the goodness or honesty of anyone, even though they gather in goodness and honesty from those around them in the world, as ways of relating in the world. This is because the honesty and goodness of the Sage are rooted in his/her De and are thus empty.

Finally, the last part of sentence 4: "The one hundred families all attend to their ears and eyes, but the Sage everyone childlike has." Is this that everyone treats the Sage like a child or does the Sage treat everyone like children? I don't think it's clear. But this is in the context of everyone attending to their senses, listening and watching, discerning, distinguishing, pondering. That is not the activity of a child. It is the activity of an adult, someone with cares and concerns, stuff to watch out for. A child is carefree and doesn't have to pay attention. So I'm inclined to think it's everyone who treats the Sage like a child. After all, if you are honest with everyone, even those who are not honest with you, are you not being child-like? If you are good to everyone, including those who are not good to you, are you not being childlike?

Chapter titles

The Virtue (Teh) of Trust	Trust in Virtue	The Sage's Heart
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The Virtue of Concession	Sages Have No Fixed Mind	Wisdom
True Virtue	Open-Mindedness, Impartiality	Opening the Mind
The Mind of Equanimity		

Wang Bi

To move constantly is to follow.

Following each according to his own usefulness, I then will not lose his goodness.

There is no forsaken man.

Each uses his own intelligence.

Let all of them live in harmony and have no desires like a baby. Heaven and earth establish order, and the Sage is able to deal with men and Spirits, for the people and the able men, he gives to the capable and takes away from the rich, magnifies those who are great and sends a valuable gift to those who are worthy. All things have their ancestors; all events have their master. Thus even if the silk string cap covers the eyes, he is not afraid of being cheated; even if the yellow cap covers his ears, he is not worried about being slighted. Then why should he belabour intelligence to examine the feelings of the people? If one examines things with intelligence, all things will use their intelligence in response. If one examines things with distrust, all things will strive to respond with mistrust. The hearts of the world are not the same, but their responses dare not be different. Then they will not make use of their feelings. The greatest damage is no more damaging than the use of intelligence: emphasize shrewdness, and the people will sue; emphasize force, and the people will fight. One does not surpass others in shrewdness; when brought to court, he will be in distress. One does not surpass others in strength; on the battleground, he will be in danger. If one cannot prevent the people from using shrewdness and force against him, then he is one against many, while the people are many against him, then he increases the dragnets of law, multiplies the forms of punishment, blocks the pathways, and attacks private homes, then all things will lose their natural virtue. People will forsake their brothers; birds will be disturbed above; fish will be disoriented below. Therefore the Sage draws back from the world. With no fixed ideas in his heart, he tries to harmonize the hearts of the world. With no specific intent or direction, he does not discriminate; so why should the people avoid him? He has no requests, so how can the people react? Neither avoiding nor reacting, the people will use their natural feelings. A man should not forsake what he can do and do what he cannot do; forsake his strengths and engage his weakness. Then he who talks will tell what he knows, and he who performs will do what he can. Therefore the people will lend their ears and eyes, and I [the Sage] will regard them all as infants.

Part of the canon of Classical Chinese literature is the Hundred Family Names 百家姓 *Bǎi jiā xìng*. The Han Chinese have a small number of family names, and one colloquial way to refer to the Chinese people is as the 老百姓 *Lǎo bǎi xìng* Venerable hundred surnames or just 百姓 *Bǎi xìng* Hundred names. The term refers to the 'ordinary working people' not the government or rulers. https://www.chinasage.info/100names.htm

Covering (deceiving) the eyes and ears

This Chinese idiom means to deceive or conceal the truth from others, to create an illusion or mislead someone. It implies the act of hiding or covering up something to prevent others from seeing or hearing the truth. It can also suggest the idea of creating a smokescreen or diverting attention to hide one's true intentions or actions.

This idiom is commonly used to describe situations where people purposely manipulate or distort information to mislead others. It can be seen in politics, business, or personal relationships, where individuals or groups try to cover up their wrongdoings or deceive others for personal gain. The idiom serves as a reminder to be cautious and not easily believe everything at face value.

Key terms

heart/mind 心 xīn

Wieger has for radical 61 *The heart, mind, motives, intention, affections, centre.* In his lesson 107 he wrote: *It represents the heart. On the top, the pericardium opened; in the middle, the organ; at the bottom, a summary delineation of the aorta. The extended meaning are very numerous ... it is the 61st radical relating to the feelings.* [very numerous is an understatement as Wieger lists upwards of 400 characters which share this radical.] https://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Radical_61 gives 1115 characters found under this radical

trust 信 xìn

conveys trusting 信 what a person 1 says 言. 人 is also a sound component Hatcher has ^ *credible*, *honest*, *sincere* (*ty*), *trustworthy*, *true*. He says it is radical 9 1 *man* with radical 149 言 speech.

Wieger reverses Hatcher's order and has radical 149 \equiv speech + radical 9 \(\) man meaning sincerity; the quality that the words of everyman should have. Faith, truthfulness, the effect produced on a man by the words of another.

[For some reason a little stroke on top of *speech* is missing on the computer]

honesty 愨 què also sincerity

the character is made up of \pm scholar, soldier, π excessive, and ψ heart.

100 families 百姓 bǎixìng also means ordinary people; "the person in the street"

百 one hundred [p.c. — one represents the meaning and 白 white represents the sound]

姓 one's family name [p.c. 女 woman represents the meaning and 生 *life* represents the sound]

Hatcher has (the) hundred, common; all of the; families, clans; people; society

Wieger has a hundred; many; all and radical 38 女 woman, female + radical 100 生 to bear, to produce, to come forth, to live, life, unripe, unpolished, unacquainted, unusual. In a lesson he gives the place where the clan-chiefs of old, were 生 born from a 女 woman impregnated by heaven. They were surnamed after that place; hence the extended meaning 姓 family surname.

The characters appear together once in chapters 5, and 17, and twice in chapter 49.

Chapter 50 🗵

Walk a mile in another man's shoes. What are we? We are organisms which are wracked and rolled by our life, by the world around us and by the mental struggles that come from somewhere, inside and outside; some know where they come from, but many do not.

This chapter lays out the worldly part of us, our outsides. Sentences two and three are metaphor; you can use your own fearsome things instead of tigers, rhinos or people with swords.

Sentence 1

Men come forth and live; they enter (again) and die.

is common knowledge. Follow your nose. Follow your heart.

Sentence 2

The followers of life are three in ten. The followers of death are three in ten. Those whose life activity is their death ground are three in ten. Why is this? Because they live life grasping for its rich taste."

This sentence is interpreted and translated in many a way, but none seem clear as to what is meant. George R.R. Martin, in the game of thrones series maybe says it best, with his watchwords, *valar morghulis* meaning *everybody dies*.

Between coming out into life and entering death, Followers of life are 3 in 10. Followers of death are 3 in 10. People whose lives are merely moving them towards the place of death Are also 3 in 10. Now: what is the reason? Because they live life for its substance. Linnell

Emerging in life (or) entering death The companions of life will be three (in) ten The companions of death will be three (in) ten And others whose lives & actions approach the domain of death Will also be three (in) ten. Now why is this so? Because these live life for its substance. Hatcher

Anyone who is born dies. If 13 people are born all 13 people will eventually die. From birth to life, from life to death, the great earth will afford the places to live and to die for exactly 13. Ho

When human beings are born into this world, this is life. When they sink beneath the ground, this is death. One third of them will have a long life, one third will pass away early, and yet another one third will follow the road to ruin because of the excessive amount of care and attention they devote to themselves and the rash actions they take. Why is that? Because of their excessive devotion to themselves. Chen

Apparently humans can easily be divided into three groups, like Caesar's Gaul perhaps. Three out of 10 in each group, leaving one, the wise ones, the ones who live in Dao. Of course, it doesn't matter which crowd you run with, everybody dies. 100% of us are mortal.

Sentence 3

So we hear: One who Excels at fostering life "travels on land without meeting rhinoceros or tiger enters combat without armour or weapon.

says the remaining person, one of the 10%, who truly lives in Dao, has little to fear.

Ninety percent of the people suffer the tension that comes from ignorance of how polarities work. Even though life and death are opposites, they are inseparable. Preferences are futile. Only ten percent have the wisdom to accept both life and death as facts and simply enjoy the dance of existence. Heider

Sentence 4

The rhinoceros finds no place in him into which to thrust its horn, nor the tiger a place in which to fix its claws, nor the weapon a place to admit its point. And for what reason? Because there is in him no place of death

continues with the *dangers* (fears) metaphors, which were probably common in ancient times. You may replace with your own, perceived, threats. Cancer and stroke are good ones.

The thing you fear most has no power. Your fear of it is what has the power. Facing the truth really will set you free. Winfrey

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along'. E. Roosevelt

Jiyu says Lao Tzu thought danger lurked everywhere, so to avoid it, practice non-action. And, remember, the things you fear the most have already happened. Your fear is that they will happen again.

Craig notes: As Tor notes, this chapter brings out a wide range of interpretation. But the important contrast, I believe, is between the nine people in the three boxes in sentence two and the one person in sentence three. I think the way to read sentence two is that, though there is some distinction among the three boxes, in all three cases they "live life for substance". Some read the 'reason' part as applying only to the third box but I think this is wrong. Else why is the one different from the nine and not just from the last three? Also, the first two are "followers" and the third is "just moving around". But in all three cases their focus is the "stuff" of life. The character for what they live for is 厚, 'hou', which is an image of a jug of wine aging in a cave, hence 'strong flavour', and by extension 'substance', 'density', 'bounty'. Those who seek to extend life, box one, those who are devotees of life and want to prolong it, are thus because they are attached to, attracted to, the strong flavour of the stuff of life. Those who seek death, box two, those who are devotees of death and want to go there, are thus because they are repelled by the strong flavour of the stuff of life, which is also a form of attachment. Those who are aimlessly wandering around in dangerous circumstances, box three, are also focused on the strong flavour of the stuff of life but just aren't paying much attention to the consequences of their behaviour.

In contrast, the one in sentence three is not attached to the pungent stuff of life. "He who is adept at upholding/managing life": the character for 'upholding/managing/sustaining' is 攝, 'she', to take in, absorb, administer, uphold, sustain, assimilate, conserve. (Dong and Hatcher) Linnell is correct to point to Chapter 49 where the Sage gathers in, assimilates, the World. It is not their own life that this person conserves, but all life, the life of the World. Chapter 34: Dao supports/sustains everything, rejects nothing, yet has no name, is not a master, has no desire. It is substance, support/sustaining, that has no substance, nothing a name could hang on. Chapter 35: "Dao's words are without flavour." The one in sentence four has no substance in which horns or claws or weapons could catch. Death itself has nowhere to hang on to, nowhere to catch.

Chapter titles

Esteem Life	Importance of Life	Life Without Death
The Value of Life	From Life into Death	The Forces of Life and Death
Your Life	Living and Dying	The Art of Survival
The Natural Right to Live		

Wang Bi

Coming out means the place of life and going in means the place of death.

Three-tenths means three out of ten. Only three out of ten adopt the way of life and live the utmost of life. They are three out of ten! Those who adopt the way of death and follow through the utmost of death are also three out of ten. People who live by over-nourishing themselves have no grounds for life. Those who know how to sustain life do not take life too seriously; therefore, they have no grounds for death. The most harmful instruments are weapons and the most harmful beast is no more than a rhinoceros or tiger; if one is able to keep weapons from lodging their blades and points and rhinoceros and tigers from applying their claws and horns, then his body is not burdened [by desires]. Then where are his grounds for death? The earthworms regard the depths of a river as shallow and dig a hole in it; the powerful eagles regard the mountain as low and build a nest on top; where harpoons and bird-shooting devices cannot reach, there are no grounds for death. But they are eventually lured by sweet bait, and enter a place without life; is this not called over-nourishing one's life? Therefore if things [people] are not driven by their desires and move far away from their roots, if they are not driven by desires and submerge their true nature, then entering battle, they will never be hurt, and travelling on land, they will never be attacked. An infant can be a valuable model! How true this is!

Key terms

buffalo, rhinoceros, yak 児 sì

is the radical for stool or, according to some, the radical for man, with the phonetic for *concave* on top, which certainly resembles the blocky head of a water buffalo. Dong has *a female rhinoceros or bull*. Something big with horns. Linnell uses *rhino*.

[Three Asian rhinoceri were known to the ancient Chinese, all on the extreme southern borders; the Indian, Javan and Sumatran. The character is sort of water buffalo-like, an animal with a big blocky head. The character appears only twice, both times in this chapter]

Hatcher has (a, the) (water, wild) buffalo(s); rhino(ceros)

Wieger has rhinoceros, yak

mortal, die 死 sǐ

depicts a person \wedge mourning over a carcass $\overline{\mathcal{G}}$, meaning to *die; dissolution of a man* Hatcher has *death, dying, passing, perishing, mortality*

Wieger has radical 78 \mathcal{F} death, decay, bad, vicious + radical 21 \sqsubseteq spoon. In a lesson he gives the radical as to turn one's self around. And give the character as to change; transformation, to convert. As phonetic 35 Wieger has to die, to cease

Hatcher (^) perish, disappear, pass (ing) away

tiger, cruelty, bravery 虎 hǔ

pictograph of a tiger. The tiger, the king of wild beasts, the ancient Chinese were unfamiliar with lions, the tiger's skin and hind legs, on which it stands up like a man when leaping

Hatcher has *tiger(s)*

• Chapter 51 回

Another summary chapter, it is about Dao and its influence and characteristics.

All things come from Dao and grow through Dao. Dao creates but doesn't take credit or *own* what is made from it. Lao Tzu called this characteristic *the profound De*.

We are again given express instruction to do things, create things, but not to own them.

Sentences 1 to 3

- 1. The Way produces all things. Power nourishes them. Matter gives them physical form. Environment shapes their abilities. Therefore all things respect the Way and honour power.
- 2. The Way is respected, and power is honoured without anyone's order and always naturally. Therefore the Way produces all things, and power nourishes them, caring for them and developing them, sheltering them and comforting them, nurturing them and protecting them,
- 3. producing them but not possessing them, helping them but not obligating them, guiding them but not controlling them. This is mystical power.

Dao creates them, De raises them, Things shape them, Circumstances complete them. Linnell

Heider deals with this sentence in a 'modern' way.

Everything, every behaviour, is a vibratory pattern or process. Such process emerges, develops, and decays, according to the single principle. People have a natural reverence for the principle, and they naturally love the vibratory energy which obeys the principle. Heider

Dao is a principle. Creation, on the other hand, is a process. That is all there is: principle and process, how and what. Heider

Chapter titles

Teh as a Nurse	Nourishing Virtue	Dao and Teh
Cherishing Virtue	The Way Gives Birth	Natural Birthing
The Nourishing Teh	Born of Dao, Nourished by Virtue	The Power of Impartial Support
The Dao and the Virtue		

Wang Bi

After commencement of life, things have to be nourished; being nourished, they take form. Having form, they grow to completion. From what do they get life? From Dao. From what do they obtain nourishment? From Te [virtue]. From what do they take form? From matter. From what do they achieve completion? From circumstances. Just because it simply follows, nothing therefore does not achieve its form. Just because of circumstances, nothing therefore cannot be completed. The reason that all things have their lives and all endeavors can be complete is that they have their sources. From where do their sources come? From nothing but Dao. Traced upward to the ultimate, it is the ultimate Dao. Following their sources, they each have their titles. Dao is where all things come through. Virtue is what all things obtain. Through Dao, one can obtain [virtue]; therefore one cannot help but respect [Dao]. Losing virtue, one will get hurt; therefore one cannot help but value [virtue].

To order also means to oblige.

To complete is to give substance. Each obtains its shelter and protection so its body is not harmed. Action without possession.

This means to have virtue without knowing the master, from mysticism; therefore it is called mystical virtue. It comes.

Key terms

circumstances 勢 shì

[p.c. 力 power represents the meaning and 执 hold in hand original meaning seize, pictograph of a person with hands 丮 bound by shackles 莘. Based on the original meaning "seize". The meaning later shifted to "wield power", "carry out", and "hold] represents the sound. Linnell has it once in Chapter 51 as conditions, situations.

Hatcher also uses this character defined as *conditions*, *circumstances*, *situations*, *forces* Wieger has *power*, *authority*, *influence*, *circumstance*

matter; things 物 wù

original meaning *varicoloured cow* [p.c. + *cow* represents the meaning and must *not*, original meaning cut throat, depicts a knife must cutting with drops of blood coming out, based on the original meaning "cut throat", now written as must. The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "variety", depicting the variety of colours on a cow. Later the meaning shifted to "things"

Hatcher has creation, existence, reality; the material world

Wieger has radical 93 + an ox; a bull; a cow; cattle + phonetic 90 / m no, not, must not. He has in a lesson, the ox was the most valuable thing among the goods of the ancients, hence the following two characters: 物 a thing, mater, substance; the beings, and 午 an, one. The idea is represented by a representative of the two noble characteries, a 1 man and + an ox

poison 毒 dú

depicts a plant Ψ that is not good 毐 a person of reprehensible morals, i.e. a poisonous plant Linnell uses heals them [of poison (ous)]

Hatcher has heal, cure, detoxify; restore, renew (s, ing)

to rear, nourish, raise up, 畜 yù

[p.c. 子 child represents the meaning and 月 meat, flesh represents the sound. The 子 (child) component is upside-down, depicting a child being born head-first] Hatcher has(takes) care(s); rears, raises, tends

Traceller mas(remes) care(s), rears, remses, remas

Chapter 52 🗵

This is an important chapter. It takes us back to the beginning, providing insights into what Dao is and how it works. Dao becomes the *Great Mother* or *origin of the world* because, as we know, everything rises in Dao and eventually returns to Dao.

Sentence 1

The beginning of the universe is the mother of all things. Those who discover the mother understand the children.

The world had a beginning, which can be considered the mother of the world. Once you have realized its mother, you thus know her children. Linnell and Hatcher

Sentence 2

Understanding the children and returning to the mother, they live always free from harm.

Once you know her children, return to and maintain their mother. When the self disappears, there can be no danger. Linnell

Sentences 3 and 4

- 3. Close the mouth, shut the doors, and all of life is without strain.
- 4. Open the mouth, meddle with affairs, and all of life is beyond help.

explain how Dao works in us, if we live in it and offer practical advise on what not to do. Primarily, live internally, don't talk about it, don't brag.

Craig notes: Not sure I fully agree with this. These are about more than talking. They are also about doing/engaging.

Sentences 5 and 6

- 5. Seeing the small is insight; to stay with the gentle is strength.
- 6. Use the Light, return to insight, and thereby be preserved from harm. This is practicing the eternal.

Use your brightness to return to your insight. Do not lose your self in misfortune. This is called practising the ever-constant. Linnell

Make use of what is illuminated To return home again to the light Do not abandon yourself to misfortune This may be called "sustainable practice". Hatcher

Let people use their own light to illuminate and restore their understanding. Let them leave nothing to regret about when their bodies perish. This is called the gradual realization of the Eternal. Ho

conclude the lesson. It tells us concentrating on the small, the weak, the simple are the way to be strong and have a good life. Some people make a reference to Zen in these sentences. Zen practice is such that everything fades away leaving only the kernel of truth. Unencumbered, unsullied, raw, the block, the void, Dao.

Chapter titles

Return to Origin	Return to the Origin	Going Home into the Light
Going Back to the Cause	The World Has a Beginning	Returning to Our Origins
Returning Home to the First Cause	Knowing Process, Learning Constancy	Returning to Insight
Guard and Stay With Mother Nature		

Wang Bi

To have a good beginning is to have good nourishment and nurture. Therefore the world has a beginning, and it can be the mother of the world.

The mother is the root; the son is the branch. To obtain the root is to know the branch. One should not abandon the root to go after the branch.

"The passage" is where activities and desires are born.

"The door" is where activities and desires pass through.

With nothing to do and in permanent repose, one will have no toil throughout his life.

By not blocking the source and multiplying activities, one will have no cure throughout his life.

To achieve in governing, never rely on great things. To see the great things is not enlightenment; to discern subtle things is enlightenment. To preserve the strong is not strength; to preserve the weak is to be strong. To illuminate Dao in order to eliminate the people's ignorance.

Never examine things with intelligence.

This refers to the constancy of Dao.



Another chapter of practical life advice.

Sentences 1 and 2

- 1. When I am walking on the mighty Way, Let me but know the very least I may, And I shall only fear to leave the road.
- 2. Great tao is very even yet people are fond of byways.

warn us how easy it is to be sidetracked, to wander off the path, how easily we can slip away from Dao.

It is only walking off the path that I need to fear ... The great Way is extremely even, But the citizens are fond of side paths. Linnell

The great way is so very ordinary And the people love the detours. Hatcher

[If] I [were to] make [use of a] little [bit of] knowledge [that I] have, [it would be] to walk [with the] great Dào [and] only fear [going] astray. Ramsden

Gu (1995) translated these lines as "If I have acquired a little knowledge, I will be afraid of going astray."

In a note: This interpretation is surprisingly rather common. However, considering the next couple of lines, which says that people like to take devious paths, my interpretation appears to make better sense. Because I am afraid of getting lost, I stick to the Dao. Ho

Sentences 3 and 4

3. The court is immaculate, While the fields are overgrown with weeds, And the granaries are empty.

4. They wear silk finery, Carry sharp swords, Sate themselves on food and drink Having wealth in excess. They are called thieving braggarts. This is definitely not the Way.

explain what happens when Dao is lost, and everyone wanders off the Path, everyone living hedonistically, seeking power and riches, being uncaring and cruel. Think D. Trump.

Chapter titles

Gain by Insight	Increasing Evidence	Self-Seeking or Gain of Self
Increasing Evidence	Causing One Flashes	Not Yet on the Way
Abundant Evidence	Deviating From Dao	The Undivided Part
Arrogance at the Dao		

Wang Bi

That is to say: if I only had a little knowledge, I would practice the Great Dao in the world. My only fear would be acting on it.

That is to say: the Great Dao is unprejudiced, just, and equal, but people still abandon it and refuse to flow with it. They prefer the deviant by-paths and also act to block the middle way of Dao. Therefore, this is to say, the Great Dao is very smooth, but the people prefer the by-paths.

The court refers to the palace. "Very well kept" means clean and nice.

If the court is very clean, then the fields are full of weeds and the granaries are empty. Maintaining one will cause many calamities.

To obtain things without following the right way is wicked; to be wicked means to rob. To be extravagant without following the right way means to steal the throne. Therefore to mention "not Dao" in order to clarify "not Dao": these are all robberies and extravagances.

Key terms

granary 倉 cāng

depicts grain $\stackrel{\triangle}{\ominus}$ gathered together behind a door $\stackrel{\triangle}{\rightarrow}$. Also means *berth*; *sea*; *barn*; *storehouse*; *cabin*; *hold (in ship)*, It appears only once, here, in this chapter 53

Hatcher has (the)(ir) graineries, store(house)s, silos, barns

Wieger has the character as phonetic 575 meaning *a granary; a storehouse*. In a lesson he has the character among those formed by radical 9 and includes *government storehouse*

difficult paths 徑 jìng

[p.c. $\overrightarrow{1}$ walk represents the meaning and $\underline{\underline{\mathbb{M}}}$ textile, depicts weaving vertical (warp) threads on a loom. represents the sound].

Linnell interposes *side* before paths.

Hatcher has (the) byways, bypaths, short cuts, detours. This character appears only once, here, in this chapter



tells us living in Dao means stability, solidity, respect.

Sentence 1

The well-established cannot be uprooted. The well-grasped does not slip away. Generation after generation carries out the ancestor worship without break.

拔 uprooted, plucked is one of the many characters formed by the radical \dagger *hand*, with the phonetic *pull up*, it occurs only once, here, in this chapter.

Sentences 2 and 3

2. Cultivated in the person, power becomes real. Cultivated in the family, power becomes abundant. Cul-

tivated in the community, power endures. Cultivated in the nation, power flourishes. Cultivated in the world, power becomes universal.

3. So observe yourself by yourself, observe the home by the home, observe the locality by the locality, observe the nation by the nation, observe the world by the world.

Cultivate it in the self - Linnell

Cultivate this in ... Hatcher

He who applies the same seriousness to serve ... Ho

Here is the necessity of *scaling* as a function of Dao.

Sentence 4

How do I know the world is like this? By this.

Chapter titles

To Cultivate Intuition	Rectifying Viewpoints	Dao as Model
The Root and its Branches	Good Construction Does Not Fall Down	The Whole is in Each Part
Cultivating Broad Views	Cultivation of Virtue	Establishing a Universal View
Live and Work Respectfully		

Wang Bi

Firm the foundation before building the top, so it cannot be toppled down.

Never covet too much; just match one's capacity, so it will not slip away.

Inheriting this Dao, children and grandchildren will worship their ancestors through sacrifice without ceasing. Start with the self and apply this to others. Cultivating oneself, the self will be true. Cultivating the family, the family will be plentiful. Cultivating without ceasing, to apply it will turn out great.

They are the same.

Use the hearts of the people in the world to examine the Dao of the world. The Dao of the world, either in bad terms or good, in fortune or misfortune, are all similar to the Dao of man.

The above statements point to the question: how can I know about the world? By examining myself and not seeking anything external. This is to say "never going out-of-doors and knowing the world."

Kev terms

cultivate 修 xiū

[p.c. *hair* represents the meaning and 攸 *distant*, original meaning *warn*, depicts a hand holding a stick ready to beat someone. Based on the original meaning "warn". The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]. Also means *study; repair; to decorate; to embellish; to repair; to build; to adorn, to mend; to write; to study; to take (a class)*

Hatcher has (^) *cultivate*, *develop*, *practice*; *restore* (*ing*)

Wieger has it made of radicals $9 \stackrel{?}{1}$ man and phonetic $26 \stackrel{?}{>}$ hair, feathers topped by phonetic $3 \stackrel{?}{\nearrow}$ fork, to pick up, to fold the hands

This character appears only in this chapter

Chapter 55 🗵

This chapter expands on how life in Dao is conducted and how to recognize those who live in Dao. These lessons have much value for the practitioner. Remember, we were told how those living in Dao were impervious to tiger claws and rhino horns and swords, mainly because they stayed away from such, but here we are told there is an almost magical elixir at work. Achilles was impervious because his mother dipped him in yarrow water, except for the heel she held. It was the heel that received the Trojan arrow and put an end to him.

Be careful, there is always a little spot that isn't perfected, that is natural.

Sentence 1

He who possesses virtue in abundance May be compared to an infant. Poisonous insects will not sting him. Fierce beasts will not seize him. Birds of prey will not strike him. His bones are weak, his sinews tender, but his grasp is firm.

He who embodies the substance of De Can be compared to a newborn child: Wasps, scorpions, snakes, and serpents do not sting him, Fierce beasts do not seize him, Birds of prey do not claw him. His bones are weak, his muscles are soft, yet his grasp is firm and strong. Linnell

Linnell isn't clear in his interpretation of this reference to birds of prey *clawing*. In his explanation he added, *Birds of prey do not claw him*. [seize,catch,take hold bird] [roll around with hand].

Sentences 2 and 3

- 2. The male does not yet know union with the female Yet its virility is strong It has essence even at the extreme.
- 3. It can how all day without becoming hoarse, so perfect is its harmony. To know harmony is to know the eternal. To know the eternal is to be illumined.

Well obscurantism is certainly evident here. It says a person living in Dao is like a baby, innocent of all things carnal, but the generative power of Dao is always strong. A baby acts in harmony with nature and everything is good.

Sentence 4

But knowing harmony creates abstraction, And following abstraction creates ritual. Exceeding nature creates calamity, And controlling nature creates violence.

But wait, this is a warning, an omen.

Linnell has for sentence four Knowing 知 harmony 和 speaks \Box of the ever-constant 常. Knowing 知 the ever-constant 常 speaks \Box of insight 明. Benefiting 益 life 生 speaks \Box of good fortune (auspicious, lucky) 祥. Heart/mind 心 making 使 Qi 氣 speaks \Box of strength 強.

Hatcher has

To comprehend harmony speaks of the continuous To comprehend the continuous speaks of clarity The enrichment of life may be called a "happy omen" The mind directing the breath may be called a "power"

Qi 氣 (steam, vapour; radical 84; air, gas, steam, vapor; spirit; gas; air; smell; weather; to make angry; to annoy; to get angry; vital energy; qi) appears in chapters 10, 42, and 55. It depicts a gust of air, but is more familiar, perhaps, as chi, meaning vitality, life energy, life force, vital energy.

Sentence 5

But whoever possesses such strength invariably grows old and withers. This is not the way of Dao. All those who do not follow the Dao will come to an early end.

old 老 lǎo, the name given to Lao Tzu, the legendary Dao De Jing author is *old boy. Lao* means *age*, *decay*, *grow* (s) *old/frail*; *aged*, *decayed*. Dong has *pictograph of an old person* with long hair bent over and leaning on a cane.

Chapter titles

To Verify the Mysterious	The Mystic Charm	Child and Sage
The Wonderful Harmony	The Richness of Subliminal Virtue	The Promises of the Great Integrity
The Mysterious Talisman Infant Nature, Natural Child		The Power in Not Contending
Be Receptive Like an Infant; Be Congruent with the Eternal		

Wang Bi

An infant without requests or desires never offends anything. Therefore poisonous insects never sting him. One who maintains an abundance of virtue never offends anything. Therefore nothing will interfere with his perfection.

Tender and soft, its grasp is completely firm.

"Formed" means grown. Nothing can hurt his body, so he retains his growth. That is to say: for one who maintains an abundance of virtue, nothing can diminish his virtue or change his innocence; the tender and soft do not fight, and so are not broken or smashed. That is all there is to it.

Having a heart void of contention or desires, [an infant] can howl all day without becoming hoarse.

The thing regards harmony as its constancy. Therefore, to know harmony is to be constant.

Neither bright nor dim, neither warm nor cold, this is constancy. Having no form, it cannot be seen; therefore it is called enlightenment.

Life cannot be benefited; to benefit it means to die young.

The heart ought to be empty; if allowed to direct vigor, it would become stark.

Key terms

omen, sign 兆 zhào

original meaning escape, originally a pictograph of two people escaping a flood. Based on the original meaning "escape", now written as 逃. The current meaning is a phonetic loan. Related to the the phonetic developed from numerous cracks on a tortoise shell an ancient form of divination. By extension, an omen, a number, now a million, billion and trillion

Linnell uses revealed

Hatcher has (give) (a) sign, omen, portent; begin(ning, -un)

Wieger give is belonging to radical $\iint a \ man \ (two \ legs)$, legs, as an omen, a prognostic, a million. The character is a lot like radical $\iint stool$, legs with a top. The four angle strokes on either side may be related to radical $\iint water$ with the middle stroke replaced by the legs. Altogether an odd character

Chapter 56 🗵

This is one of my favourites. Ignorance is bliss, my mother used to say. Purity and simplicity are paramount. Earlier we were told to throw out books and learning, they don't do us any good. Buddhism has a category of people who *practice Buddhism* without actually being such, a form of *intellectual understanding* practice. It is scoffed at.

Sentences two and three can be meditation guides. And they also reflect back to similarities with Ecclesiastes.

Sentence 1

Those who know do not talk And talkers do not know.

People who possess wisdom do not speak much, people who talk much are not wise. Chen

I sort of dealt with this in the Introduction, asking, is *writing* the same as *talking*? Am I flying in the face of everything Dao by attempting to complete this study? Is there any point to it if, in fact, it isn't saying anything? What about all those scholars in the last century and a half who poured their creative juice into making their version of the Dao De Jing available? Did they do it with ulterior motive? For profit? For respect? For glory? To teach? To lead? I

once noted that no one owns the words of the Dao De Jing, we all own the words of the Dao De Jing!

Are there nuances in the admonishment? Are nuances allowed? In a discussion with Craig he mentions we are working on a study guide. That is true.

Those who know do not speak much. Those who speak much do not know. In a note: Literally, "Those who are wise do not speak; those who speak are not wise." The word "much" is added in each of these clauses to revive Laozi's obvious true meaning. Ho

To know does not mean to speak To speak does not mean to know. Hatcher

People who possess wisdom do not speak much, people who talk much are not wise. Block up the orifices of desire, close the access points of craving, do not flaunt your talents, resolve disputes, show restraint in displaying your brilliance, and merge with the earthly world. This is the realm of mysterious wonderful equalization-unity. Chen

Sentence 2

Close the mouth. Shut the doors. Blunt the sharpness. Untie the tangles. Soften the light. Become one with the dusty world. This is called the profound identification.

Block your senses, close your gateway. Blunt your sharpness, Loosen your tangles, Soften your brightness, Be the same as the dust of the world. This is called a deep and mysterious sameness. Linnell

Sentence 3

It cannot be made familiar, yet cannot be estranged; it cannot be profited, yet cannot be harmed; it cannot be valued, yet cannot be demeaned. Therefore it is precious for the world.

So one cannot obtain it yet be attached One cannot obtain it yet be detached One cannot obtain it yet benefit One cannot obtain it yet be harmed One cannot obtain it yet treasure One cannot obtain it yet consider as common. So it acts as the treasure of the world. Lindauer

Therefore, you can not gain it and be friendly, Can not gain it and be unfriendly, Can not gain it and benefit, Can not gain it and cause harm, Can not gain it and have high rank, Can not gain it and be lowly. Therefore you become valuable to the world. Linnell

Craig notes: Sentence 1: As Tor notes, the irony, or is it hypocrisy, of talking about not talking is pungent. This is not dissimilar from doing by not doing, or being by not being. If there's nothing to say or do, what are we saying or doing? I'm going to appeal again to Heidegger here. We come to awareness as always already being in the world. We don't start from outside and then jump in. We are always already enmeshed, entangled, swallowed up, yammering, crying, laughing, feeling, ignoring, engaging. We are always already talking. Yet we can discover silence. And when we discover silence, it too was already there. We can become what we already were. There is no shame in talking. There is no honour in silence.

Sentence 2: Here's how to find your silence within your cacophony. Become the same as the dust of the world. Yes the world is loud and messy and disorderly. But it is also already silent.

Sentence 3: This mantra is very interesting. "No can gain and/through A. No can gain and/through not A." Firstly, 'gain' is 得, *de*, a hand grasping a cowrie shell, which was a form of currency in ancient China. Grabbing the money! What is gained? This is not stated, as Linnell notes. But, since this follows Sentence 2, I think it's safe to read the end of that as what is gained: the mysterious sameness of being one with the dust. One becomes the same as the dust by blocking, closing, blunting, loosening, softening. But whatever those actions are, they cannot involve A or not A.

The conjunction is $\overline{\mathbb{m}}$, er, a picture of a beard, but the current meaning of 'and' or 'and so', 'but', 'yet', is a phonetic loan. Hatcher has 'with, as, in, by, through'. Dong says there can be

an indication of a causal relation or change of state between left and right. That's also true of English 'and'. It can indicate a causal relation or mere adjacency. Many translations seem to read it as the latter. "You can't do this and be that." But what if we read it in a more causal sense? "You can't do this through or by being that." "No can gain and be attached. No can gain and be detached." Or: "No can gain by being attached. No can gain by being detached." In the first case, however one gains dustiness, one can't be A or not A. After one has gained dustiness, one can't be A and one can't be not A. In the second case, one gains dustiness neither by A nor by not A. The process of gaining dustiness cannot go through A and cannot go through not A. Perhaps both ways of reading the conjunction make sense and there's no reason to resolve the ambiguity. In both cases they tell us something about the process of gaining dustiness. Don't seek to gain dustiness through A or in A. Don't seek to gain dustiness through not A or in not A.

In addition to this ambiguity of the conjunction there is also an ambiguity of subject and object: **who** cannot gain **what** by being that? Linnell notes the ambiguity of what is gained. I think it's dustiness. The variation in translations shows the ambiguity of who. Some say 'you', some say 'the sage'. Perhaps either makes sense and there's no point in resolving that ambiguity. Tor would say so, since for him we should read all of this as personal. And I agree.

What about the pairs? Attachment and detachment. Benefit and harm. High value and low value. Attachment and detachment are interesting. After all, it would be fairly easy to read blocking, closing, blunting, loosening and softening as ways of detaching. But we are told they cannot be detachment, whether as means or as end. So gaining dustiness is not detachment. And gaining dustiness is not attachment. The case of high and low value is also very interesting. The two characters for high and low value both contain cowrie shells! So grabbing the cowrie cannot be getting the cowrie or not getting the cowrie! Therefore you become the world's cowrie. Yes, "valuable to the world" is the same character as "high value". Grabbing the cowrie is not grabbing the cowrie.

Chapter titles

The Teh of the Mysterious	Mystic Virtue	Nobility of the Sage
The Mysterious Virtue	Those Who Know Do Not Say	How to Prepare for the Great Integrity
Profound Virtue The Making of a Mystic		Gaining Oneness
Inner Peace and the Mystical Union		

Wang Bi

To follow nature.

To cause trouble.

To maintain quality.

To eliminate the source of dispute.

By not being distinguished or preferred, nothing will fight for favors.

By not being singled out for disgrace, nothing will feel particularly ashamed.

If one can get close to it, then one can also separate from it.

If one can bestow benefit, then one can also inflict harm.

If one can value it, then one can also despise it.

Nothing can impose on it.

Key terms

same 同 tóng, tòng

depicts a large object \mathcal{N} like a shoulder carriage that requires the cooperation of multiple people working together to carry. To be with. To be the same as. Multiple people working together in harmony to achieve one thing are the same as each other in this one effort.

Hatcher has be) identify, unite (d, ing); (as) one

Wieger has together, with, alike

Chapter 57 🗉

Take actions, have ambitions, embrace innovations. These are all things used for ulterior motive, money, fame; attempts to *control* something, or *desire* to control something.

Run an honest, open group. Your job is to facilitate and illuminate what is happening. Interfere as little as possible. Interference, however brilliant, creates a dependency on the leader. The fewer the rules the better. Rules reduce freedom and responsibility. Enforcement of rules is coercive and manipulative, which diminishes spontaneity and absorbs group energy. The more coercive you are, the more resistant the group will become. Your manipulations will only breed evasions. Every law creates an outlaw. This is no way to run a group. Heider

Sentences 1, 2 and 3

- 1. States are governed by justice. Wars are waged by violations. The world is mastered by nonintervention. How do I know this? By this:
- 2. The more prohibitions there are, The poorer the people become. The more sharp weapons there are, The greater the chaos in the state.
- 3. The more clever and advanced your knowledge The stranger things become. The more commandments and regulations you have The more thieves there are.

Use honesty and justness when governing a nation. Use strange and unusual tactics when commanding troops. Use non-interference to take hold of the world. How do I thus know it is like this? By means of this. Linnell

My grandfather had sayings about someone he considered to be, or knew to be, a thief. 'He'd take the eyes out of your head and come back for the holes', and, 'He'd take the milk out of your tea'.

Sentence 4

Therefore the sage says: I take no action and the people of themselves are transformed. I love tranquillity and the people of themselves become correct.

Sentence 5

I engage in no activity and the people of themselves become prosperous. I have no desires and the people of themselves become simple.

Chapter titles

The Habit of Simplicity	Atmosphere of Innovation	Wisdom of Non-Activity
The Genuine Government	Govern Nations by Normalcy	Simplicity Blossoms When Coercion Dies
Plain Lessons	Loss in Disorder, Gain in Non-action	The Power in Effortlessness
The Laissez Faire Government		

Wang Bi

Govern the nation with Dao, then the nation will have peace; govern the nation with rectitude, then battles and strategies will arise. With inaction, one can win the world. A former chapter indicates that one always wins the world with inaction. If one has to act, one is not good enough to win the world. Therefore governing a nation with rectitude, one is not good enough to win the world and has to use brilliant strategies in battles. Governing a nation with Dao, one honours the roots and eases the branches; governing a nation with rectitude, one

establishes laws to attack the branches. When the roots are not established, the branches are sparse, the people cannot subsist; therefore, one has to use the army with brilliant strategies.

Sharp weapons refer to all instruments which can be for selfish purposes. When the people are strong, the nation becomes weak.

If the people are full of intelligence, then cleverness and hypocrisy will flourish; when cleverness and hypocrisy flourish, wickedness prevails.

To establish rectitude to stop wickedness, one must employ military trickery. Multiply taboos and prohibitions to ward off poverty, but the people become increasingly poor. Use sharp weapons to strengthen the nation, but the nation becomes more chaotic. All of this is caused by forsaking the roots and managing the branches.

What the higher people desire, the common people would quickly follow; if I desire only to be without desire, then the people would have no desires and become simple. These four indicate honouring the roots and easing the branches.

Key terms

prohibition 忌 *jì*

[p.c. \triangle heart represents the meaning and \exists self represents the sound.

Linnell uses prohibitions and taboos

Hatcher has superstitions(-ious) taboos, fears, abstentions

taboo 諱 *huì*

[p.c. 言 *speech* represents the meaning and 韋, original meaning *surround a city*, pictograph of feet walking around city walls. The character is based on the original meaning "to surround", represents the sound]

Hatcher has & restrictions, prohibitions, proscriptions

Wieger has to conceal; to shun; a taboo

prohibitions and taboos appears only once, in chapter 57

strange 奇 qí, jī

[p.c. 大 great, big represents the meaning and $\overline{\Box}$ able to, original meaning sing, \Box mouth represents the meaning and the right component, which is a pictograph of an axe handle (now written as 柯), based on the original meaning "sing", now written as 歌. The current meaning "able to" is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]. Also means extraordinary, surprising, strange

Wieger has radical \not big, very and phonetic \Box convenient, proper, can, may, which he has as a derivative of the partial primitive \Box sob, hiccup, or a difficulty in breathing, oppression. His third series uses phonetic 3 inverted. He has \Box to send forth a breathing of approbation. The primitive To express one's satisfaction. To be willing, to permit, to consent to admire.

thief, steal 盗 dào

depicts a gluttonous person drooling 次 for food inside of a dish Ⅲ. The meaning later shifted to "steal", "rob", and "bandit". Refers to those who covet the goods of their neighbours

Chapter 58 回

Overall, lack of Dao in a country causes much misery. The country can be yourself. Perhaps this is why diets don't work; or sobriety is so difficult. Addiction pretends to be under control whereas, in fact, addiction controls. When we are told to *not* do something or a rule is imposed on us, what do we do? We *flaunt* it and do it anyway, usually to our detriment!

Sentences 1 to 4

- 1. When a government is unobtrusive The people are simple and honest. When a government is suspicious and strict The people are discontented and sneaky.
- 2. Calamity is that upon which happiness depends; Happiness is that in which calamity is latent.
- 3. Who knows its pivot? It lacks a 'correct' The 'correct' returns to be deemed unorthodox. Worthiness returns to be deemed an apparition. Human superstition a truly old story.
- 4. Therefore the sage is: upright but not judgmental, to the point but not arrogant, straightforward but not offensive, is a light but not blinding.

Sentence 1: If their government is very restrained, Its citizens will be very genuine and honest. If their government is very observant and alert, Its citizens will be very lacking and deficient. Linnell

Group process evolves naturally. It is self-regulating. Do not interfere. It will work itself out. Efforts to control process usually fail. Either they block process or make it chaotic. Learn to trust what is happening. If there is silence, let it grow; something will emerge. If there is a storm, let it rage, it will resolve into calm. Heider

Chapter titles

Adaptation to Change	Transformation Without Friction	Light that does not Blind
Letting Others Reform Themselves	When the Government Is Unobtrusive	Alternatives
Accord with Changes	Action and Reaction	Cultivating the Center
Good Life Under a Non-interventionist Government		

Wang Bi

Those who know how to govern have no form, no name, no activity, and no rectitude to uphold. Sluggish and dull, they eventually achieve great government. Therefore, "the government is sluggish and dull." The people, having nobody to contend with, are magnanimous and content. Therefore, "the people are honest and content."

To establish criminal laws and classifications, to be keen about rewards and punishments in order to check the villains and the wicked is called discriminating. To divide people into kinds and categories, then they will fight and compete. Therefore, "the people are wily and restless."

That is to say: who knows the ultimate of good governing? Only [good governing] establishes nothing called rectitude and sets up nothing called form or name. Sluggish and dull, one can cause great change in the world. This is the ultimate.

Governing with rectitude means to return to the use of military trickery. Therefore rectitude returns to perversity.

Establishing goodness to harmonize all things means to return to the disaster of evil.

The people's delusions mean that the people have lost Dao long long ago, and cannot easily be set straight and hold their responsibility for good government.

Leading things with squareness, causing them to abandon their wickedness but never cutting them down with one's squareness. This is to say, the "great square has no corners."

"Honest" means immaculately clean. To hurt means to injure. Honesty is used to cleanse the people and let them discard their wickedness and corruption. However, honesty is not used to hurt anything.

Leading things with uprightness, letting them abandon their prejudice, but not using uprightness to bully them. This is to say, "straightness seems bent."

Using brightness to illumine delusion, but not to search out the hidden or concealed. This is to say, lucid Dao seems obscure. All these mean to emphasize the root and put the end to rest; never attacking, but allowing them to return [to Dao].

Key terms

anxious, short of, lack 缺 quē

original meaning damaged object [p.c. 缶 pottery represents the meaning and 夬 parted, decisive represents the sound]. The radical for earthenware, a clay pot for example, and the phonetic for to divide. A hand holding one half of a bilateral object which was divided meaning broken, wanting, deficient an apt description of the feeling one has when one's pot is broken; the text has this character doubled.

Linnell uses lacking and deficient

Hatcher has (is, are) deficient, incomplete, partial, lacking & deficient, incomplete, partial, wanting Wieger has radical 121 街 jar + phonetic 53 夬 to divide, to settle, cetainly; etc. In a lesson he has to divide, to partake, a hand holding one half of a bilateral 中 object, which was divided into two halves. 中 is phonetic 52 meaning middle, within, to hit, to be hit. In a lesson he has for this character, the centre. To hit the centre, to attain. It represents a square target, pierced in its centre by an arrow

cut, injure, stab 劌 guì

Dong has to cut, injure, stab, stick on; cut; injure

The word 劌 means literally creating a wound in the flesh with a knife. Succumbing to corruption is creating a wound in one's character or integrity. Ho

Hatcher has harm, hurt (ful); wound(ing); injure(ious)

Wieger has radical 18 \mathcal{I} knife, here abbreviated to \mathbb{I} + phonetic 760 the planet Jupiter; year; harvest. In a lesson he has Jupiter the planet that indicated whether an attack was to be made, or not. The ancients had also, for the computtion of time, a cycle of twelve years basd on the recolution of Jupiter. Hence, later on, the extended and adapted meaning, a period of twelve months, a solar year

examine 察 chá

original meaning *eaves* [p.c. $\stackrel{\leftarrow}{\neg}$ *roof* represents the meaning and \Re , *sacrifice to*, depicts a hand \Re offering meat \Re as a sacrifice. $\stackrel{\leftarrow}{\pi}$ is a meaning component commonly used in spiritual-related characters, represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "eaves". The meaning later shifted to "observe from above", "examine", and "inspect"]

the character appears doubled in this chapter and in chapter 20

Linnell uses observant and alert

Hatcher has (is) alert, astute, observant, sharp, efficient and astute, observant, exacting, inquisitive Wieger has to examine, to find out, enquiries

excess, indulge 肆 sì

長 a form of beast having long hair and 聿 [pictograph of a hand grabbing a tail]. It is not clear how this relates to excess

Hatcher has offend(sive); (be) severe, reckless, tactless

Wieger has to expend, to expose, excessive, reckless, now

government 政 zhèng

[p.c. $\not \subseteq tap$ represents the meaning and $\not \equiv$ original meaning *journey*, pictograph of a foot $\not \equiv$ heading toward a city $\not \equiv$. Based on the original meaning "journey", now written as $\not \equiv$, represents the sound]. Wieger *to rule*; *government*; *law*; *politics*

nitpicking, examine 察 chá

original meaning *eaves*, [p.c. *一 roof* represents the meaning and 祭 *sacrifice* to, depicts a hand 又 offering meat 月 as a sacrifice. 示 is a meaning component commonly used in spiritual-related characters, represents the sound]. Based on the original meaning "eaves". The meaning later shifted to "observe from above", "examine", and "inspect" is the radical for roof and the phonetic for making a sacrifice to one's ancestors meaning examine, discover, discern, to find out, inquiries.

Linnell has lacking and deficient

Hatcher has (is) alert, astute, observant, sharp, efficient and for the doubled & deficient, incomplete, partial, wanting.

Wieger has radical 40 roof + phonetic 595 祭 to sacrifice.

sluggish 慢 màn

[p.c. † heart represents the meaning and 曼 long, depicts a hand 又 covering \Box the eye \Box to gaze far away into the distance, represents the sound]

This character does not appear in the Dao De Jing, only in Wang Bi

Chapter 59 🗉

continues with advice on governing others and yourself. Moderation (Jiyu has *parsimony*). Heider cautions us to *become increasingly conscious*.

Sentence 1

To govern the human and serve the divine, nothing compares to frugality.

Frugality is one of the Three Treasures.

It is better to be sparing. Linnell

Nothing works better than following the farmer's example. Ho

There is nothing quite like economy Only one who is thrifty May be deemed ahead of the task. Hatcher

In a note: In the original, one word 嗇 was used to describe the example to follow. Unfortunately, in modern usage the word is always associated with 吝嗇, which means being stingy and frugal. This more common usage of the word does not, however, fit in with the rest of the chapter, and it is doubtful whether Laozi is preaching at all the virtues of frugality here. On the other hand, the more ancient usage of the word 嗇 is farmer. The meaning then is very clear. Ho

Only by being frugal can you recover quickly. When you recover quickly you accumulate virtue. Having accumulated virtue, There is nothing you can't overcome. When there is nothing you can't overcome Who knows the limits of your capabilities? These limits being unfathomable You can possess the country.

Sentence 3

One who possesses the Mother of the state can last a long time.

Sentence 4

This is called making the root deep and the basis firm, the Way of long life and eternal vision.

Frugality and moderation have immense benefits to our lives.

Chapter titles

To Keep Dao	Adherence to Dao	Permanence through Serenity
Preserving the Dao	To Govern the Human and Serve the Divine	The Importance of Moderation
Holding Fast to the Dao	Moderation	The Way of Moderation
Be Prepared		

Wang Bi

"Nothing like" means "nothing better than"; thriftiness refers to the farmer. When a farmer cultivates his field, he eliminates different kinds by unifying them into one. Completing its nature, he does not hasten its diseases, but eliminates the source of the diseases. He inherits heaven's ordainment from above and soothes the people below. Nothing is better than this.

To submit early means to return to eternity.

Only by accumulating virtue and refusing to push sharply can one submit early to eternity. Therefore, to submit early means to accumulate virtue.

Dao is limitless.

To rule a nation with limitations, one cannot rule the nation.

Whatever puts the nation at rest is called the mother. To accumulate virtue means only to deal with its roots and then manage the branches. Therefore, one can last forever.

Kev terms

farmer 農 nóng

depicts using a farming tool \(\overline{\overline{\chi}}\) early morning, depicts a farming tool, in a field \(\overline{\chi}\). The character for farmer does not appear in the Dao De Jing but does in commentaries where the farmer stands for frugality, practicality and good management.

stingy; mean 嗇 sè

pictograph of wheat 麥 being stored in a granary 靣. Based on the original meaning "harvest; hoard". The meaning later shifted to "stingy". Also means *miserly, thrifty; miserly, thrifty; stopped up, constipated.* The character appear only twice, both times in this chapter.

Linnell uses *sparing* as a euphemism for *stingy*, *thrifty*.

Hatcher has thrift, economy, parsimony, moderation and notes it derives from radical 140 艸, grass,' herbs, plants.

Wieger uses radical 45 \(\psi\) sprout doubled,

The bottom part of the character is based on phonetic 211 \Box to revert; revolve; to turn back.

Dong has \Box granary at the bottom but this is different than \Box with the addition of an extra stroke at the top.

Chapter 60 回

Another favourite and well known chapter. It says to *not* control everything. A former employer had a desk sign that said, *Don't bother me with details*. He was a great man to work

with. And, as we all know, the more you poke at or turn over a fish in the pan the more likely it is to break up.

Sentence 1

Governing a great state is like cooking small fish.

The character for fish, 鮮, appears only once, here in this chapter.

Sentences 2 and 3

- 2. Let the kingdom be governed according to the Tao, and the manes of the departed will not manifest their spiritual energy.
- 3. It is not that those manes have not that spiritual energy, but it will not be employed to hurt men. It is not that it could not hurt men, but neither does the ruling sage hurt them.

It is not that those manes have not that spiritual energy, but it will not be employed to hurt men. It is not that it could not hurt men, but neither does the ruling sage hurt them. Legge

There is a lot of esoteric-like stuff in these two sentences. While ostensibly about how you react and deal with the external world, it is equally valuable to your inside existence. If you live in Dao then bad stuff can't get at you. Rhinoceros horns and such *outside*, and importantly, *inside*, emotions and doubts. The word *spirits* can easily be construed to be doubts, guilt and secrets you develop as you live. But, if you are tranquil, they can have no power over you.

Sentence 4

Because the two do not harm each other, their virtues ultimately combine.

Because the two do not harm each other, their virtues ultimately combine. Cleary

Chapter titles

To Maintain Position	Maintaining One's Position	Guiding with Wisdom
Filling the Throne	Governing a Large Nation Is like Cooking Small Fry	Our Future
Occupying the Throne	Avoiding Tampering, Allow Dao	Holding the Position
Governing a Great Nation According to the Dao		

Wang Bi

This means not to disturb it. Hastiness creates much harm; serenity preserves true nature. Therefore, the larger the nation, the quieter its master. Thus he is able to win the people's hearts completely.

To rule a large nation is as to cook a small fish. In governing the world with Dao, ghosts will not become gob-

The spirit does not harm nature. When things maintain their nature, the spirit cannot impose on them. When the spirit cannot impose on them, one does not know the spirit as spirit.

When Dao is in harmony, the spirit will not harm people. When the spirit does not harm people, they do not know the spirit as spirit. When Dao is in harmony, then the Sage will not hurt the people either. When the Sage does not hurt the people, they do not know the Sage as sage either. In other words, the people are not only unaware of the spirit as spirit, they are also unaware of the Sage as sage. The dependence on the net of authority to control things is the decline of government. Not letting the people know the spirit as spirit and the Sage as Sage is the ultimate of Dao.

If the spirit does not harm people, the Sage does not harm them either. If the Sage does not harm people, the spirit does not harm them either. This is to say both refrain from hurting the other. The spirit and the Sage are in accord with Dao; all will converge to them.

Key terms

harm 傷 shāng

[p.c. 1 person represents the meaning and bright represents the sound]. Also means distress, trouble, haunt (s) (v), wound, injury; fall ill from; to injure. Apparently Dong has this wrong Hatcher has harm, injure(y), distress, trouble, haunt (s) (v) for this character. The character appears four times in chapter 60 and once in chapter 74.

Linnell uses injure.

Hatcher has harm, injure(y), distress, trouble, haunt (s) (v)

© Chapter 61 回

This chapter is deep into countries and states. It might, at first, be difficult to see how it applies to personal development. But, as Dao is infinitely scalable, from your own personal insides to the limits of Universe (if there are any) and back; all is governed by Dao. Zooming between scales of perception is difficult. And, hey, if you don't get it here, it is included somewhere else in Dao De Jing.

Peace and harmony are the contributing factors in successfully living in Dao. Living in peace and harmony draws others to you, you influence others to try to live in peace and harmony. It spreads without effort.

Wang Bi sort of clears up this chapter, but there is a lot of *shifting* required to fully understand. Just remember that anything that is in Dao, large states or individual people, are humble (lower-than) and accrue peace and tranquility, these being euphemisms for Dao. So humility, one of the three treasures when practiced, brings Dao peace; when practiced by one in Dao it bring more Dao and greater peace.

Humility is a product of and produces Dao peace; you can't have one without the other.

Sentence 1

A big country may be compared to the lower part of a river. It is the converging point of the world; It is the female of the world. The female always overcomes the male by tranquility, And by tranquility she is underneath

The female always uses stillness to conquer the male. By using stillness, she becomes lower-than. Linnell

A woman to (all) under heaven The feminine, ever through stillness, overcomes the male Through stillness & playing submissive. Hatcher

Sentence 2

A large country wins over a small country by placing itself below the small country. A small country wins over a large country by placing itself below the large country.

Ho has it right, the nation talk is euphemistic for something non-literal. We say *state of mind* when talking about our balance, in ourselves and in others. Balance is tranquil. Balance brings peace. Here again we are pointed to the equation tranquility = Dao = tranquility = ...

In a note: In the original text, one word, "取" or "take" or "get" was used to describe the result of a nation taking on a low profile. Obviously 取小國 does not mean literally taking over the small nation. 取大 國 does not mean literally taking over the big nation. Ho

Thus some win by placing themselves below, and others win by being below.

Sentence 4

The great state only wishes to unite men together and nourish them; a small state only wishes to be received by, and to serve, the other.

Sentence 5

Thus, each gets what it wants. But it behooves a great country to lower itself.

In the end for both of these to acquire their desired position Those which are great appropriately act low. Lindauer

It is a mistake to believe that a great leader is above others. Paradoxically, greatness comes from knowing how to be lowly and empty and receptive and of service.

Imagine that the life force is like water in the river and in the sea. The sea, greater than the river, lies below, open and receptive. The busy, rushing river enters the sea, is absorbed, and is transformed.

Or imagine that the leader is the feminine, lying below and open, empty, and receptive. The feminine receives the masculine and absorbs the masculine vibration. Soon the feminine has encompassed the masculine; the masculine has spent itself, become soft and resolved.

The wise leader is of service: receptive, yielding, following. The group member's vibrations dominates and leads, while the leader follows. But soon it is the member's consciousness which is transformed, the member's vibration which is resolved The relationship is reciprocal. It is the job of the leader to be aware of the group member's process; it is the need of the group member to be received and paid attention to.

Both get what they need, if the leader has the wisdom to serve and follow, to be open and below. Heider

Sentences 3, 4 and 5 are straightforward, once we grasp the formula and leave out the entities that are doing the conquering, humility and wanting. Wanting is a desire.

Linnell coined a phrase *lower-than* for 為下 which he uses in chapter 13 as *inferior* and here twice as *lower-than*. He also uses 下 by itself as *lower-than* in chapters 61, 55 and 68, but in chapter 76 he translates it as *below*. In a note interestingly, *this is the same symbol translated in #61, #66, and #68 as "lower-than" (which was a good thing), so in this case it is the inferior qualities which are lower-than.*

Inflexible and great dwell below. Soft and weak dwell above. Linnell in chapter 76

Chapter titles

C110.p101 010105		
The Teh of Humility	Virtue of Humility	Winning through Serving
The Virtue of Humility	A Great Nation Flows Downward	A Plea for Mutual Humility
Virtue of Yielding	Complementary Submission	The Power in Modesty
No Hegemony in Foreign Relations		

Wang Bi

The river and sea are large but stay low; therefore hundreds of streams flow to them. If the great state is large and behaves humbly, then the entire world comes to it. Therefore, a large state is like the low land.

The world converges to it.

Serene and undemanding, all things naturally return to it.

Because of her serenity, she can be humble. "The female" means femininity; the male is aggressive and covetous. The female, in her serenity, can always overcome the male. Because of her serenity and also her humility, all things return to her.

Saying that "the large state puts itself beneath" means the large state makes itself humble to the small state. The small state is attached to it.

The large state accepts it.

That is to say: only by cultivating humility can each obtain its proper place.

The small state cultivates humility only for self-preservation; it cannot cause the world to come to it. When the large state cultivates humility, the world will return to it. Therefore, each obtains what it wants, and the large should stay low.

Key terms

be low 為下 weixià

為 do pictograph of a hand guiding an elephant to do work.

 \top under originally a small line or dot below a longer line, indicating "down". The vertical line was added to distinguish the character from \equiv (two). Opposite of \pm top, superior, highest.

For 為 Hatcher has (&) act, assume, become, behave, play (s, ing) and humble, lowly; (the) submissive, subordinate using radical 87 爪 or o

Wieger has radical 87 *claw* and a long explanation for the character but with monkeys not elephants. It form phonetic series 717 meaning *to be; to do; to make; for; because; on account of; in order to.* All words related to *action*.

Wieger shows two forms for the character, $\not \sqsubseteq$ and $\not \trianglerighteq$, the latter is used in the Dao De Jing. Female monkey, one $\not \sqcap$ or $\not \sqcap$ [monkey hand] on the top, and two others mingled at the bottom; because among all the animals, the female monkey is the most prone to claw. The middle is intended to represent the body of the female monkey. This body is composed of a man $\not \vdash$ (on account of the resemblance), and of a coarse representation of the breasts (to signify the female). This last element is a primitive.

This is all pure fun. The ancient character represented a hand [here he has an abbreviation for claw for which I was unable for find a copy] carding textile fibres [an action].

calm 靜 jìng

Hatcher has calm, stillness, patience, serenity, tranquility

Wieger has radical 174 青 green, blue, black, gray, the white of an egg, tablet + 争 strife, quarrell, depicts two hands grabbing the same plow

flow 流 liú

also means circulate, drift; class; to flow; to disseminate; to circulate or spread; to move or drift; to degenerate; to banish or send into exile; stream of water or something resembling one; class, rate or grade

Wieger has this character as phonetic 312 meaning *current*, *stream*. The flowing (natural and easy) of water. There were primitively two water symbols, the scribes left off one of them.

The phonetic also is used with the radical for child being breech born, that is feet first, by extension unnatural, uneasy; anomaly, difference, distance, which Dong uses incorrectly

Hatcher has flow, stream, course, current (s, ing) (v)

ocean 洋 yáng

[p.c 〉 water represents the meaning and 羊 sheep represents the sound] indicating peaceful, placid water

Chapter 62 🗵

This chapter takes us back (returns) to Dao and how it works.

Sentence 1

Tao is the storehouse of all things. It is the good man's treasure and the bad man's refuge.

That which Dao's is the obscure mystery of the ten thousand creatures. This is the treasure of a virtuous person, And that which is the protection of a person who is not virtuous. Linnell

Some versions use the word *sinner*, for which there is no obvious character. The closest it comes is *not virtuous* 不善, the second part is *virtue* 善 which is derived from the radicals for *mouth* and *sheep*, as in gentle words. Wieger says the origins are obscure.

Hatcher has the six characters 不 (a, an, the) not (so, very), less than, un- 善 (a, the) able, good, skilled, virtuous, worthy 人 character, fellow, individual, one, person (s) 之 ...s'; ...'s; ^^ of/to/for vv 所 location, place, position, way, means of/for/to 保 protection, refuge, shelter, safety, security.

The way is a sanctum to the myriad beings A good person's treasure A less than good person's place of refuge. Hatcher

One interpretation comes close to the lyrical aspect of this line:

Dao has of all things the most honoured place. No treasures give good men so rich a grace; Bad men it guards, and doth their ill efface. Legge

Sentence 2

Beautiful saying can be sold at the market, Noble conduct can be presented as a gift. Though there be bad people, Why reject them?

offers *compassion*, it tells us even if we disagree with someone, or they fall from grace in our presence, to not abandon them. Followed in sentence three by going the other way, if a man attains success and power, rather than praise and honour him, teach him Dao. We were told elsewhere Dao is the greatest gift we can give someone. Rather than tinkle like jade, rumble like rock.

This is to say that although the Dao should be followed for its own sake in disregard for the good consequences, it makes sense for people who just value the consequences to learn to follow the Dao. The bracketed clause is implied but not part of the original text. Compare with Gu's translation(1995): "With the Dao, beautiful words can buy respect; Beautiful deeds can be highly regarded. How can the bad man desert the Dao?" "With the Dao" is not in the text and in my view not even implied, since those who are with the Dao will have no need for beautiful words or beautiful deeds, as Chapter 81 so emphatically says. Walker's translation(1995) is consistent with the spirit of Daodejing, but, considering the next few lines, he may have twisted the meaning here. This is his version: "Beautiful words win some men honours; good deeds buy others acclaim. But the Dao values everyone, not just those who excel. What's the sense of discarding anyone?" Ho

Credible words are not beautiful, beautiful words are not credible. Those who are good do not quarrel, those who quarrel are not good. Those who know are not erudite, those who are erudite do not know [Hearkens back to chapter 56]. Chen

Sentence 3

Therefore at the crowning of the emperor or at the installation of the three ministers, instead of sending gifts of jade and a team of four horses, remain still and send the Way

when inaugurating the son of heaven, Or installing the three nobles – Even if you possessed jade disks drawn by a team of four horses, That is not as good as sitting and offering this Way. Linnell

Sentence 4

Why have sages prized Tao for so long? Because with Tao, he who seeks finds, and he who has flaws is forgiven. This is why it is the treasure of the world.

Craig notes: Tao is the good man's treasure. Hence we can seek for it and can use it. Tao is the bad man's refuge because he who has flaws is forgiven. The finest words can be sold. Does that mean we cannot speak of it? No. Just because we have no control over other people's interpretation or understanding or further use of our words does not mean we ought not to speak. The most selfless actions can be done with ulterior intention. Someone could leap in to save a drowning person, and then expect a reward. Should such actions then not be done? No. No one should be rejected, whatever their intentions. None the less, why should we honour the honourable? Instead, "remain still and send the Way." What kind of action is that? What is it to send the Way as a gift? Can we give Tao with our speech and our actions? Why not? If we can seek it and attain it, then we can give it away. The other side of this coin is of course silence and no action. But the coin itself is entirely empty. And that is what makes it the most valuable, as well as the least possessable.

Chapter titles

The Practice of Dao	Practicing Dao	Dao as Refuge
Practical Dao	The Way Is the Pivot of All Things	Rehearsals for the Great Integrity
Attending to the Dao	Advancing in the Dao	The Dao in Leaders
The Dao as Treasure and Refuge		

Wang Bi

"The refuge" means hidden, that is, the sheltering place.

"The treasure" is to be used.

"The shield" means to protect safely.

This means Dao comes before everything, and nothing is more valuable than it. Valuable gems and handsome horses cannot match it. Beautiful words can outsell all merchandise; therefore beautiful words can be sold in the market. Good deeds can draw responses from a thousand li; therefore "good deeds can become gifts to others."

A bad man should preserve Dao to avoid being forsaken.

That means employing Dao from high places.

"This Dao" refers to what has been stated above. The crowning of the king and the instalment of the three dukes mean honouring their positions and respecting their persons, all for the sake of Dao. Nothing can be more valuable than this. Therefore, the offering of large, priceless jade preceding a team of four horses is not as good as sitting and offering this Dao.

To seek and obtain, to avoid and be spared. Nothing is inapplicable. This is why Dao is valued by the world.

Key terms

abandon 棄 qì

pictograph of two hands # putting a child # in a basket # for the purpose of abandoning or disposing with it. This appears wrong. The bottom half is radical 75 # tree.

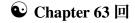
Hatcher has deny, discard, dismiss, reject, waste (ing)

Wieger has \uparrow tree underneath the phonetic \boxplus an age, a generation of 30 years, the world, both under radical \triangle private, selfish topped off by radical \dashv lid, head. Sorry Mr. Dong, no mentions of a child, baskets or hands.

virtue 善 shàn

composed of two 言 (speech) components and \ne (sheep). In ancient China sheep (羊) were associated with goodness and beauty, which is why \ne is a component in characters like \ne (beautiful), 善 (benevolent), and 義 (justice), virtue is the phonetic for *good; clever; virtuous; to approve; to love* Hatcher has (a, the) able, good, skilled, virtuous, worthy

Wieger has radical 30 *mouth* + radical 123 ≠ *sheep, goat* (also phonetic 248)



Sentences 1 to 4

- 1. Practice no-action; Attend to do-nothing; Taste the flavourless
- 2. Whether it is big or small, many or few, repay hatred with virtue. Repay hostility with De.
- 3. plan for difficulty when it is still easy, do the great while it is still small.
- 4. Difficult tasks in the world always begin from what is easy great tasks in the world always begin from what is small.

Sentence 2: Greatness is insignificant, too much is less. Repay animosity with De. Linnell

Here are more practical suggestions on how to live in Dao. How to live in the world; live in ourselves. How to *practice*. One version of sentence three says, *cross the Universe one step at a time*. Hey, go anywhere one step at a time, don't leap, don't teleport. Alright, teleport if you can, but perhaps teleportation is still only one step. Sentence four hints to Chapter 64.

A journey [travel] of a thousand miles begins from under the feet. Linnell

But wait, the characters don't say those words. They are loaned by the translators/interpreters. Here are other takes on these sentences.

Plan for the complicated while it is simple Develop the great while it is small The difficult tasks under heaven Always begin in simplicity The greatest tasks under heaven Always begin as minutiae. Hatcher

To do the difficult we start with the easy. To do the great thing we start with the small. All the difficult tasks under heaven must begin with the easy parts. All the great achievements under heaven must begin with the small steps. Ho

The great originates from the small, the numerous emerges from the few, [use de (德) to respond to animosity.] Solving difficulties must commence from the simple, achieving the great must commence from the minuscule. The difficult matters in this world must be dealt with from dealing with the easy ones. The grand events of this world must be dealt with through dealing with the minute ones. Chen

This series of alternates, or opposites, illustrate how Dao works. We are told in chapter 22 how to make something straight we must first bend it.

Sentence 5

Therefore the wise never strive for the great and thus achieve greatness.

The sage, you, never claims or propounds greatness, does not boast, therefore, greatness accrues naturally to him, you.

Sentences 6 and 7

- 6. Rash promises inspire little trust. Taking things too lightly results in much difficulty.
- 7. Thus the wise always confront difficulties and therefore have no difficulty.

Craig notes: As Tor says, these are injunctions about living in, with, Dao in, with, everyday life. The first line is of particular interest for its striking simplicity. "Do empty/not do. Work empty/not work. Taste empty/not taste." The first is the familiar wu wei. The second and third are new. Work is 事, shi, a picture of a hand holding a container for writing utensils. So this kind of work means the duty of an educated person, keeping track of things. The scribe. The government official. The scholar. Work without owning the work. Work without getting caught up in delusions of power. Taste is 味, wei, taste, smell, sense. It's root image is the mouth, on the left, the symbol on the right being the sound wei. When I studied Tai Chi my sifu always enjoined us to taste our movements. So this is about paying attention to one's senses, to one's body, and by extension all the world in which one is embedded, without the distractions of the mind. Taste, like sound, is very hard to describe. Don't bother! Pay attention. But don't hold on to what you sense. You won't be able to.

Chapter titles

A Consideration of Beginnings	Origins of Favours	Remember the Beginning
Forethought	Do Non-doing	The Secrets of Getting Things Done
Think in the Beginning	Simple Actions Add Up	The Part of Least Resistance
The Natural, Selfless Way of Life		

Wang Bi

Resting in inaction, teaching without words, and relishing the insipid and tasteless are the ultimate in governing.

A little malice is not worth repaying; great malice incurs the hatred of the world. To identify with the world is virtue.

With the ability of the Sage, it is still difficult to deal with the small and easy. Can those who do not have the ability of the Sage neglect this? Therefore this is to say, "Even [the Sage] takes things seriously."



Always try to deal with things when they are small and new. They will change into their opposites, it is inevitable.

Sentences 1 to 3

- 1. What has equilibrium is easy to maintain. What hasn't begun is easy to plan. What is fragile is easy to shatter. What is small is easy to scatter.
- 2. Deal with things before they arise. Cultivate order before confusion sets in.
- 3. tree as big as a person's embrace grows from a tiny shoot. A tower nine stories high begins with a mound of earth. A journey of a thousand miles begins under one's feet.

Some alternative versions of these sentences are interesting.

What is peaceful is easy to hold. Linnell

What is at rest is easy to hold. What manifests no omens is easily forestalled. What is fragile is easily shattered. What is small is easily scattered. Wu

Action should be taken before a thing has made its appearance; order should be secured before disorder has begun. Legge

Sentence three holds, probably the most recognized line of the Dao De Jing, even among those who don't know its source. A journey of a thousand miles begins under one's feet or A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. Last chapter we were told to cross the Universe one step at a time. Everything has a simple, natural start. And a simple, natural procedure. Don't complicate things, don't rush. Go easy and carefully always.

Remember the line in Chapter 24 about how standing on tiptoe is not very stable.

Sentences 4 and 5

- 4. To act is to fail. To grab is to lose. Therefore the wise do not act and do not fail. They do not grab and do not lose.
- 5. People often fail on the verge of success; Take care at the end as at the beginning, So that you may avoid failure.

Many leaders spoil the work just as it nears completion. They get eager. They get interested in certain outcomes. They become anxious and make mistakes. This is a time for care and consciousness. Don't do too much. Don't be too helpful. Don't worry about getting credit for having done something. Because the wise leader has no expectations, no outcome can be called a failure. Paying attention, allowing a natural unfolding, and standing back most of the time, the leader sees the event arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. Heider

Like frying a small fish in Chapter 60, don't mess about with the work. Allow it to flow naturally and guide without interference. Exercise caution from the start of the work right to the end. In personal development, this is even more important, as when you force things you lose your way, forget your purpose, miss your mark.

Sentence 6

Therefore the Sage desires nothing so much as to be desireless. She does not value rare and expensive goods. She unlearns what was once taught And helps the people regain what they have lost; To help every being assume its natural way of being, And not dare to force anything.

Therefore the sage desires to have no desire, He does not value rare treasures. He learns to be unlearned, and returns to what the multitude missed -Tao. Thus he supports all things in their natural state but does not take any action. Chan

Thus the sage: Desires to not desire, Does not value rare goods, Learns to not learn. He returns to that which everyone else has passed over, Thus helping the ten thousand creatures to be naturally so, Yet not daring to act. Linnel

Chapter titles

Consider the Insignificant	Attend to the Insignificant	Take Care of the Small
Guarding the Small	What Is at Rest Is Easy to Hold	Timing
Guarding the Small	Small Beginnings, Successful Endings	The Power at the Beginning
Fortitude and Living One's Inner Nature		

Wang Bi

When at rest, one should never forget danger. When holding, one should never forget loss. One should plan a thing before it is accomplished, so it is called easy.

In leaving non-being to enter being, due to their smallness and feebleness, they are not able to have great achievement. Therefore they are easy [to scatter]. These four indicate that one must be careful of the results. One must not fail to hold it because it is nothing or scatter it because it is small. If it is nothing and one does not hold it, then it will grow. If it is small and one does not scatter it, then it will grow bigger. Therefore to think about the difficulties at the end as much as the trouble at the beginning is to be without failure.

That means when they are at rest and have not begun.

That means when they are still small and fragile.

Be cautious to the end and eliminate the small; be cautious to the small and eliminate disorder. But to govern with action and insist on forms and names will cause incidents to arise, and cunning and evasion to prevail. Thus, failure and loss will follow.

Not cautious to the end.

Even small wishes and desires give rise to conflicts. The rare treasure, though small, gives rise to greed and thievery.

To have this ability without learning is natural; but taken to mean one does not have to learn is a mistake. So the Sage has to learn what the people do not learn in order to reverse their faults.

While chapters 63 and 64 caution wariness, they also teach the importance of planting seeds, of making the small efforts that eventually bring great results. For example, Heshang Gong says, "Clenching the hand does not allow one to obtain anything, while opening it and giving something may bring more in return." Small generosities may build unforeseen relationships and connections. Small kindnesses and acts of virtue foster harmony and plant the seeds that grow into fields of social collaboration, giving vitality and purpose to communities and the people within them. Reid

Key terms

go, do 行

composed of two radicals for one step with the left foot, and one with the right foot. Meaning also to march, to travel, journey.

Hatcher has (a, an, the) advance, course, journey, march v

peaceful 安 ān, an

depicts a woman 女 sitting under a roof 宀

Linnell uses peaceful for equilibrium

Hatcher has secure, settled, stable, calm, at rest, content

Wieger has still; rest; peace; to place; to lay down; how?

tower 臺 tái

depicts a tall 高 building 室. It means a high place, a lofty terrace, a look-out. By extension any elevated place, staging, tower, observatory

Hatcher has (a, the) (watch)tower, terrace, observatory v

Wieger has a terrace, a turret, a stage



... it is difficult to rule knowledgeable people. Jiyu

In Chapter 3 it was said the way to rule people is to simplify their lives, weaken their ambitions, strengthen their bones and fill their bellies. This is entirely antithetical to the way we live in the modern world, but, it is scalable to us as individuals. In other words, be happy, be content. Be calm. If you go vegan, you've probably gone too far.

Sentences 1 and 2

- 1. In the old days, those who were well versed in the practice of the Dao did not try to enlighten the people, but rather to keep them in a state of simplicity.
- 2. For, why are the people hard to govern? Because they are too clever! Therefore, he who governs his state with cleverness is its malefactor; but he who governs his state without resorting to cleverness is its benefactor.

The citizens are hard to govern Because they have too much knowledge, using knowledge to govern the nation Is the bane [evil] of the nation. Linnell

The difficulties of governing the people Are due to their great cleverness, to use cleverness in governing a realm Is an injury to the realm. Hatcher

The people are difficult to govern because their *zhi* 智 [intelligence, wisdom, knowledge] are duo 多 [various, many]. Therefore, using *zhi* 智 [intelligence, wisdom, knowledge] to govern a state brings misfortune to the state. Not using *zhi* 智 [intelligence, wisdom, knowledge] to govern a state brings fortune to the state. Ho

Sentence 3

To be acquainted with these two ways is to know the standard; To keep the standard always in mind is to have sublime virtue.

He who has knowledge of these two also has them as examples. To always understand these examples – This is called deep and mysterious De. Linnell

Those who comprehend both of these Also examine for patterns Always to know to look for patterns May be called a mystic power. Hatcher

Sentence 4

When the Mystic Virtue becomes clear, far-reaching, And things revert back (to their source) Then and then only emerges the Grand Harmony.

Deep and mysterious De is so profound! and remote! That when creatures return, it returns with them! Then they reach the greatest harmony. Linnell

The ability to distinguish between theory and practice will save you much trouble. Practice a way of life, and demonstrate conscious cooperation with the single principle. If you cooperate with Dao, you will experience the power of universal harmony. Heider

Mystical Virtue has a nice ring to it. It is more than ordinary De. It smacks of a profound, unknowable De. It is process. Dao is principle, De is process.

Craig notes: Sentences three and four are not easy.

"These two", in Sentence 3, are "using knowledge to govern is theft from the nation" and "not using knowledge to govern is enrichment of the nation". Sentence 3: "To know these two means truly to investigate a pattern. To always understand this pattern is called mysterious De." What is the pattern? Wang Bi says "to govern a nation with knowledge is to rob it." Knowledge in this sense, on the part of the people, breeds distrust of rulers, which makes them hard to govern. The ruler sets out many rules, trying to accomplish justice for many different circumstances. But no rules can cover all circumstances, and this only leads to great complication. People then feel 'what does this have to do with me? I don't recognize my life in these rules.' This results in alienation of the people from their country and their ruler and each other. Pattern: rules upon rules result in distrust and alienation. Thus the strength of a nation, the unity and solidarity of its people, is stolen from it by all these rules, no matter the best of intentions on the part of the ruler. Pattern: a ruler trusts the people to be naturally trust worthy and able to sort out behaviour and relationships among themselves, with no need for rules to tell them what to do. The strength of the nation is thus enriched as the solidarity and unity of its people arises naturally through their own natures.

Why is continuous investigation and awareness of these patterns "mysterious De"? Because, as Tor says, this is a process not a goal. Knowledge is a constant temptation that must constantly be resisted. And this process of continuous resistance is itself a kind of knowledge, a continuous investigation of pattern. Yet there is no causality here. Resisting knowledge does not cause anything. Creatures are their own De. Thus in Sentence 4, as Linnell has it, they return entirely of themselves, without any interference from a 'leader'. And harmony and solidarity arises spontaneously if things are left to their own. Do/achieve precisely by not doing/achieving, as has been said many times before here.

Chapter titles

The Teh of Simplicity	Virtue of Innocence	The Loss of Innocence
Simple Virtue	Good Practitioners of the Way in Ancient Times	Cleverness Versus Simplicity
Pure Virtue	Showing the Goal - Not Showing Much Learning	The Danger in Cleverness
Be Wary of Acquired Knowledge		

Wang Bi

"Intelligence" means to see more trickery and deception and to cloud their innocence. "Ignorance" is to have simplicity with no knowledge and keep their true quality, which means to follow nature.

Having too much knowledge, trickery, and deceptiveness, the people are hard to govern.

To have "knowledge" is to govern. To govern a nation with knowledge is to rob it. Therefore this is called knowledge. The people are hard to govern when they have too much knowledge. The most urgent task is to block all the passages, shut all the doors, and let the people have no knowledge or desires. If one uses knowledge and craft to stir up the people and arouse their wicked hearts, he will again use cunning and craft to check their deception; then the people, knowing his craftiness, will follow his example to avoid him. The more complicated and cunning the thought, the more hypocrisy will result. Therefore, to govern the nation with knowledge is to rob it.

"The standard" refers to uniformity. The ancients and moderns have the same standard without repeal. All know this standard; it is called mystical virtue. Mystical virtue is deep and far-reaching. Returns to its true nature.

This chapter emphasizes that governance lies in genuineness and simplicity. Laozi believes that good or bad governance is determined by the rulers' own intentions and methods. Only if rulers are genuine and sincere will they implement good and decent governance, and only through decent governance will society be peaceful. On the other hand, if rulers are sly and scheming, their governance will be a corrupted one. In a situation of corrupt governance, people will swindle and harm each other and society will have no peace. In light of this consideration, Laozi expects the ruler to guide the people by genuineness and simplicity. Laozi lived in a time of turmoil, and came to realize that the root of turmoil is the battle of wits and intelligence, competition, and hypocrisy, therefore he appeals to the people to renounce disputes over mundane values and to go back to genuineness and simplicity. It is within the context of his chaotic times that Laozi addressed this critical discourse. Chen

Key terms

ignorant 愚 yú

[p.c. 心 *heart* represents the meaning and 禺 *district*, origin unclear. Likely depicts a monkey. Possibly related to 禹, represents the sound]. Also means *stupid*, *doltish*, *foolish*; *to be stupid*; *to cheat or deceive*; *me or I (modest)*

Linnell uses ignorant.

Hatcher has to simplify, rusticate; keep/make^plain/simple.

Wieger has simple, stupid, rude

knowledge (cleverness) 知 zhi

[p.c. \square *mouth*, transfer of knowledge is thrugh the mouth, represents the meaning and $\cancel{\Xi}$ *arrow*, straight talk, to the point, represents the sound]

Linnell uses this character but has it in brackets. It occurs in other chapters

Hatcher uses 智, possibly an older symbol which had the bottom radical \Box *sun* added; Linnell has this character several times as *knowledge* and *wisdom*

Wieger has to know, to be aware of, to feel, to inform, wisdom cleverness

智 and 知 are interchangeable throughout the text.

Chapter 66 回

The modern adage, *lead by standing behind, follow by standing in front*, both apparent paradoxes, comes directly from this chapter. Here we are again given the above/below; over/under allusions, this time for individuals, not states. Examine these closely, there isn't any real difference except as to scale.

What we call leadership consists mainly of knowing how to follow. Heider

A university professor of my acquaintance, when faced with mandatory attendance at a *leadership* workshop, wondered why there weren't such workshops for *followship*.

Sentence 1

How did the great rivers and seas become the Lords of the ravines? By being good at keeping low. That was how they became Lords of the Ravines.

Sentence 2

So if you want to be over people You must speak humbly to them. If you want to lead them You must place yourself behind them.

Thus, the sage, in desiring to be above the citizens, He must by means of his speech be lower-than them. In desiring to be before the citizens, He must by means of his self be behind them. Linnell

Applying this, in desiring to rise above the people, Always in expression be subordinate to them. In desiring to go ahead of the people Always regard yourself as behind them. Hatcher

Sentence 3

Thus when he is above, the people do not feel his burden; When he is ahead, the people do not feel his hindrance. Therefore all the world is pleased to hold him in high esteem and never get tired of him.

Sentence 4

Because he does not compete; therefore no one competes with him.

Chapter titles

Chapter thies		
To Subordinate Self	Apres Vous	Taking a Low Position
Going Behind	Rivers and Seas Are Lords of the Hundred Valleys	Wisdom Always Comes from Below
To Put Oneself Behind	Humility and Non-Contention	The Power in Staying Low
Rule with Humility		

Wang Bi

This chapter has no commentary by Wang Bi.

• Chapter 67 回

Compassion, sharing, and equality, on the one hand, sustain life. This is because we are all one. When I care for you, I enhance the harmonious energy of the whole. And that is life. Heider

Sentence 1

Everyone says the Way is great and beyond comparison. Because it is great, it cannot be compared. If it were compared, it already would have seemed small.

This hearkens to the idea that people who do not know Dao will invariably laugh at it when they meet it as found in chapter 41.

If I was like everyone else, Long ago! I would have become insignificant, indeed! Linnell

That it resembles no likeness Had it a likeness Surely after so long It might have diminished a little. Hatcher

The common ground of all creation is a greater source of life than any exalted isolation. Heider

Sentences 2, 3 and 4

- 2. I have three treasures. Guard and keep them: The first is deep love, The second is frugality, And the third is not to dare to be ahead of the world.
- 3. Through Love, one has no fear; Through not doing too much, one has amplitude (of reserve power); Through not presuming to be the first in the world, One can develop one's talent and let it mature.
- 4. Now-a-days they give up gentleness and are all for being bold; economy, and are all for being liberal; the hindmost place, and seek only to be foremost; (of all which the end is) death

I have three treasures that I constantly hold firmly to: first is 慈 compassion, [kind heart] second is 俭 [frugality, temperate] and third is not presuming to be at the head of the world . It adds; Compassion enables courage. Frugality enables broadness. Not presuming to be at the head of the world enables talent. weeklywisdomblog.com

There are three treasures which I embrace and follow closely: the first is to be kind; the second is to be simple; the third is to not put one's own importance first in the world. Because kindness and compassion can produce courage, simplicity can thus be broadened to contain the world. By not putting your own importance first in worldly affairs, you will not impede the natural growth of all things. Hua-Ching Ni

Because I am compassionate, I have courage. Because I am thrifty, I am generous. Because I am humble, my potential can be fully developed. Ho.

The three treasures are an important part of Daoist philosophy and practice.

In a note: The original is "not daring to be the first in the world" (不敢為天下先) and has been translated (by Gu 1995) as "unwillingness to take the lead in the world". This is likely to be a misinterpretation. The spirit of the sentence lies in advising people of the virtues of humility. One can be the first without thinking that he is the first, for this reason one is truly the first. Compare this interpretation with Chapter 38: "The refined virtuous never attempts to be virtuous. For this reason they are truly virtuous." Ho

Sentence 5

If you wage war with compassion you will win. If you protect yourself with compassion you will be impervious. Heaven will take care of you, Protecting you with compassion.

Now: when compassion is used in war, the consequence is victory. When it is used for protection, the consequence is strength. When heaven would help you, Using compassion it protects you. Linnell

Here we encounter the necessity of doing one thing to accomplish another, detailed in Chapter 36, *In order to contract, It is necessary first to expand. In order to weaken, It is necessary first to strengthen. In order to destroy, It is necessary first to promote. In order to grasp, It is necessary first to give.*

Chapter titles

Three Treasures	Three Treasures	Three Lasting Treasures
Three Precious Things	Everyone Says	The Three Treasures
Three Precious Things	Three Treasures	The Power in Compassion
The Three Treasures		

Wang Bi

"Becoming small long ago" means becoming small for a long time. Resembling anything would mean losing its greatness. Therefore, "if resembling anything, it would have become small long ago." In attack, compassion brings victory; in defence, it holds firm. Compassion, then, permits bravery. Thriftiness means sparing expenses; then the world will not be lacking. Therefore one can be expansive.

Only by denying one's self or putting the self behind can all things return to it. Then one creates and completes tools for the benefit of the world and becomes the master of all things.

"And to" means to prefer.

To aid each other without avoiding the difficult is justified.

Key terms

economy 儉 jiǎn

[p.c. 1 person represents the meaning and \mathfrak{R} together, depicts multiple people \mathbb{R} opening their mouths \square to speak together, representing the meaning "together" or "all" represents the sound Linnell uses *economy*

Hatcher has economy, thrift, frugality, restraint

Wieger has radical $9 \nmid man + \text{phonetic } 726 \text{ all; unanimous.}$ This phonetic is made up of \triangle to assemble, and $\triangle A$ two men (several) and $\triangle A$ two mouths (several)

love 慈 ci

kind, charitable, benevolent; compassionate; gentle; merciful; kind; humane

Linnell uses compassion

Hatcher uses compassion, mercy, kindness, forbearance

慈 appears seven times, once each in chapters 18 and 19, and five times in chapter 67

love 親 qīn, qìng

original meaning chestnut tree, also now written as 亲 [p.c. 木 represents the meaning and 辛 represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "chestnut". Also means relatives, parents; intimate; the hazel nut or filbert tree; a thorny tree; one's own (flesh and blood); related; marriage; bride; close; in person; first-hand; in favor of; pro-; to kiss; (Internet slang) dear; parents-in-law of one's offspring Hatcher has (is/are) (^) (be)loved, cherished, held dear, close

Wieger has radical 147 足 foot meaning to see, to apprehend, to visit, to appear, to estimate, experience + radical 123 羊 sheep. He has the character as to love; to approach; to kiss; one's self, own. Kindred

親 appears five times in Linnell, once in each of chapters 17 (as love, verb), 18 (as loving, verb), 44 (as love, verb), 56 (as friendly, adjective, also defined as love, in favour of), and 72 (as favour, noun).

love 愛 ài

originally a p.c. with an older version *choke on something* representing the sound and $\mathring{\sqcup}$ *heart* representing the meaning. Later radical 34 $\not \! Z$ *go* was added to the bottom

Hatcher has love, care for, cherish, treasure, be kind to

Linnell has love

Wieger has radical 61 \(\tilde{\Lambda}\) heart inserted between the top and bottom of phonetic 505 action and reaction annulling each other; equilibrium, pause, halt. He has the character as phonetic 721 to love; to likeness

愛 appears five times in Linnell, once in each of chapters 10, 13 (as *loving*, verb), 27 (as *love*, verb), 44 (as *extreme desire* noun), and 72 (as *loves*, verb)

Chapter 68 回

Jiyu says Lao Tzu thought retreat and defence should be taken as a principle. *That it is desirable to make use of others' force, instead of face-to-face conflict to attain one's end.*

Sentences 1 and 2

- 1. The best captain does not plunge headlong Nor is the best soldier a fellow hot to fight.
- 2. The best tactician does not engage the enemy. The best utilizer of people's talents places himself below them.

He who is good at being a scholar is not militant. He who is good at war does not get angry. He who is good at conquering the enemy does not engage them. He who is good at making use of people acts lower-than them. Linnell

Sentence 3

This is the Te of not contending this is the power to manage people. This is being the Counterpart of Heaven equalling the very best of the ancients.

Simple instructions of how to behave, in general. Anger, intemperance, wanting to control, using threats of violence, using violence, are all antithetical to Dao and those who live in Dao. Wait it out. As my dear dead wife used to say, 'What goes around comes around" in regard to teacup storms or miserable acts perpetrated against her.

Chapter titles

Compliance with Heaven	Harmony with Heaven	Like Heaven
Imitating Heaven	Good Warriors	The Ethics of War
Fellowship with Heaven	Taking Care of Business	Nonagressive Strength
The Virtue of Non-struggle		

Wang Bi

A "general" is the commander of soldiers. "Warlike" means to push ahead and to bully people.

To be behind, not in front; to respond, not initiate; therefore one does not resort to anger.

Never fighting with them.

By using people and not placing oneself under them, the people's strength will never be fully utilized for him.

Key terms

battle; war 戰 zhàn

[p.c. 戈 *spear* represents the meaning and 單 *single*, pictograph of a hunting or military trap constructed from two rocks and a net, represents the sound]

Linnell uses war

Hatcher has ^ combat, war(fare), battle, fighting, contests

martial, warlike 武 wǔ

depicts marching 止 foot with a weapon 戈 spear

Linnell uses the euphemism *militant*.

Hatcher has aggressive, violent, belligerent, combative and uses aggressive.

Chapter 69 🗉

This chapter delves straight into warfare and battle. Retreat as advance is proposed. Here we are advised to not contend, and certainly not to initiate contention. Equally applicable to nations and individuals.

But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. Jesus the Christ

That is living in Dao.

If a group member wants to fight with you, consider the strategy of the guerrilla commander: Never seek a fight. If it comes to you, yield; step back. It is far better to step back than to overstep yourself. Heider

Sentence 1

Military men have a saying: "I do not presume to act as master, I act as guest I do not presume to advance an inch, I retreat a foot."

Those who command troops have a saying: I dare not act like the master, but instead act like a guest. Dare not advance an inch, but instead retreat a foot. Linnell

Sentence 2

This is movement without moving, stretching the arm without showing it, confronting enemies with the idea there is no enemy, holding in the hand no weapons.

Sentence 3

No calamity is greater than underestimating opponents. If you underestimate opponents, you're close to

losing your treasure.

Calamities are not worse than underestimating the enemy, and underestimating the enemy is not far from having lost my "three treasures." Chen

Sentence 4

So, when two armies confront each other Victory will go to them that grieve.

Flexibility, humility, and being prepared are the virtues that will bring great benefits in one's daily life and in the battlefield. Ho

Chapter titles

The Function of the Mysterious	Mystic Application	The Hidden Power
The Use of Supreme Virtue	Sayings on Military Operations	In War the Defender Will Be Victorious
Profound Use	Avoiding the Fight, Winning the War	Neutralizing Escalation
The Virtue of Non-struggle		

Wang Bi

Then they won't stop.

The "march" refers to military array. This means with humility, withdrawal, sorrow, and compassion, not daring to be ahead of things, one goes into battle as if there were no march to pursue, no arms to stretch, no weapons to grasp and no enemy to confront. That is to say, nobody can repel him.

That means due to my pity, compassion, humility, and withdrawal, I do not want to rely on force to become unconquerable in the world. If I finally become unconquerable, it is what I call "my great calamity." "Treasures" refer to the three treasures. Therefore it says, "almost makes me lose my treasures."

"Raising" means to lift up; "against" means to confront. Those with pity must confront each other, they do not pursue benefit and avoid harm. Therefore, they will certainly win.

Key terms

advance, walk well 進 jìn

[p.c. *L walk* represents the meaning and 井 *well* represents the sound]

Hatcher has to advance; move/push/press forward/ahead

foot, yard 尺 chǐ, chě

origin unclear. Possibly a pictograph of a side view of a person with a mark on their leg indicating the length of one foot. Wieger says the Europeans call it a foot. It uses the radical for corpse, meaning a human body

Hatcher has a chi; a foot (in the Zhou, 22.5 cm, now 35.8)

inch 寸 cùn

is the radical for the Chinese inch. The dot represents the place on the wrist where the pulse is felt, which place is an inch distant from the hand, hence the meaning inch

Hatcher has a cun; an inch (in the Zhou dynasty, 2.25 cm)

misfortune, disaster 禍 huò

[p.c. $\stackrel{?}{\land}$ *show* represents the meaning and $\stackrel{!}{\boxminus}$ *chat* {p.c. \square *mouth* represents the meaning and $\stackrel{!}{\boxminus}$ *bone*, pictograph of bones, represents the sound} represents the sound]

Hatcher has ^ calamity, danger, horror, error, mistake

retreat, step back 退 tuì,

depicts moving 主 a sacrificial grain offering 簋 away, original meaning take away a sacrificial offering. The meaning later shifted to "withdraw" and "retreat"

Hatcher has retreat, withdraw, yield; move/pull/step back

soldier, arms, military 兵 bīng

Linnell uses command troops once, weapons oncce, and armies once

Hatcher has martial, military, weapons v; militar- v

Chapter 70 🗉

Jiyu says Lao Tzu anguished because his work and ideas went unappreciated.

This way of living and leading groups is easy to understand. It is easy to do. But not many leaders understand this approach. Very few use it in their work. Frankly, it is too simple and ancient to attract much attention. As a rule, the greatest interest goes to the greatest novelty. Heider

Sentence 1

My ideas are easy to understand and easy to practice. Yet no one understands them or practices them.

But there is no one in the world who can understand them, There is no one who can practice them. Linnell

In a note: Laozi explicitly tells his readers that his teachings are down-to-earth, practical, and of this world. Ho

Sentence 2

My ideas have a source; my actions have a master. Because people do not understand this, they do not know me. Since few know me, I am very precious.

Sentence 3

Therefore the Sage wears a coarse cloth on top And carries jade within his bosom.

Chapter titles

The Difficulty of Understanding	Difficult to Understand	Easy to Understand
The Difficult Recognition	My Sayings Are Very Easy to Recognize	So Easy to Understand and Practice!
Difficult to Know	The Jewel in Your Heart	Knowing the Dao
The Rarity of Dao Followers		

Wang Bi

One knows without going out-of-doors or peeping through windows. Therefore, it is very easy to understand. One completes without action. Therefore, it is easy to put into practice. Confused by impulsive desires, one therefore cannot understand them. Blinded by honour and benefits, one therefore cannot practice them. "Root" refers to the source of all things. "Lord" refers to the master of all things.

Just because my words have their root and my deeds have their lord, I must be known by someone. And the people cannot be without knowledge of that.

Because of my profundity, few people understand me. The fewer the people who know me, the more matchless I become. Therefore those who know me are few, so those who emulate me are rare.

Wearing coarse clothes, the Sage is one with the dust; bearing jade near his breast, he treasures true nature. The Sage is hard to know because he identifies with the dust and does not distinguish himself, bears precious jade near his breast and does not change from it. Therefore, he is hard to know and rare.

Key terms

to be able, perform 能 néng

original meaning *bear*, pictograph of a bear. Based on the original meaning "bear". The meaning of this character has shifted over time to mean "strong" and "ability, power".

Hatcher has can; (is/are) (cap)able, competent of /to

Wieger has radical 130 肉 flesh; meat; fat; corporeal (abbreviated as 月) + radical 28 \triangle private, and the doubled radical 21 \triangle spoon meaning bear; able to, ability power

Linnell uses this character as [能] in chapter 67 for can be

understand 懂 dŏng

[p.c. | heart represents the meaning and 董 supervise, {p.c. | grass represents the meaning and 重 heavy, person carrying a heavy basket on their back, represents the sound]

Linnell uses understand.

Hatcher has to comprehend, grasp, know, understand

matter; affair 事 shì

the characters 史 (history), 吏 (government official), 使 (cause; use; instruct), and 事 (matter; work; affair) are all etymologically related and all derive from the same ancient character, depicting a hand (又) holding a container for writing utensils. 事 and 史 were originally written the same, but later an extra mark was added to distinguish them

Linnell uses duties.

Hatcher has (as) affairs, efforts, endeavours, events, works

Wieger has an affair, business, a service

Chapter 71 🗵

Another two sentence chapter full of great information.

The wise leader has learned how painful it is to fake knowledge. Being wise and not wanting the pain; the leader does not indulge in pretending. Anyway, it is a relief to be able to say: "I don't know." Heider

Four sentences that lead to wisdom: I don't know. I need help. I'm sorry. I was wrong. L. Penny in Still Life

Sentence 1

There is nothing better than to know that you don't know. Not knowing, yet thinking you know - This is sickness. Only when you are sick of being sick Can you be cured.

Sentence 2

The sage's not being sick Is because she is sick of sickness. Therefore she is not sick

A person, on seeing a man suffering from hunger, instinctively sees the suffering and empathizes with him. Another person comes by and says: "You are not him, so how can you tell if he is suffering?" This latter person has learnt the clever but crooked way of thinking and has forgotten his natural awareness and sensitivity. He is sick. Ho

Craig notes: This is a remarkable example of the terseness of this text.

Sentence 1: "Know not know is best. Not know know is sickness. Only when you are sick sick are you not sick." Here are some ways to read the first two:

'To know that you do not know is best, not to know that you know is sickness.'

'To know and yet not know is best, not to know and yet to know is sickness.'

'To know but think one does not knows is best, not to know but to think that one knows is sickness.'

'To know not to know is best, not to know to know is sickness.'

Or even a combination: 'To know that one does not know is best, to not know but think that one knows is disease.'

Perhaps all of these are valid. There is no reason to believe that ambiguity is not intentional here, to think that there must be one and only one reading. Ambiguity is an opportunity to meditate. There is clear opportunity for paradox here. But I'm not going to worry that bone. To aid meditation I'm going to ask a couple of questions.

First: is this about ordinary knowledge or about knowledge of Dao? It could be about both. Arrogance about knowing, whether ordinary or otherwise, is sickness. Humility about knowing, whether ordinary or otherwise, is a root of wisdom. And arrogance and humility can apply to knowing or to not knowing. It's quite possible to be arrogant about ignorance, just as it's possible to be humble about knowing.

Second: what the heck is 'sick sick'? The third part of the sentence is: 'Only when sick sick is how not sick.' The second sentence reiterates this, but about the Sage. In that case, we are probably talking about knowledge of Dao. But that doesn't remove the ambiguity. Sentence

2: "The Sage is not sick because he is sick sick. This is why he is not sick." There seem to be two main ways to read 'sick sick', 'aware that sickness is sickness' and 'is sick of sickness'. I prefer the latter because it brings us back to process. In the process of deep investigation one can become thoroughly and entirely sick of the process of investigation, and only then does one let go of it all, including the process. One can embrace not knowing. And thus know. One can give up doing and thus empty do. Detachment from the process as a moment of the process can be enlightening. Here we are told 'only when you let yourself get fully sick of this sickness will you be free of the sickness.' So part of this story is that one has to go through ignorance to wisdom, and find wisdom in ignorance. There is no shame in ignorance. The shame is in arrogance, whether about ignorance or wisdom.

Chapter titles

The Disease of Knowledge	Knowing the Disease	Rid of Sickness
The Disease of Knowing	Knowing Unconsciously	Healing the Mind
Knowledge and its Sickness	Knowing Not-Knowing	Knowing the Disease
Rediscover What You Know in Your Nature		

Wang Bi

One who does not know that knowledge is not reliable is diseased.

Kev terms

sickness 病 bìng

[p.c. \mathcal{F} sick, depicts a sick person \mathcal{L} lying in bed \mathcal{H} , represents the meaning and \mathcal{H} third, original meaning pedestal, depicts a platform to put things on. The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]

Hatcher has (is)(a) affliction, illness, disease, flaw, disorder

Wieger has radical 104 扩 sickness, to lie on a bed, urgent, pressing as in a grave sickness, + phonetice 150 丙 the third of the ten stems. It also means fire, the fire under the roof, in a house. The more recent form represents the flames rising up and spreading over the roof. Wieger also explains radical 104 扩 sickness is often concatenated with radical 53 广 house on a cliff

Chapter 72 🗵

Leaders of people should be modest, selfless and centred on Dao.

Overcome the bias against the word of God. The great force of our spiritual roots lies in tradition, like it or not. The wise leader models spiritual behaviour and lives in harmony with spiritual values. Heider

Sentence 1

If the people do not fear authority then great authority has arrived.

Sentence 2

Do not reduce the living space of their dwellings. Do no oppress their lives. It is because you do not oppress them that they are not oppressed.

Do not disrespect their dwellings, Do not despise their livelihood. Linnell

Sentence 3

Therefore the sage knows himself but does not show himself. He loves himself but does not exalt himself. Therefore he rejects the one but accepts the other.

Truly reverence-inspiring is he who displays nothing to intimidate his people. Do not despise people for their humble residences; Do not shun them for their modest births. Because you do not despise and shun them, They also will not despise and shun you. The Sage knows himself and frees himself from prejudice. He treasures and takes care of his own life but will not exalt himself. He gives something up and gains something else. Ho

Chapter titles

To Cherish One's Self	Comparing Coercive Power and the Empowerment of the Great Integrity	Ego and Self
Loving Oneself	When the People Are Not Awed by Authority	Self-Respect
Loving Oneself	Self Respect, Low Profile	The Appropriate Perspective
Do Not Intimidate Others; Do Not Exalt Yourself		

Wang Bi

Serenity and inaction are called "the beginning." To be humble and not filled is called "life." If one forsakes serenity, acts on his hasty desires, abandons the self-effacing, and indulges his power and harshness, then things will be disturbed and the people will be perverse. Power can no longer control the people; and the people can no longer endure domination. Then both high and low will be in a great rout, and the punishment of heaven will occur. Therefore if the people do not fear his power, then great fear will occur. Not restricting their living quarters and not disturbing their livelihood mean that one should not rely on authoritative power. Does not disturb himself.

Because one does not disturb himself, the world will not disturb him.

He does not display his knowledge to shine his light or exert his power.

Having self-value, one's living quarters will be disturbed and his livelihood will be disgusted.

Kev Terms

despise 厭 yàn

original meaning to push down, [p.c. Γ cliff (roof) represents the meaning and depicts a dog with meat in its mouth represents the sound. Original form of (press, push down), related to packed-earth construction of buildings (Γ)

Hatcher has overtax, burden, oppress; surfeit, weary (ing)

Wieger relates this character to phonetic series 701 獣 to scatter, to disperse, to separate as in pounding meat to break up its structure

disrespect 狎 xiá

dog and fingernail

Hatcher has *narrow*, *restrict*, *constrict*, *cramp*, *crowd* (*ing*)

Wieger has *a pet dog, familiar, irreverent* [perhaps in the sense of taking for granted?] fear, dread 畏 *wei*

pictograph of a ghost (鬼) wielding a stick (卜), which is a fearful sight to behold. 鬼 is also a sound component

Hatcher has awed by, afraid, fearful; dread, fear, heed (of)

Wieger has, in lesson 40, \boxtimes skull, cover of the brain of which he says, in composition, the head. It is often altered in writing to look like radical 102 \boxplus field. In part, C he gives it as the head of a devil, of a phantom. For this character he says, to dread, to be in awe, awful, terrible. The character was first composed of the head of a spectre and of claws \prod , later on a man \bigwedge frightened was added, for nothing inspires more fear than the head of a demon or the claws of a tiger. It forms phonetic series 488.

Chapter 73 🗵

There is an old sailors' riddle. What is the difference between being *drunk* sick and *sea* sick? When you are drunk sick you are afraid you are going to die. When you are sea sick you are afraid you are going to live. To become seasick 晕船 *yùnchuán* is a halo in the sky coupled with the character for boat.

Dao does not preach sermons or dictate behaviour. What people do is their own responsibility. But the pattern of their behaviour follows natural law. This law is so general, it covers every possible event. It is so specific, it applies to every instance of every event. But no one can decide for you what to do in a given situation. It is always up to you.

Sentences 1 and 2

- 1. Boldness in daring means killing; boldness in not daring means life.
- 2. These two may help and may harm. Who knows the reason for what heaven dislikes? That is why even sages find it hard for them.

When your courage lies in daring, The consequence is killing. When your courage lies in not daring, The consequence is survival. These two choices, they sometimes cause benefit, sometimes cause harm. That which heaven detests – who knows its reasons? Linnell

Courage atop presumption suggests dying Courage in avoiding presumption suggests survival (Yet) either of these may be sometimes beneficial, other times harmful That which heaven holds in contempt - Who knows as to the reasons? Hatcher

These sentences are almost like mantras espousing Dao thinking. But in sentence two a hint of predestination creeps in, who can understand the ways of heaven. Karma, anyone?

Sentence 3

The Way of heaven does not strive; yet it wins easily. It does not speak; yet it gets a good response. It does not demand; yet all needs are met. It is not anxious; yet it plans well.

These four attributes of Heaven (Dao) are interesting. Does nothing – wins; says nothing – echoes; orders nothing – is followed; advises nothing – is right. Linnell turns things around saying Heaven does not ... strive - yet achieves; speak – yet responds; summon – yet gathers; hurry – yet is prepared.

Does not strive, yet skillfully achieves its goals. Does not speak, yet skillfully responds. Does not summon, yet everything naturally comes to it. Is certainly unhurried, yet skillfully prepares. Linnell

Sentence 4

Heaven's net is indeed vast. Though its meshes are wide, it misses nothing.

網 *net*, appears only once, here in this chapter. It is part of the group formed by the abbreviated radical for *silk*, *thread*.

Laozi believes that intimidation to make people behave in a certain way is not in general a good policy. Policy makers should take away the motivation for people to "misbehave" rather than use deterrents to deter people from behaving in the undesired way. We know that people are prepared to die for what they believe as noble causes, and if they cannot get their sustenance through lawful activities they will risk their lives in unlawful activities in order to survive. Availing people of jobs so they can make a living, and giving them the right to live in their own communities will take away the need to commit crimes. Consider the suicidal terrorist attacks committed by various "radical people." Consider the plight of many of the poor who have no means to live a basic life, and we can see the wisdom of these lines. Ho

Chapter titles

Action is Dangerous	Natural Action	Courage with Wisdom
Freedom of Action	Boldness in Daring Means Killing	Courage, Patience and Paradoxes
Trusting in Action	Following the Course of Dao	Nature's Way
Heaven's Plans		

Wang Bi

Will surely not die a natural death.

Will surely be in accord with life.

Both are brave, but their functions are different since benefit and harm are different. Therefore they are either beneficial or harmful.

"Who" means which one. That is to say: which one knows the reason or intent of the world's hatred? Only the Sage does. Even with his sagacity, the Sage finds it difficult to be brave. What about those who want to act without the Sage's sagacity? So it is even more difficult.

Because heaven does not compete, nothing in the world can compete with it.

To conform will bring fortune; to reject will bring evil. Good responses need no words.

Staying low, all things automatically will return to it.

To recognize good and evil by descending to images; to establish sincerity before the event, not to forget danger in safety; to plan before summoning; therefore it is called to be calm and skillful in planning.

Heshang Gong

Understanding Lao Zi's power and virtue of kindness, compassion, and love as applied to overcoming adversity, we may better understand how "Heaven's Dao does not contend, yet is excellent at overcoming; does not speak, yet is excellent at accomplishing what is necessary; does not give summons, yet is excellent at drawing towards itself; remains uncontrived, yet is excellent at organizing. Heaven's net is immense. It is loose, yet loses nothing." We can also better understand why "courage that is reckless brings death" by looking to chapter 67, in which he states, "if one neglects kindness in courage, they will die." Reid

Key terms

courage 勇 yǒng

[p.c. 力 *power* represents the meaning and 甬 path, originally depicted a bell. The lower part of the character was later reanalyzed as 用. The current meaning is a phonetic loan, represents the sound]. Hatcher has *adventure*, *boldness*, *bravery*, *courage*, *valor*.

Wieger has brave, daring

The character appears twice in chapter 67 and twice in chapter 73

daring 敢 gǎn

original meaning *to hunt; to pursue*, depicts a 攵 hand holding a hunting weapon catching a wild boar 豕. 甘 *sweetness*, pictograph of something sweet inside the mouth 口 represents the sound. Based on the original meaning "to hunt; to pursue". The meaning later shifted to "brave" and "to dare" Hatcher *has audacity, boldness, daring, presumption*

Wieger has radical 66 支 or 女 tap next to 甘 sweetness under an abbreviated character for 豕 pig, boar. For the character he has to dare, to venture, presumptuous

Chapter 74 🗵

It is not the leader's role to play judge and jury, to punish people for 'bad' behaviour. In the first place, punishment does not effectively control behaviour. But even if punishment did work, what leader would dare to use fear as a teaching method? Heider

This chapter is a deep protest by Laozi against the practices of harsh punishment and inhumane laws during his time, which forced people into deadly situations. Chen

Sentences 1, 2 and 3

- 1. The people are not afraid of death; Why threaten them with death?
- 2. Supposing that the people are afraid of death, And we can seize and kill the unruly, Who would dare to do so?
- 3. There is always the master executioner (Heaven) who kills. To undertake executions for the master executioner is like hewing wood for the master carpenter. Whoever undertakes hewing wood for the master carpenter rarely escapes injuring his own hands.

In a note: Laozi believes that intimidation to make people behave in a certain way is not in general a good policy. Policy makers should take away the motivation for people to "misbehave" rather than use deterrents to stop people from behaving in an undesired way. We know that people are prepared to die for what they believe as noble causes, and if they cannot get their sustenance through lawful activities they will risk their lives in unlawful activities in order to survive. Availing people of jobs so they can make a living, and giving them the right to live in their own communities will take away the need to commit crimes. Consider the suicidal terrorist attacks committed by various "radical people." Consider the plight of many of the poor who have no means to live a basic life, and we can see the wisdom of these lines. Ho

This chapter is all over the place. If someone isn't afraid of death then it is pointless to threaten them. Many a political prisoner is threatened with torture, not death. Then we are

told even if they do fear death and we are allowed to do away with them, no reasons needed, who amongst us would shoot first. It is probably best not to know. Then the real lesson, don't pretend to be something you are not, because if you do, something will bite you in the ass. Remember we were told to *stick to our bush*, well this is a sort of *mind your own business*.

So don't try to lay no "boo-gee woo-gee" On the king of rock and roll. Baldry

There is a taunting, almost, dare inherent in this. It's like Lao Tzu is saying, go ahead, ha ha, take the dare. Learn the hard way.

Chapter titles

Overcoming Delusions	Subdue Delusion	Rehabilitating Instead of Judging
The Fault of Coercion	If People Usually Don't Fear Death	Ruling by Fear
To Control Delusion	The Paradox of Punishment	Unnatural Authority
Rely Not On the Death Penalty		

Wang Bi

To disturb the people by perfidy and deviousness is called trickery.

Nonconformity evokes the anger and disgust of orderly people. Unkindness evokes the hatred of the people. Therefore there is always a need for an executioner.

Key terms

death 死 sǐ

Hatcher has death, dying, mortality, passing, perishing

Wieger has radical 78 \mathcal{F} bad, + radical 21 \mathcal{L} spoon In a lesson he gives \mathcal{L} as corresponding to old forms, one, represents an old instrument, a kind of scraper, or spoon, this character soon became obsolete. In the derivatives that remained .. one might find several characters that mean utensils. \mathcal{L} man, inverted. Over-turned. Hence the significations derived from the origins of this character; to turn around, to invert, to comp[are, to join, to match, to pair (right side and reverse. He gives radical 21 as to turn one's self around. etc.

another character for death is 沒 méi, mò, original meaning reach into the water to grab something, depicts a hand reaching in the water to grab something. The meaning later expanded to "drown", "disappear", and "not have". Also means the cutting off of water, the drying up at death; (the) death, mortality, end, disappearance

Hatcher has (the) death, mortality, end, disappearance

Wieger treats this character as radical 85 % water abbreviated as ? + phonetic 72 to plunge. In a lesson he gives to dive, while turning on one's self, in order to get something under water. The head being below; by extension to disappear, to be no more. This version appears twice, in chapters 16 and 52, which Linnell has as disappears

executioner 殺 shā

depicts a person being decapitated, it is the radical for pole-ax, kill derived from making a jerking motion as striking with a stick and the phonetic for the cutting of a the ear, upon a stalk of rice; to behead a man. Depicts a person being decapitated $\stackrel{*}{\Rightarrow}$ with a weapon $\stackrel{*}{\searrow}$

Hatcher has death, dying; loss of life; killing, slaughter

Chapter 75 🗓

Exploitation doesn't benefit anybody. Gains from exploitation even though guarded carefully, sooner or later, will be lost. Power accrued from exploitation is always horrid and cruel. Leopold II's Congo is an example.

People are hungry, because rulers eat too much tax-grain. That is why people are starving.

In ancient China, taxes were usually paid with grain and other crops.

Sentence 2

People are hard to govern, because rulers interfere too much. That is why they are hard to govern.

Sentence 3

When people slight death, it is because of the earnestness with which they seek life; that makes them slight death. Only those who do not contrive to live are wise in valuing life.

Those who makes living an unconditional right are good in that they pay due respect to life. Ho

In a note: Diverse translations of these lines exist. Walker(1995) took these lines to mean: "Those who enjoy life are wiser than those who employ life." Gu (1995) took them to mean: "Those who make light of their own life are wiser than those who overvalue their life." The original 無以生為者,是賢于貴生 is directly translated into my current version by taking 于 as "in" rather than "than." This appears to make good sense as both this and the previous chapter preach the virtues of the respect for life. Ho

Chapter titles

Loss by Greediness	The Harm of Greed	Inner Order of Life
The Evil of Avarice	People's Starvation	Who Can Enjoy the Treasures of Life?
Injury from Covetousness	Greedy Leaders, Impoverished People	Self-Destructive Leadership
Government's Faults		

Wang Bi

That is to say: what makes the people perverse and the government chaotic originates at the top, not the bottom. The people always follow the man on top. [Paul Lin: Wang Pi supposedly said regarding this chapter: "I suspect this is not Lao Tzu's work."]

Kev terms

taxes 稅 shuì

[p.c.禾 *stalk of grain* represents the meaning and 兌 *exchange*, original meaning *joyous*, depicts words 八 coming out of a person's mouth \Box represents the sound]

Hatcher has ^^tax grain; duty, tariff, revenue (s, grain)

Wieger has duty on merchandise; taxes



Soft and supple versus hard and brittle. It is self-evident.

Sentences 1, 2 and 3

- 1. When a man is living, he is soft and supple. When he is dead, he becomes hard and rigid.
- 2. When a plant is living, it is soft and tender. When it is dead, it become withered and dry.
- 3. Hence, the hard and rigid belongs to the company of the dead: The soft and supple belongs to the company of the living.

Sentence 4

Therefore when an army is headstrong, it will lose in a battle. When a tree is hard, it will be cut down.

The mighty and the great will be laid low. The humble and the weak will be exalted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth, Jesus the Christ, from the Sermon on the Mount

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. Isaiah

Chapter titles

Beware of Strength	Abstain from Hardness	Rigidity Means Death
The Danger of Strength	When People Are Born	Let Yin Predominate Over Yang
Caution against Strength	The Way of the Green Stick	The Power in Flexibility
Strengths and Weaknesses		

Wang Bi

He who uses a strong army to do violence to the world incurs the people's hate. Therefore he can never win. It will be imposed on.

Referring to the trunk of the tree.

Referring to the branches of the tree.

Key terms

hard 彊 qiáng, jiàng, qiǎng

[p.c. 弓 bow represents the meaning and 畺 boundary represents the sound]

The text uses 弓 and 虽 although, original meaning type of lizard, which maybe an abbreviated form of \blacksquare

inflexible 堅 jiān

[p.c. \pm earth represents the meaning and \boxtimes to gouge out an eye, depicts a hand \boxtimes gouging an eye \boxtimes represents the sound].

Wieger has radical \pm as earth, ground, soil, dust, aborigines, local; radical \times as the right hand; and; also, still again; more; phonetic; phonetic \to as minister, subject.

Dong has 臣 minister, original meaning *glare at*, pictograph of an eye, similar to 目. Based on the original meaning "glare at", now written as 瞋. The current meaning is a phonetic loan.

Linnell uses hard and inflexible.

Hatcher has hard and stiff

soft 柔 róu

[p.c. 矛 spear represents the sound and 木 tree represents the meaning]. Also means soft; gentle, pliant; flexible; supple; yielding

Hatcher has flexibility; gentle, responsive, supple (ness); gentle, responsive, supple (ness)

Wieger has radical 75 tree + radical 110 \mathcal{F} spear. In a lesson he has a kind of halberd, with a very long staff, such as were used on chariots, to hook fighting men. He compares it to radical 62 \mathcal{F} spear also meaning arms, weapons sharp or cutting. The full character \mathcal{F} is phonetic 455, a slender stem, flexible, elastic, pliant

Chapter 77 🗵

This chapter is about reciprocity. Newton's laws. What goes around, comes around. Nothing goes without something comes. Nature abhors a vacuum. Chapter five used the image of a bellows to illustrate reciprocal motion is needed to make effective action.

reciprocal 亦 is derived from a standing man, whose sides are indicated by two lines or dots. Pictograph of a person, with two dots at the armpits.

Think *on the other hand*, or something that changes from one to another and back again. Think *two sides of the same coin*.

The Way of heaven is like bending a bow. The high is lowered; the low is raised. The excessive is reduced; the deficient is increased.

Sentence 2

Heaven's Way is to take from what has too much And give to what does not have enough. This is not the way of men, however, for they take from those who have little to increase the wealth of the rich.

Sentence 3

Who can have an abundance to offer the world? Only the one who has Dao.

Sentence 4

Therefore, the Sage does his work without setting any store by it, accomplishes his task without dwelling upon it. He does not want his merits to be seen.

Other variants for sentence 4 use the word hoard for *setting store by*. To hoard $\bar{\mathbf{m}}$ is the abbreviated radical for *grass*, *herbs* meaning *a lot*, and the phonetic for *complacency* together indicating *to hide away*; *to store up*. Depicts a weapon \mathbf{z} slashing an eye \mathbf{z} . In ancient China, captured prisoners were blinded with weapons making them into slaves. \mathbf{z} was later added as a sound component.

A hoard 餘 is the radical for to eat, feed and the phonetic for men eating together with leftovers or surplus; Dong does not admit this construction, preferring the same character as the verb to hoard.

Chapter titles

Dao of Heaven	The Way of Heaven	The Way of Heaven
The Dao of Heaven	The Way of Heaven	Two Opposite Processes
The Way of Heaven	Excess and Insufficiency	Directing the Power
The Way of Heaven		

Wang Bi

By sharing virtue with heaven and earth, one can therefore embody it like the Dao of heaven. As for the measure of mankind, each has his own physical identity and cannot share equally with others. Only when he forsakes his identity and stops regarding private property as nature can he share virtue with heaven and earth. That is to say: dwelling in fullness to preserve emptiness, diminishing the abundant and replenishing the deficient, blending with light and becoming one with dust, being magnanimous and sharing—this only Dao can do! Therefore the Sage does not display his superiority in order to share with the world.

Chapter 78 🗵

O. We know water is not soft. Try doing a belly flopper off a short wharf. Water is non-compressible. Organic things hitting its surface at speed are smashed and broken. It is humble, gathering in the lowest places. It is relentless, always moving, flowing, dripping. Water makes up some large part of us, we are water. Our body engines run on water and some catalysts. The ancients saw water as a life force, regardless of its physics, along with fire, earth and air. The element closest to Dao is water.

Sentence 1

Nothing in the world is softer and weaker than water. Yet nothing is better at attacking the hard and

strong. There is no substitute for it.

Nothing in the world is more submissive and yielding than water. Yet nothing can equal it in cutting the inflexible and eroding the hard. World

In the world, nothing is softer and weaker than water. Yet for attacking that which is hard and strong, There is nothing that can surpass it. This is because it endlessly replaces itself. Linnell

(In all) the world there is nothing as adaptable & soft as water Yet of that which attacks the hard & inflexible Nothing can surpass it. Hatcher

Sentence 2

The weak overcomes the strong. The soft overcomes the hard. Everyone knows this, but none have the ability to practice it.

I am uncertain what Lao Tzu is getting at here. Do we all really know it and not use it? Maybe it is in our nature to try the opposite? Is he condemning all people or just some subset, say those who are not aware they are part of Dao?

Craig notes: Very good question. I think he really means no one can do it. As individual finite living beings we have a natural inclination to protect ourselves, to prolong our lives. Sometimes we have to oppose strength with strength. It's impossible to turn the other cheek every time. So I think he means not that we can never practice it, but that we can't always practice it.

Sentence 3

Therefore, the Sage says: To receive the dirt of a country is to be lord of its soil-shrines. To bear the calamities of a country is to be the prince of the world. Indeed, Truth sounds like its opposite!

Chapter titles

Chapter titles		
Trust and Faith	Trust in Faith	Truth Lies in the Paradox
Accepting the Truth	The Most Flexible Things in the World	Appearance and Reality
True Faith	Yielding Overcomes Inflexibility	Accepting the Blame
Water and the Paradoxes of Life		

Wang Bi

"With" means usefulness. "It" refers to water. That is to say, if the softness and weakness of water is used, nothing can take its place.

Chapter 79 🗵

Because we are all one, there are no sides to take. When all is said and done, the wise leader goes along with what is happening anyway. Heider

Sentence 1

Patching up a great hatred is sure to leave some hatred behind. How can this be regarded as satisfactory?

Harmonize a great resentment. And there must be some remaining resentment. How can this be considered good? Linnell

Compromising with great hatred surely leaves some hatred. How can this be considered good? Beck

We are human, we act human. We can try to control our human foibles, such as emotions, but when there is a win there is also a loss. Aggravated grudge. Disturbing claims of inequity.

Therefore (to guard against this), the sage keeps the left-hand portion of the record of the engagement, and does not insist on the (speedy) fulfillment of it by the other party.

The sage accepts less than is due And does not blame or punish. Merel

Someone has to take the blame when things go wrong. It is easy to blame others rather than yourself, it is easier to point a finger than admit you are the fault.

Sentence 3

One who has Te is concerned with fulfilling his contract one who does not have Te concerns himself with collecting his due.

justice $\frac{1}{2}$ is the radical for *sheep* over the phonetic for *l; me; my*. The character indicates harmony after a dispute, *giving satisfaction to the interested parties. Hence all the derived meanings of this important character; the bottom of an affair, truth, right; conventional, just, equitable, proper, etc. The sheep probably comes from the ancient practice of sacrificing an animal at the conclusion of a treaty, or, alternately, the symbol of a sheep as a quiet, unassuming creature. Dong and Wieger*

Think *innocent as a lamb*. In ancient China sheep \neq were associated with goodness and beauty, which is why \neq is a component in characters like $\not\equiv$ (beautiful), $\not\equiv$ (benevolent), and $\not\equiv$ (justice).

Sentence 4

the Way of Heaven favours no one but always helps the good

Sentences three and four have a myriad of interpretations.

Therefore: to have De is to take charge of your agreements; To be without De is to take charge of taking away from others. The Way of heaven, while without favour, Is always with virtuous people. Linnell

The virtuous one only enforces contracts. The non-virtuous one imposes his will. The Way of Heaven will not favour any one in particular, But it will favour those who do good deeds. Ho

In a note: These two lines are amazing. In the original, \hat{m} [penetrate, thorough] is used to describe what the non-virtuous rulers do. \hat{m} refers to a rule imposed by the emperor during the Zhou Dynasty governing how a plot of land was to be divided and farmed by different people. In this context the word is used as a figure of speech to refer to rules imposed from the top to be observed by people below. Ho

Chapter titles

Enforcing Contracts	Observance of Obligations	Putting up with and Getting along with
Keeping One's Bond	Harmonize Bitter Enemies	The Toxicity of Blame
To Sustain Agreements	Quarrels, Quibbles, and Quietude	The Power in Not Taking Advantage
Do Good Deeds; Blame No One		

Wang Bi

Not knowing how to settle the contract, one causes great grudge. When grudge is settled with virtue, the wound is not healed. Therefore, some residue grudge must remain.

The left stub of the contract prevents the rise of grudge.

A man with virtue considers the contract and prevents grudge from rising before trying to blame people. One taxes others for their mistakes.

Key terms

blame 尤 is the phonetic for evils, calamities; still more; to exceed

Pictograph of a hand with a wart on it. The original meaning "wart" is now written as 疣. The original meaning later expanded to "strange, bizarre" and "outstanding, special". Meaning *blame*, *grudge*, *reproach*; *fault*; *moreover*

Hatcher has blame, reproach, resentment(s); fault, offense

Wieger has radical $43 \pm lame +$ the radical $3 \cdot a$ point, a dot [a wart?]. In a lesson he has a dot, a sign of punctuation, etc. Formerly the dot was round; it is now piriform, on account of the writing-brush that writes thus

impartial, without favour 親 qīn, qìng

[p.c. 見 see represents the meaning and 亲 relatives, original meaning chestnut tree {p.c. 木 tree represents the meaning and 辛 laborious, original meaning chisel, pictograph of a chisel-like tool. The meaning later shifted to "hard" and "laborious" represents the sound}. Based on the original meaning "chestnut", represents the sound]

Hatcher has favourite; (bond of) alliance, attachment (s)

Wieger has radical 147 見 see + phonetic 361 幸 fortunate; prosperous; opportune, which together form phonetic 818 親, the character, meaning to love; to approach; to kiss; near; one's self; own, and kindred, affinity

resentment 怨 yuàn

[p.c. 心 heart represents the meaning and 夗 to turn over when asleep, pictograph of a dying animal lying down, represents the sound]

Hatcher has animosity, hostility, grievance, enmity (s)

Wieger has radical 61 $\stackrel{\frown}{L}$ heart + a phonetic made up of radical 36 $\stackrel{\frown}{D}$ evening, sunset and radical 26 $\stackrel{\frown}{\Box}$ seal; together they make phonetic series 174 $\stackrel{\frown}{D}$ to turn in bed. The character means ill treatment, to have a grudge

Chapter 80 回

Lao Tzu sought the *old ways* without innovation and without ritual. Of course, he was whistling Dixie. Two and a half millennia ago, things were different. Think Homer. Modernity means we are different and have to live differently. Yet, within the Dao there is a *human way* that can help *us be happy and healthy and full of* life If you can make these ideas your own way, then things will work out well.

Sentence 1

Let there be a small country with few people, Who, even having much machinery, don't use it. Who take death seriously and don't wander far away.

Nation, state \boxtimes , in the text, seems too large for the intended meaning here, perhaps \sqsubseteq *community*, depicts a group of things \boxminus in an enclosed area, box \sqsubseteq is more meaningful. A neighbourhood? Wieger has \boxminus as a kind, series, rank, order, a rule. Hatcher has \boxtimes (be) (the) country, domain, state, territory (v).

Sentence 2

Even if there are ships and carriages, no one takes them. Even if there are armor and weapons, no one displays them.

Sentence 3

let people return to the use of knots and be satisfied with their food and pleased with their clothing and content with their homes and happy with their customs

Sentence 4

And even though the next country is so close that people can hear its roosters crowing and its dogs barking, they are content to die of old age without ever having gone to see it.

Ensure that the citizens return to knotting ropes and using them, Find deliciousness in their food, Beauty in their clothes, Contentment in their dwellings, Happiness in their customs. Linnell

If you want to be free, learn to live simply. Use what you have and be content where you are. Quit trying to solve your problems by moving to another place, by changing mates or careers. Leave your car in the garage. If you have a gun, put it away. Sell that complex computer and go back to using pencil and paper. Rather than read every new book that comes along, reread the classics. Eat food grown locally. Wear simple, durable clothing. Keep a small home, uncluttered and easy to clean.

Keep an open calendar with periods of uncommitted time. Have a spiritual practice and let family customs grow. Of course, the world is full of novelty and adventures. New opportunities come along every day. So what? Heider

In notes: There are many figures of speech here, and they should not be taken literally. The last line in the original reads: "so people will revive the use of using knots to communicate." Certainly Laozi did not mean giving up the written language. After all, the Daodejing was written in language that was already well established. This chapter describes an ideal world of self-sufficiency where people find delight in the enjoyment of a simple life. People may think that Laozi does not approve of interacting. But this is not true, since to "follow their traditions happily" already implies some kind of interaction. Laozi would let people settle down to their own lifestyles. Since Laozi believes that then they would be so satisfied, that there would be no incentive and no need to travel. Ho

Chapter titles

Chapter titles		
Contentment	Independence	Praise of Simplicity
Standing Alone	A Small State Has Few People	Transforming Our Lives
Standing Alone	Rustic Utopia	Fulfilling Independence
A Peaceful, Rich, But Simple Life		

Wang Bi

Even a small state with scanty population can return to the ancient, let alone the great state with plenty of people. Therefore the small state is used as an example.

That means let the people have tenfold or a hundredfold of utensils, but they never use them. Then why worry that there are not enough [utensils]?

Never let the people use anything, but only value themselves. Never let them indulge in bribery and let each of them feel secure in his own home. When they weigh death heavily, they never have any desire to move far away.

Without desires and demands.

Key terms

knot, knotting 結 jié, jiē

[p.c. silk represents the meaning and 吉 luck, lucky represents the sound]

Hatcher has knotted, (the) knotting, tying (of); ^

Wieger has radical $120 \, \text{\%} \, \text{silk} + \text{phonetic} \, 180 \pm \text{fortunate}, \, \text{lucky}.$ In a lesson he has speech of a sage bringing luck; good, auspicious, happy. The $\stackrel{.}{\equiv}$ character has the top being an affair, a thing, because all things are comprised between the two terms of numeration — (one) and $\stackrel{.}{+}$ (ten).

[The Japanese Good Luck knot, tied in two strings, is flat and has a cross on one side and a square on the other]

Chapter 81 回

And now, we come to the end. Those who speak do not know, those who know do not speak, said Chapter 56. Here we are told again speaking of Dao probably means you missed it. Of course, Lao Tzu, and many more since (now including me), *wrote* about Dao. Does that count? Hmm ...

This chapter, along with the first two lines of Chapter 1, can be a complete lifetime of practice.

The whole book is now summarized, like Coles Notes; the back panel on a book cover; stuff your elders tell you when you are young, but instantly forget because you are not yet living in Dao. Very simple ideas. Maybe, very simple truths.

Sentences 1 to 5

- 1. Sincere words are not elegant elegant words are not sincere.
- 2. The good do not argue. Those who argue are not good.

- 3. Those who know are not scholarly. The scholarly do not know.
- 4. The wise do not hoard. The more they give to others, the more they have.
- 5. The Way of Heaven is to benefit others and not to injure. The Way of the sage is to act but not to compete.

Truthful words may not be fine to hear. Words that are fine to hear may not be truthful.

Good people will not want to argue or to defend themselves by word of mouth.

Those who love to argue with others or to defend their beliefs are likely to be not so good.

Those with insight need not be well versed in different things. Those who are well versed in different kinds of knowledge may not really know.

The Sage does not set out to accumulate a fortune or merit. Yet as he serves the people, he becomes richer; and as he gives to people, he gets more.

The way of heaven is to benefit, not hurt. The way of the Sage is to do his duty, and not to contest or struggle. Ho

Chapter titles

The Nature of the Essential	Expressing the Essential	Nature of the Sage
The Evidence of Simplicity	True Words Are Not Beautiful	The Paradoxes of Life
Making Clear the Substance	Truthful Words	The Evolved Way
Doing One's Duty		

Wang Bi

The substance is in the quality.

The root stems from simplicity.

The ultimate is contained in One.

Without selfishness, one is self-sufficient; giving to the good and leaving [other] things alone.

That is what all things respect.

That is how all things return to him.

It always moves to produce and complete.

Follow the benefit of heaven and never harm each other.